

METRO VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

DRAFT Terms of Reference for the Governance

In the fall of 2007, a number of urban Aboriginal community Executive Directors met to discuss an urban Aboriginal forum, which would advance the work of the urban off-reserve Aboriginal social service providers in the Metro Vancouver area and provide an opportunity for networking and support. The intent was to provide advocacy for the needs of the Metro Vancouver urban Aboriginal community under a coalition of partner organizations and – to enhance relations among Aboriginal Executive Directors , as well as, to build human resource capacity and provide holistic supports. Underlying principles of the Council include: advocacy, capacity building, and unity. Recognizing the need for continued support of a united voice for the 40-60,000 Aboriginal people in the Metro Vancouver area, the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council was incorporated as a society in 2009 and is now comprised of 24 Aboriginal organizations.

The MVAEC start up process was initiated by Metro Vancouver Aboriginal organizations, endorsed by their Councils of Directors, and is an Incorporated Society. While Metro Vancouver Aboriginal people, Councils and all stake holders will be consulted regularly, the MVAEC maintains responsibility and accountability for setting out the broad direction of the start up and implementation activity and subsequent entity.

Mandate

MVAEC has the mandate to advocate, collaborate, and build capacity with a unified voice for all urban off-reserve Aboriginal people in the Metro Vancouver area.

Mission Statement

“MVAEC is a unified voice of Aboriginal Organizations, who strategically plan, advocate and positively influence outcomes that strengthen the service delivery and policies that impact our Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Community.”

Purpose

The purposes of the Society are:

- a) Address, in a cooperative manner through coalition building and sector representation, matters affecting the holistic well-being of Aboriginal people living in the Metro Vancouver urban area.
- b) Preserve and promote the diverse cultural identity of Aboriginal people and promote and implement best practices in culturally appropriate delivery of programs, services, management, and administration.
- c) Develop positive public relations that foster and support the strengths, inclusiveness, beliefs and values of Aboriginal people through protocol agreements, networks, associations, and partnerships with service organizations, Aboriginal political organizations, government departments, and private sectors.
- d) Respecting, understanding, and supporting the unique role of Elders and their contribution to the development and management of programs and services.
- e) Encourage and support the participation and mentorship of Aboriginal youth, especially those who are already involved in program and service delivery.

f) Develop information and communication networks within MVAEC and with the broader community serving Metro Vancouver Aboriginal people.

g) To be meaningfully engaged as advisors and partners to all levels of government, their departments, and ministries on matters related to urban Aboriginal programs and services for the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Community.

h) Promote, strengthen, and advocate for resource equity and sustainability for Aboriginal organizations, including wage parity and benefits.

i) Provide a working forum where Executive Directors or equivalent can come together to support, mentor, train, and foster good working relations with one another through the sharing of resources.

j) Develop and promote best practice governance models within Aboriginal service delivery organizations, including supporting Council and leadership development

Responsibility

The primary responsibility of this Society in its third year of operation is to ensure the following:

- Meaningful community involvement and input in the process/vision
- Incorporation of culturally appropriate practices in all aspects
- Commitment to transparency, inclusiveness and accountability
- A pro-active, solutions based approach

The intent is to provide advocacy for the needs of the Metro Vancouver urban Aboriginal community under a community coalition of partner organizations and to enhance relations among non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal municipal, regional, provincial, and federal offices to build human resource capacity and provide holistic supports.

These goals will be achieved through:

- Advocacy
- Capacity Development
- Unity
- Collaboration

Composition

There are three tiers of participation in the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC):

1. Member Organization - Appointed Executive Director or equivalent (voting status)
2. Table Advisory Group – Led by designated MVAEC member with Invited allies who possess knowledge in the particular area the Table is responsible for. Will contribute to discussion and recommendations to MVAEC, but will have no independent authority (non-voting status).
3. Observer Status – observer only, but may be asked to participate in discussion or provide information in special circumstances (non-voting status)

Member Organization (Voting Status)

Member Organization Representatives

At each Annual General Meeting of the Members, each Aboriginal Service Organization that is a Member of the MVAEC Society shall, by letter signed by the senior staff person of the Member Organization and delivered to the Coordinator of the MVAEC Society, appoint the Executive

Director or Equivalent (as deemed acceptable by the MVAEC Society) of the Member Organization to be a Director of the MVAEC Society.

