



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS NYC TERMS OF REFERENCE

Effective July 1, 2003

Amended December 1, 2025

MISSION: Our mission is to **empower Indigenous youth** across Turtle Island by fostering a deep connection to our cultural heritage, advocating for our rights, and creating opportunities for growth and leadership. As the National Youth Council, we are committed to building strong foundations for future generations, grounded in the pillars of **healing, collaboration, openness, and inclusivity**.

By honouring our traditions and values, we strive to **support the next generation** in overcoming historical challenges, ensuring that our efforts do not perpetuate colonial endeavours and promote true sovereignty and self-determination. Together, we aim to inspire, support and engage youth in the **path towards a positive leadership** that will honour and advance the legacy of our ancestors.

VISION: Our vision is a future where Indigenous youth across Turtle Island are recognized and respected as key contributors to society, thriving in an environment that supports their cultural, social, environmental, and economic aspirations. As the National Youth Council, we strive to **build a united community of Indigenous youth** who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to exercise our inherent rights as sovereign by **advocating with respect and pride towards self-determination**.

AUTHORITY:

The AFN NYC (NYC) was established through AFN Resolution 25/2001, *AFN Charter Amendment - Inclusion of NYC in July 17-19, 2001*.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

The NYC reports and is accountable to First Nations youth and leadership in their respective regions and the NYC.

ROLE & FUNCTION

Article 24.b: Role & Function of the AFN Charter reads:

1. The National Youth Council may discuss any questions or any matter within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter.
2. At least two representatives of the National Youth Council (chosen by consensus by members of the Council) shall participate in all Annual General Assemblies and Confederacy of Nations meetings.
3. The two National Youth Council Chairpersons shall be advisory members to the Executive Committee meetings.
4. The role and function of members of the National Youth Council is to represent First Nations youth perspectives in all political, social, economic, cultural and traditional matters.

The role and function of the NYC members is to represent First Nations youth perspectives in all political, social, economic, cultural and traditional matters.

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OBJECTIVES:

- Promote opportunities for youth to engage in important issues facing First Nations.
- Hold the space for youth to create and maintain a network between their nations.
- Provide perspectives during Chief's committees, meetings and assemblies.
- Contribute to the intergenerational discussions on significant matters for First Nations communities.
- Commit to fostering mutual respect among all groups including within First Nations communities.

COMPOSITION:

- The NYC operates as a 24-member council of First Nations youth from each of the 12 AFN regions.
- Each region shall identify two representatives of the same or all genders/sexes, including 2SLGBTQIA peoples, whose length of term depends on their regional process.
- The representatives are selected by regional youth councils or by their Regional Chief.
- Membership is limited to First Nations youth aged 16-29 (inclusive).
- Each region may identify one alternate for each NYC member in their region.
- With respect to the bylaws of each region, it is their sole discretion to identify their representation.
- NYC members under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a chaperone at the region's expense. (See appendix B: documentation and consent forms for underage NYC members).

DURATION OF TERM

- NYC members shall be appointed for a term of three years and shall be eligible for

reappointment as determined through the regional processes.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A: NYC Members:

