

Schedule F The Four Pillars

PILLAR 1: REVIVAL AND PROTECTION OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE

Indigenous languages are sacred. Our languages are the keystone of our connection to each other and to the land. As expressed by the Assembly of First Nations, our languages were given to us by the Creator as an integral part of life and to allow us to interact with each other and the natural world. Embodied in our languages is our unique relationship to the Creator, our attitudes, beliefs, values and the fundamental notion of what is truth. Language is the principal means by which culture is accumulated, shared and transmitted from generation to generation. The key to identity and retention of culture is the revival and protection of our languages.

It is recognized and acknowledged that the traditional languages of our peoples are diverse. Language varies from community to community, sometimes operating like dialects. Each Band Class Member has the right to define for itself what constitutes an Indigenous language within its own nation.

The first pillar is the **revival and protection of our languages**, and may include initiatives with one or more of the following goals:

- Protecting and reviving the languages of our people.
- Encouraging our elders to pass on their knowledge of traditional languages to younger generations. Our elders will teach that our languages are not only about spoken and written words but are about our values, beliefs, rituals, songs, dances, spirituality, and social behaviours.
- Strengthening the bonds between language and the land.
- Teaching spoken and written languages to speakers of all levels, with a goal of having fluent speakers of our traditional languages.
- Enhancing the dignity, self-worth and sense of belonging of our peoples through the use of their own languages.
- Advancing individuals' language education.

PILLAR 2: REVIVAL AND PROTECTION OF INDIGENOUS CULTURE

Culture is how we express ourselves as nations. Culture helps maintain, and is a product of, ongoing relationships within our nations, our ancestors and the land. Protecting our culture means preserving the relationships through which our culture is both sustained and adapted. Our cultures are dynamic. Culture is a complex whole that includes knowledge, practices, customs, art, norms, beliefs, and any other capabilities and habits that offer a sense of meaning as peoples.

It is recognized and acknowledged that each Band Class Member has its own culture, beliefs,

traditions, worldviews and customs. Each has a unique experience on the land and with each other, but are all connected.

The second pillar is the **revival and protection of our cultures**, and may include initiatives with one or more of the following goals:

- Preserving and strengthening knowledge of our cultures and traditions.
- Reviving traditional cultural skills and practices.
- Passing knowledge of our traditional cultures, values, goals and practices to future generations.
- Forging bonds with the land and its resources through acknowledgment and use of cultural practises.
- Sharing traditional knowledge from older generations to younger generations.

PILLER 3: PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF HERITAGE

Heritage consists of the traditions and way of life passed down through generations and inherited by our peoples today. Heritage is closely connected to, but distinct, from culture. Heritage is about maintaining a connection to the past, through the present and into the future. It is about stewardship and maintenance of traditions and practices, as well as stewardship of our lands and waters.

It is recognized and acknowledged that each Band Class Member has its own heritage that is unique.

The third pillar is the **protection and promotion of heritage** and may include initiatives with one or more of the following goals:

- Preserving and strengthening knowledge of our shared inheritance.
- Passing knowledge of heritage to future generations.
- Preserving knowledge of the creation and maintenance of our material cultures.
- Fostering connection to and protection of lands and waters.
- Sustaining our resources in our lands.
- Fostering multiculturalism from nation to nation.

PILLER 4: WELLNESS FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLE

Wellness consists of emotional, physical, spiritual and mental health and wellbeing. Wellness involves healthy relationships, wisdom, respect and responsibility.

It is recognized and acknowledged that wellness is connected to our cultures, traditions, and knowledge, and that wellness of our communities and peoples is best achieved through practicing

our cultures and traditions, and through connection to the land.

Residential Schools have caused intergenerational harms that have had and continue to have a devastating impact on the wellness of our peoples. The fourth pillar is the promotion of **wellness for our communities and our people** to address these harms and may include initiatives with one or more of the following goals:

- Promoting holistic and traditional modes of wellness.
- Creating strong and healthy families in our communities.
- Raising our children and youth in a positive and healthy environment.
- Creating individual empowerment.
- Promoting the physical well-being of our people.
- Protecting and reviving healthful eating with traditional foods.
- Fostering relationships with the land.
- Promoting the practice of traditional values such as self-respect, respect toward others, humility, love, caring, sharing, honesty, and discipline.
- Addressing social harms that are the result of intergenerational trauma, including lateral violence, suicide, and drug and alcohol addiction and abuse.

Note: The goals listed under each Pillar are examples and not meant to exhaust the initiatives that may be undertaken under any of the Pillars but rather to show the types of initiatives that may be covered under the Four Pillars.