There shall be no limit on the number of terms that a Director of the Society may serve.

If a Director ceases to hold office, the Member Organization that appointed that Director shall, by letter signed by the senior staff person of the Member Organization and addressed to the Coordinator of the Society, appoint the Executive Director or Equivalent (as deemed acceptable by the Society) of that Member Organization as a new Director to serve for the remainder of that term.

Co-Chairpersons

Two standing members of the Council will be s/elected to act as the Co-Chairs for the Council for up to a year term, on the first meeting following the Annual General meeting. The Co-Chairs shall be one female and one male person. In addition to their regular duties, at least one of the Co-Chairs will have the following responsibilities (the other Co-Chair will fill in when necessary):

- Chair MVAEC Council meetings
- Assist in the development of the agenda for MVAEC Council meetings
- Act as a contact person for media
- Represent the MVAEC in intergovernmental affairs (ie: with First Nations, Municipal, Federal, or Provincial governments)

Table Advisory Group (Non-voting Status)

Individuals invited to sit on the Tables are welcome to participate in the discussion but do not have voting status.

Observer Status (Non-voting Status)

Individuals may on occasion be invited to attend meetings to learn about the process and will adhere to the MVAEC observer protocol. On some occasions, an individual may be invited to share specific information. MVAEC will have the final say as to how long the individual(s) may be in attendance.

Term of Appointment

The Co-Chairs for the Council will hold a one year term in office, each standing member sits on the committee for a 12 month term beginning when the Council accepts the letter signed by senior staff or a Member Organization, at a regularly scheduled Council Meeting and ceasing at the next Annual General Meeting unless terminated earlier. The Chairs will be elected at the first meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

Council of Director for Legal Operations

The official Council of the MVAEC Society (those who have been appointed by their organizations' Council of Directors, have submitted all required paperwork, and have been duly appointed by the MVAEC Council) will be legally responsible for overseeing the overall operations of the Society, including, finances, audit, property, and administrative systems. Note that some organizations that meet MVAEC's membership criteria may be permitted to participate on the Council while awaiting confirmation of their membership, do not wish to become an official member, or for limited periods of time: all as decided solely at the discretion of the MVAEC Council.

Quorum

Required quorum for MVAEC Council is 50% plus one of its voting members. Eg. With 8 voting members, the quorum would be 5 and chair would break a tie.

Decision Making Model / Dispute Resolution

All decisions will be consensus based except for the following items which will go to motions:

- Finances
- Personnel
- Property
- Adoption of major documents and plans
- Any other items required by MVAEC's Constitution and By-laws

The use of the Aboriginal Consensus Model will be used as the base for dispute resolution.

The model strives to arrive at unity of opinion rather than a unanimous opinion. Unity of opinion means that everyone in the group agrees with the essence of the decision and can support it, even if not wholeheartedly agreeing with it. The nature and values of the MVAEC are to create an environment that both seeks and respects diversity of opinion and encourages respectful and productive debate.

- Creation of Resolution: a consensus decision is tabled and broad input is sought from the group. Discussion occurs until unity of opinion regarding a specific proposal is reached.
- If unity of opinion is not achieved, then a formal vote shall be called

Expectations of Standing Council Members

The following expectations will be fulfilled by standing members at all times:

- Attend all meetings
- Comply with the code of ethics
- Come prepared for meetings (review all minutes and briefing material thoroughly)
- Act as a liaison between MVAEC and their community organizations by providing feedback from their community organizations
- Will actively participate in the discussions and agenda
- To the best of their ability, will follow through with all commitments agreed to
- Will actively work to accomplish the vision of MVAEC
- Faithfully represent the interests of Aboriginal children and families and their needs
- Respectful communications

Active Participation

Due to the short time frame and a limited number of meetings, standing members that miss two meetings in a row without sending regrets by the time the meeting starts will have their membership put under the review of the other standing Council members, to see if there is any assistance or alternative to contributing to the workload of the Council.

