

Union of BC Indian Chiefs Substance Free Policy

The Policy Statement

UBCIC is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all its members and staff. In addition to UBCIC's existing human resources policy on alcohol or drugs in which "employees of the UBCIC will not consume or be under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances during work hours," UBCIC will not include or condone consumption of alcohol and/or non-medical drugs at any meetings or events sponsored by UBCIC. This policy is intended to help foster a network of support and respect that leaves no room for violence, harassment, or discrimination of any kind.

Terms and Intentions of Policy

The term "substance use" refers to the use of non-medical drugs and alcohol. Substance use can lead to intoxication, an inebriated state where one's behavioral, cognitive, and physiological capabilities are impaired. Substance use has been directly linked to behaviors that cause harm to self or others, such as harassment, abuse, and violence including, but not limited to, sexual assault, domestic abuse, and psychological abuse.

The examples and definitions included above are not exhaustive. Substance use can have many complex and negative impacts that can affect many people and is often linked to conduct that is unwanted or unwelcome by those around the user.

UBCIC recognizes that substance abuse and addiction is often a manifestation of coping and processing the trauma that is tied to the Indian Residential School System and other discriminatory policies, practices, and legislation forced upon Indigenous peoples. UBCIC does not wish to alienate or stigmatize those coping with the intergenerational impacts of Canada's colonial framework of oppression by prohibiting substance use. The intention of the substance-free policy is to eliminate any risk of adverse conduct and to ensure the creation of safe places wherein individuals or groups can feel comfortable and unburdened practicing their spiritual traditions and/or taking the proper steps on their pathways to healing.

Reporting Procedures

If someone wishes to report an incidence of substance use or improper conduct arising from substance use, they can speak with the UBCIC Executive or the UBCIC Administrator.

When the designated individual receives a such a report, they will:

- Immediately and thoroughly carry out any procedures mandated by UBCIC's Human Resources policy
- Immediately record details of the incident(s); ask the reporter, who may be a victim of harassment and/or violence, what outcome they want and ensure they know what their options are and the procedures/policies that apply to each option; keep a confidential record of all discussions; respect the choices of the reporter; discuss and agree upon next steps.

Implementation of Policy

The UBCIC Chiefs Council endorsed this Policy via Resolution 2019-12 on February 28, 2019.

UBCIC will ensure that this policy is disseminated to all UBCIC members and staff and include in the staff human resource materials. All new staff and members will be trained on the content of this policy.

Changes to Policy

The UBCIC Chiefs Council may revise this policy from time to time via resolution at the UBCIC Chiefs Council or Annual General Assembly meetings.

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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Appendix:

UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
CHIEFS COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 27TH-28TH, 2019
MUSQUEAM COMMUNITY CENTRE, X^wMƏØK^wƏY^əM (MUSQUEAM TERRITORY)

Resolution no. 2019-12

RE: UBCIC Substance-Free Policy

WHEREAS there is a deeply rooted connection between substance abuse and sexual violence that has detrimental and intergenerational impacts upon Indigenous communities. There is a need for safe spaces for women, youth, LGBTQ2S individuals, and Elders;

WHEREAS the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the Governments of British Columbia and Canada have adopted without qualification and have committed to implement, affirms:

Article 22(1): Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration;

WHEREAS safe and sacred spaces needed for healing, medicines, and ceremony must support and be supported by a culture of respect and trust in and amongst organizations, communities, and individuals. The UBCIC Chiefs Council acknowledges that spiritual customs, traditions, and ceremonies must be practiced and developed in an environment free from violence and abusive and/or discriminatory conduct;

WHEREAS the circumstances leading to alcohol or substance abuse are often the result of the trauma inflicted by the Indian Residential School System and other discriminatory policies, practices and legislation forced upon Indigenous peoples. The UBCIC Chiefs Council does not wish its substance-free policy to stigmatize or alienate those coping with the intergenerational impacts of Canada's colonial framework of oppression and impoverishment;

WHEREAS preventing and alleviating the damages wrought by substance abuse and sexual violence upon Indigenous communities, families, and individuals is critical, as well as empowering and supporting those affected through providing safe spaces that are free from stressors and triggers;

WHEREAS UBCIC’s Human Resources manual states “employees of the UBCIC will not consume or be under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances during work hours”; and

WHEREAS UBCIC has unofficially upheld and sustained a substance-free policy at all meetings and events and recognizes the profound impacts that individual actions and coping mechanisms, such as the misuse of alcohol, can have upon family, friends, and community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council formally endorses and enacts the Union of BC Indian Chiefs Substance-Free Policy (attached); and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council invites other organizations and communities to implement a substance-free policy that will create environments conducive to the promotion and protection of safe spaces for all people, especially Indigenous women, youth, Elders, and LGBTQ2S individuals.

Moved: Chief Russell Myers Ross, Yunesit’in Government

Seconded: Chief Donna Aljam, Nicomen Indian Band

Disposition: Carried

Date: February 28, 2019