- Be involved with the AFN through the AFN Executive Committee, AFN quarterly NYC meetings (including virtual), Annual General Assemblies, Special Chiefs Assemblies, Chiefs Committee meetings and AFN Secretariat sub-committee meetings. NYC meetings, where required, will offer a virtual component to accommodate participants who may not be able to attend in-person.
- Where possible, be involved in the planning and debriefing of AFN events to ensure that youth perspectives are reflected and integrated into the organization's work.
- Build positive working relationships with other Regional/National/International Youth Councils.
- Work with AFN to raise financial resources to support the activities of the NYC.
- May discuss any matter including but not limited to the scope of the AFN Charter.
- Adhere to the NYC Code of Ethics. (See appendix D: NYC Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct)
- Sign the Letter of Commitment a copy will be forwarded to the Regional Chiefs office. (See appendix E: NYC Letter of Commitment)
- Provide communication that will be a continual circle between community, regional and national.
- Be punctual for NYC meetings and while on NYC business.
- Be responsible for at least one portfolio as listed under the different sub-committees and work with the Regional Chief/Committees responsible for that portfolio for the duration of their term.
- Follow up on all business directly affecting youth, including past AFN resolutions.
- Reply to all requests for response within two weeks.
- If a NYC member fails to respond to NYC business responsibilities, within one month, for a period of one month for no reasonable cause, they will be considered an 'inactive member'.
- A letter of notice will be sent to their region requesting clarification on the status of the NYC member. The NYC defines an 'absence' as an absence without reasonable cause, an urgent need or notice (for example: extenuating personal reasons, health concerns, emergencies, etc.).
- If a NYC member is unreasonably absent for three consecutive meetings, they will be considered an 'inactive member', and appropriate measures will be taken with the NYC Coordinator.
- Absences would be recorded and communicated to the NYC Coordinator.

B: NYC Executive Committee

- Shall consist of two additional representatives, elected by the NYC at the Annual General Assembly, to participate on the NYC Executive Committee for a one-year term as per the NYC election regulation guidelines. (Appendix C)

- Assist the Co-Chairs in identifying priorities for NYC meetings.
- Be responsible for reporting to the NYC at each meeting.
- Be responsible for participating in portfolios not yet allocated to a NYC member as well as international portfolios and intergovernmental affairs.
- Be available to help new members orient themselves to the council.
- If the NYC Executive Committee members step down or are no longer on the committee, the NYC shall elect two interim executive members.
- NYC members shall not volunteer to serve on the Executive Committee unless they are confident that they can commit to meetings and the time required for this appointment.

C: NYC Co-Chairs

- Shall consist of two Chairpersons, who may represent the same or all genders/sexes, including 2SLGBTQIA peoples, elected by the NYC at the AFN Annual General Assembly as per the NYC election regulation guidelines. (See appendix C: AFN NYC election regulations guidelines).
- Act as a spokesperson for the NYC as required.
- May seek re-election, after their one-year term, for the Co-Chair positions for a maximum of two years.
- In the event of a discrepancy, a co-chair who has surpassed two years may be elected as an interim until the following Assembly.
- Shall be advisory members of the AFN Executive Committee.
- Be responsible for reporting to the AFN Executive Committee, Secretariat, and all other National Forums, as well as Annual General Assemblies, on current NYC activities.
- Be responsible for preparing a summary of any meetings attended and the outcomes of such meetings for the Executive Committee members.
- Be responsible for assisting the NYC Executive Committee in facilitating, chairing, and working with the NYC coordinator to prepare agendas for all NYC meetings. The meeting agendas should be available to NYC members a week before NYC meetings.
- Be responsible for active participation on the AFN Executive Committee.
- Directly manage public relations for NYC initiatives, including serving as the first point of contact for international engagements.
- Make immediate decisions if they enhance NYC's current work and will be held accountable for their actions.
- Shall not volunteer to serve as co-chairs unless they are confident they can commit to meetings and the time required for this appointment.
- Appoint one of the Executive members to be the Communications Officer who will act on immediate national crisis issues and situations.
- Shall adhere and formally accept the Executive Committee Code of Conduct (Appendix X).

D: AFN Portfolios

- NYC members will volunteer to be a portfolio holder for at least one AFN Secretariat portfolio.