Meetings

Meeting Locations

An effort will be made to circulate the locations for meetings throughout the region as needed.

Tables

Each Table of the Society will have a Council Member as the Chair to report back to the Council with recommendations to be ratified by the full Council of Directors.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will take place monthly on the 1st Thursday of every month, or when necessary for work to be done. Extraordinary meetings may be called as required. All members will take responsibility for attending meetings or sending regrets before the start of the meeting. Failure to send regrets for three meetings in a row will result in a review by the Council and meeting with the Co-Chairs to determine alternative way to communicate or contribute (only in very special circumstance).

If, within 30 minutes from the time appointed for a general meeting of Members, a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week, at the same time and place, and if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within 30 minutes from the time appointed for the meeting, the members present constitute a quorum.

Standing Agenda

- Opening prayer
- Introduction of guests
- Chairperson's comments
- Adopt the agenda
- Review and approve previous Meeting Record
- Business arising out of the Meeting Record
- Staff/Council reports
- Financial report
- New business
- Review of Action Agreements and Motions arising from the current meeting
- Other, Announcements
- Setting date/time/location of next meeting
- Adjournment
- Closing prayer

Separation of Powers

It is understood that the governing body acts as a unified group and acts as a whole and must not act independently of its members. The Council of Directors of the Society will be responsible for the overall legal administration of the Society with all major decisions ratified by the full director's quorum. MVAEC is accountable to the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Member Organizations, and both are accountable to Metro Vancouver's urban off-reserve Aboriginal people.

A quorum of the Council will provide broad governance, set policy, and will set and monitor the strategic objectives of the organization, for review on an annual basis. The Council is accountable to the Member Organizations at each meeting and each Member Organization's Executive Director has one (1) vote at the MVAEC meeting and any Table that they are officially a member of and that their organization assigns them to by official letter. The Council will hire a Coordinator for MVAEC. This role will determine necessary operational support, carry out the direction of the Council, and oversee the work of staff, students, volunteers, and consultants.

Expense Reimbursement

Travel expenses and accommodation, at special meetings will be covered to a pre-determined allowable amount only if funds are available for that specific purpose. Organizations may have to pay for their representative's costs if there are no dedicated funds within MVAEC to help cover costs. MVAEC will make every effort to keep costs to a minimum while meeting the needs of MVAEC.

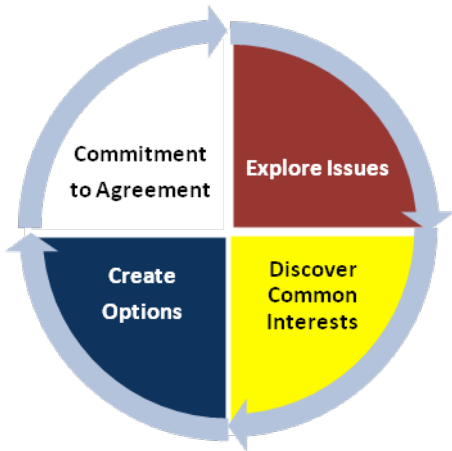
- Only when specified funds permit: Meals are reimbursed as per the personnel policy, except where the MVAEC provides the food and/or compensation.
- Only when specified funds permit: Reimbursement for travel and accommodation outside of the Metro Vancouver area requires a majority vote from the Council and notification to the operational coordinator.

Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council Membership Fee Scale

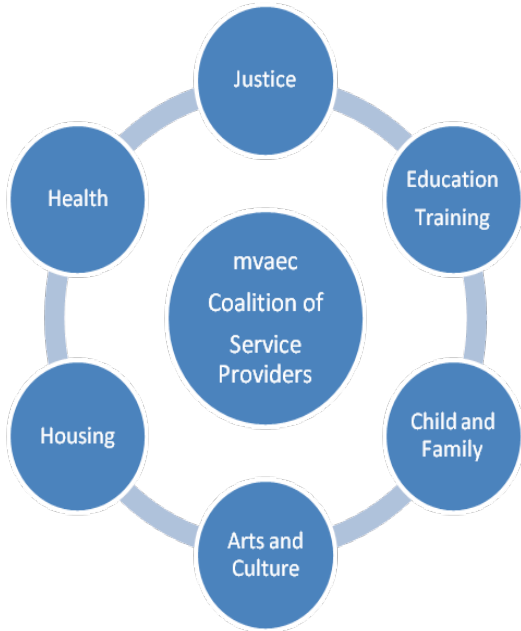
| Annual Organizational Budget | Annual Membership Fee |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| \$1 - \$500,000 | \$500 - \$1,000 |
| \$500,001 to \$1,000,000 | \$1,000 - \$1,500 |
| \$1,000,001 to \$2,000,000 | \$1,500 - \$2,500 |
| \$2,000,001 - \$3,000,000 | \$2,500 - \$4,000 |
| \$3,000,000 and above | \$5,000 |

