

# Indigenous Hiring Verification Policy

People & Culture		Compliance	
Created: 11/2025	Reviewed:	Updated:	Frequency of review: Annually in November

## Purpose

YWCA BC (the “YWCA”) is committed to advancing equity and reconciliation by ensuring that positions designated for Indigenous peoples are filled by individuals who self-identify as Indigenous and whose identity is verified in a respectful, culturally appropriate manner.

This policy aligns with our Vision, Mission, and Values, as well as our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Plan. It reflects our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action, particularly those encouraging equitable employment and economic opportunities for Indigenous peoples.

The goal is to balance our responsibility to honour Indigenous identity with a process that protects applicants’ dignity, privacy, and self-determination.

This policy provides applicants with flexibility in how they may verify their Indigenous identity, including through self-identification, a community reference, or documentation (e.g., Status card, Métis citizenship card, Inuit enrollment card). This ensures that no single approach becomes a barrier.

The YWCA also reaffirms that Indigenous-specific hiring practices exist alongside, and do not override, our broader equity and non-discrimination commitments. People & Culture will support hiring committees in applying this process consistently and respectfully, helping ensure cultural safety and fairness throughout.

## Scope

This policy applies to all YWCA BC positions that are:

- Designated as Indigenous-specific, or
- Created to fulfill commitments in our IDEA Plan or funding agreements requiring Indigenous representation.

It applies to all stages of the recruitment and selection process for these positions.

## **Policy Statement**

YWCA BC recognizes that Indigenous identity is rooted in community connection, lived experience, and cultural belonging. We also acknowledge our responsibility to ensure that Indigenous-specific positions are filled by Indigenous peoples in keeping with the intent of these roles.

We will:

1. Invite applicants to self-identify as Indigenous in the application process.
2. Use a verification process that is culturally respectful, transparent, and non-intrusive, and applied only where necessary in a supportive way.
3. Maintain confidentiality and ensure that any information provided is used only for the purpose of confirming eligibility for the position.
4. Seek guidance from Indigenous employees, advisors, or community partners where appropriate.
5. Wherever possible, include an Indigenous employee on the recruitment panel.

## **Procedures**

### **Step 1: Job Posting**

- Determine the need for an Indigenous specific position using the following criteria:
  - When the position or program is responsible for developing and/or delivering services to Indigenous people or for working with Indigenous communities or partners or
  - When the position or program / department is responsible for organizational Indigenous relations, including developing relationships with Indigenous communities and Nations, advocacy, governance, policy development etc.
- Clearly state that the position is designated for Indigenous applicants.
- Include a brief explanation of why the role is Indigenous-specific (e.g. cultural safety, lived experience, community engagement).
- Emphasize that this designation supports equity and reconciliation, aligning with our organizational commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation and Commission Calls to Action.
- The job posting will note that applicants are invited to self-identify as Indigenous during the application process, and that shortlisted candidates will be required to provide verification before interviews begin.

### **Step 2: Self-Identification**

- Applicants are invited to self-identify as Indigenous during the application process.
- For shortlisted candidates, the hiring manager will follow up to request verification before the interview process begins. This ensures the process is consistent, respectful, and only applied when a candidate is being seriously considered.

### **Step 3: Verification Process**

As per Step 2, once a shortlist is created and prior to conducting interviews, the hiring manager will request verification from applicants who have self-identified. This will be conducted in a culturally respectful, supportive, and non-intrusive way. Verification may include one or more of the following:

1. Supporting Government Document – Optional documentation such as:
    - a. a status card issued by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that is current and not expired;
    - b. Certified copy of a Métis Nation Citizenship card from one of the four provincial affiliates;
    - c. Certified copy of a Nunavut Trust Certificate card or Inuit Enrollment card;
    - d. Citizenship identification issued by a First Nation that has a modern Treaty and / or self-government agreement;
    - e. Membership card or other documentation from a recognized Indigenous organization indicating that the person is a Non-Status First Nation person; or
    - f. Letter of support by a band that has enacted its own band membership code(s).
  2. Community Connection – A brief statement from the applicant describing their lived experiences and ongoing relationship to their Indigenous community (First Nation, Inuit, or Metis).
  3. Oral Verification – Where appropriate, a conversation with an Indigenous leader, Elder, or community representative (with the applicant's consent).
- Applicants may choose which type of verification they are most comfortable providing.
  - Applicants will not be excluded solely for lack of documentation if they can demonstrate lived connection to an Indigenous community.

### **Step 4: Review & Decision**

- Verification materials will be reviewed by People and Culture and, when appropriate, an Indigenous employee or advisor.
- Decisions will be based on a holistic understanding of Indigenous identity, considering both documentation and self-identification.
- Reviews will be guided by the spirit of reconciliation and trust, with the goal of supporting applicants rather than disqualifying them.
- The substantiation process will be conducted on short-listed applicants only, prior to the applicant being invited to the second step of the interview process.

### **Step 5: Privacy & Record Keeping**

- All verification materials will be stored securely and only accessible to employees directly involved in the hiring decision and People and Culture.
- Information will not be shared beyond the hiring process without the applicant's consent. When a candidate is disqualified, their information will be kept for a period of 6 months.

## Step 6: Appeals

- If an applicant disagrees with a verification decision, they may request a review by the VP of People and Culture and the Indigenous and Engagement Team not involved in the original decision.
- The appeals process will be transparent and fair, ensuring accountability and trust. Decisions made following the appeal review will be final.

## Definitions:

- **Indigenous Peoples** – First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples of Canada, as recognized in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.
- **Indigenous-Specific Positions** – A position designated for Indigenous applicants as permitted under the BC Human Rights Code to address underrepresentation and advance reconciliation.
- **Indigenous Identity** – Refers to the combination of self-identification and community acceptance, recognizing that identity is grounded in lived experience, culture, and belonging, not solely in documentation.

## ***Acknowledgment***

*This policy was informed by and builds on existing best practices, policies and guidelines from:*

- *YWCA Canada – Hiring of Indigenous-Specific Positions Policy*
- *YWCA BC Vancouver – IDEA Plan*
- *City of Vancouver – Indigenous Employment Policy*
- *University of British Columbia – Indigenous Recruitment Guidelines*
- *BC Public Service – Indigenous Applicant Advisory Service*
- *Canadian Human Rights Commission – Employment Equity Policy*
- *Queen’s University – Indigenous Hiring Policy*