- NYC members are responsible for contacting the directors of their respective sectors to introduce themselves and begin a positive working relationship.
- Portfolio holders are responsible for actively participating in Chiefs committee meetings associated with their portfolio.
- Portfolio holders are responsible for providing sufficient notice if they are unable to attend committee meetings, so that an alternate may be selected.
- Portfolio holders are responsible for the reporting of information related to their portfolios back to the NYC.
- **AFN Secretariat portfolios include the following:**
 - a. Economic Development
 - Cannabis
 - First Nations Labour Market
 - Procurement
 - b. Infrastructure
 - c. Languages
 - d. Education
 - e. Health (Mental Health and Wellness)
 - f. Social Development
 - Jordan's Principle
 - Income Assistance
 - Sports and Recreation
 - Early Learning and Childcare
 - g. Housing/Infrastructure
 - h. Rights (UN Declaration)
 - i. Justice & Policing
 - j. Nation-Building & Governance
 - k. Environment
 - Climate Change
 - Water Stewardship
 - l. Modern Treaties and Self-government Agreements
 - m. Water/Fisheries
 - n. Lands Territories and Resources
 - Additions to reserves
 - Specific Claims
 - Comprehensive Claims
 - Inherent Rights
 - o. Emergency Management

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

- The quorum for the NYC meetings shall be thirteen (13) or 50 percent plus one of all 'active' members, as defined in Section A. Inactive members do not count towards the quorum count.
- When all efforts at achieving consensus have been exhausted without success, a positive vote of 60% of the NYC representatives shall be sufficient to constitute a decision.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- NYC members will avoid real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest and disclose (in writing, or verbally, recorded into the Record of Decision during the meeting) personal conflicts of interest to the NYC members if such an instance should arise.
- A conflict of interest would arise if a NYC member or a person, company, or group associated with them (their community for example) could obtain some direct benefit (financial, professional, personal, or otherwise) from the NYC member's decision, action or recommendation.
- NYC members must also be mindful that sometimes, even though there may be no real or potential conflict of interest at issue, there remains the potential that a decision, action or recommendation of an NYC member gives rise to a reasonable perception of a conflict of interest when viewed from the perspective of an objective outside observer.
- Whether the perception is reasonable depends on the unique facts and circumstances, and an NYC member may wish to disclose such circumstances in the interest of transparency.
- If a member is excluded due to a conflict of interest, their absence will not affect the quorum requirement for the meeting.
- Should a conflict of interest arise, the NYC will follow the Dispute Resolution Protocol, reflected below.
- In the event where a member is excluded based on a conflict of interest for a decision item, following the decision item, the member will be counted under quorum. Should a quorum not be reached, the committee may consider adjourning.
- If a member with a perceived conflict of interest leaves the meeting following the decision, the member will be counted as absent and not included in the quorum. Should a quorum not be reached due to their absence, the meeting shall be adjourned.

REPORTING

- NYC members will provide regional updates on activities of the NYC and work completed within their own area each time the NYC meets.
- NYC members will prepare summary reports within one month of attending meetings, including but not limited to Sub-Committee meetings, Chiefs Committee meetings, National Working Groups, Regional Working Groups. (See appendix F: Meeting Report Template)
- NYC members will prepare one annual report from each region, which will be posted on the website and shared in hard copy at the AFN Annual General Assembly.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

- Grievances can be lodged against a NYC member on the grounds that their conduct is shown to be disrespectful, offensive, abusive or contrary to the ethical standards and requirements outlined in the Code of Conduct (See Appendix D).
- Any person can lodge a grievance against another member of the NYC on any of the grounds outlined in the Code of Conduct and Ethics policy due to a member's breach of their duties, responsibilities, or obligations or where their conduct has caused harm and is in violation of the policy, as stated above.
- A grievance can be made in writing or verbally and followed up in writing to the

AFN NYC coordinator. The NYC coordinator will bring the issue to AFN Human Resources and the AFN Mental Health coordinator to recommend the next steps.

- Where it has been identified that a member's conduct has caused harm, they will be found to be in violation of the code of conduct, and the issue will be brought to the attention of the Regional Chief's office.

DOCUMENTATION:

- The NYC will review their Terms of Reference on an annual basis at the Annual General Assemblies.
- The NYC Coordinator will ensure that all new NYC members receive an orientation package inclusive of the Terms of Reference, Code of Ethics, contact list, and letter of commitment defining roles and responsibilities with the assistance of the NYC coordinator.