Structure – Roles and Responsibilities

COMMUNITY



Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council
Dialogue Process

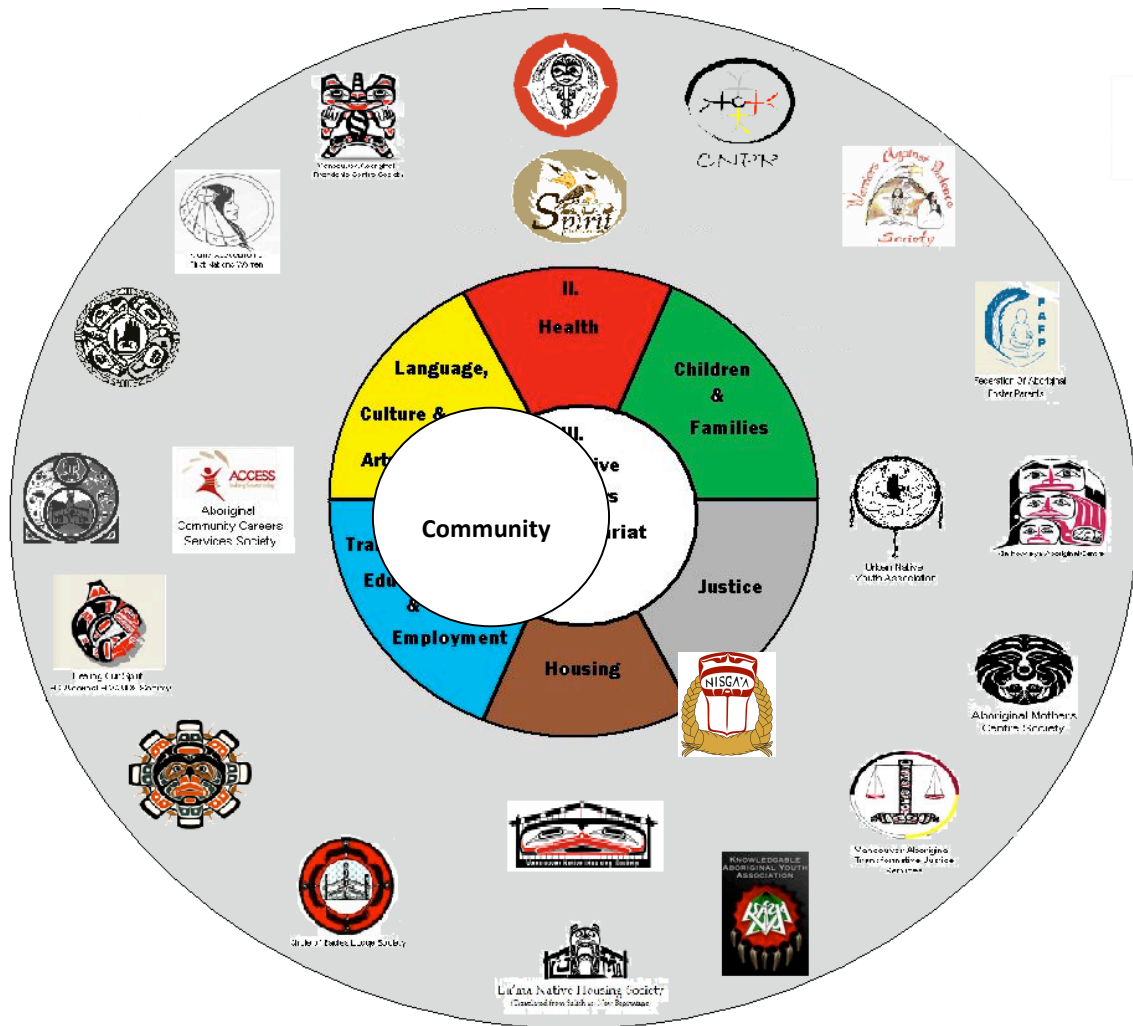


Action Tables - priority areas from forums or focus groups will be strategically planned for. Each Table will be chaired by Council Member. Participants will nominate a MVAEC Member to bring forward the voice to the MVAEC Council. Participants may include reps from Elders, women, youth, government, expertise from community.

MVAEC - address and implement solutions created by the work of the Tables.



METRO VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



Aboriginal children, families, community

Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council

Draft Communications Plan / Information Sharing

Set up Dialogue Process

Coordinate a regular series of community forums, focus groups, and surveys to provide an opportunity for the Metro Vancouver urban off-reserve Aboriginal community to present its concerns and input into service delivery plans. Council to include dialogue process of: commitment to agreement, input, exploration of issues, discover common interests, and create options in the areas of **Children, Youth & Family; Health & Wellness; Justice; Housing & Homelessness, Language, Arts & Culture, and Education, Training & Employment.**

Community Relations:

- To promote MVAEC to the public.
- To enhance the image and the community confidence in the Society and its Initiatives.
- Council Reporting Requirements – MVAEC and individual members will report to perspective stakeholders as needed.
- Society's Reporting Requirements - MVAEC will report as per contract to funders, and staff will do all reports to the Council verbally with accompanying documentation when required for Members to make an informed decision
- Tables will seek input from the community and invite as much participation as possible.

Information Sharing

Each Member will share appropriate information with community, organizations, and government when completed by the full Council and approved for sharing outside of MVAEC.

Coordinator will submit monthly written report to the Co-Chairs.

Records Management

MVAEC will have a records management plan for all Council Members and employees which ensures that Member Organization and employee records and society service records are:

- Stored securely in a separate file room where the staff will keep track of who can have access, location of file, and a tracking system for signing out files.
- Stored in fire proof cabinets, within an alarmed building,

Press Releases/Interviews/Public Speaking Engagements

The designated Chair person(s) or a designate(s) from the full council will carry out all press releases and/or interviews with input from the full council at a regularly scheduled meeting of the member organizations.

Facebook

A Facebook organization page will be set up and maintained by staff for the promotion of the Society's best interests and marketing.

Presentations

Power point, posters, poster Councils, brochures, business cards, and briefs will be prepared for marketing, for community, government, and other organizations.

Website

The Society's website will be established by Council and staff, and maintained by staff. Major changes will only be done with the direction of Council.

Newsletter

A semi annual newsletter will be developed by staff with input from the Council and distributed to the community in June and December of each year.

Communication Between Meetings

In order to foster positive, healthy, and productive communications amongst MVAEC as a group, communication out to the group as a whole will be limited to emergency or pre-approved items only in order to maintain confidentiality, respectful open face-to-face communication, and healthy boundaries. All members are encouraged to enter into full, open, confidential, and fruitful discussions as a group in person (consensus was reached that neither email nor phone conferencing are a good medium to do this). All members must adhere to the Council's decision and direction on this matter.

These are the main decisions made regarding discussion of items and communication between MVAEC members:

- All issues must be discussed at a regularly scheduled MVAEC meeting only (unless there is an emergency that the full Council agrees to discuss via other means)
- If a member has information to send out to the group it should be done through the Coordinator, then she will pass information through Co-Chairs for consideration for distribution to the larger group via email
- If a member cannot attend a meeting, but wish to have their point heard they must ask another member or the Coordinator to bring their points up at the meeting

- If a member cannot attend a meeting, it is their responsibility to ask the Coordinator or another member who was at the meeting for an update as soon as possible so that they are up to date on discussions and decisions being made
- When the Coordinator or the Chairs send out information reply directly back to the one person or person's instead of "reply all" as members do not wish to have a flood of emails.