

CHRA Statement on Reconciliation and Cultural Principles

As the national association representing social, non-profit and affordable housing, as well as holding a strong commitment to ending chronic homelessness, one of CHRA's core beliefs outlined in our 2020-2024 Strategic Plan is: "CHRA is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and housing is a core component of Reconciliation".

CHRA wholeheartedly supports the Truth and Reconciliation's Principles of Reconciliation as well as the Calls to Action. Some statements within the Principles of Reconciliation provide additional insight with respect to the culture CHRA is committed to adopting internally, and promoting within its membership. These Principles include:

- All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships;
- The perspectives and understanding of CHRA's Indigenous members of the ethics, concepts and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation;
- Supporting Indigenous Peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential;
- Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, advocacy, and transparency.

"We must do more than talk about reconciliation – we must act. To do so constructively, Canadians must remain committed to the ongoing work of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. This involves dismantling political and bureaucratic cultures."

Additionally, T&R Call to Action #92 calls for the adoption by the business sector to adopt a Reconciliation framework which includes the following:

- Adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities.
- Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

The Seven Sacred Teachings of the Grandfathers provide insight into the values CHRA holds i.e. honesty, wisdom, courage, humility, love, respect and trust. The CHRA also holds in high value the *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* or 8 IQ Principles, specifically the principles of *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for family or community, or both) and *Piliriqatigiinni* or *Ikajuqtiigiinni* (working together for a common cause).

As an organization committed to implementing the principles of Reconciliation, CHRA's culture needs to be influenced by Indigenous culture. CHRA staff and Board of Directors commits to the following cultural norms, and encourages all its members to adopt the following norms:

- Diversity and Inclusion:
 - Respect for diversity is not limited to the color of skin, disability etc. Respect for the diversity of thought, opinion, perspective of others within the collective whole is equally critical
 - Inclusion means FULL participation – questions and discussions lead to the best outcomes
 - To assist in this regard, CHRA staff will undertake cultural competency training on a regular basis with a particular focus on Indigenous culture.
 - CHRA Board meetings and other gatherings will commence with Indigenous land acknowledgements.
- Communication
 - Listen with patience and understanding – everyone has a story
 - Keep others informed; share / provide information as requested
 - Seek first to understand others vs being understood
 - Ensure everyone has a voice and that each voice is heard and understood
 - Tone and manner are important – questions are important
 - Knowledge must be shared in an effort to help each other and build understanding – no one person is considered 'better' than the other
 - Communicate with the intent of being supportive and helpful
- Interpersonal
 - Develop and maintain meaningful relationships and trust is critical for the organization to operate and work toward the best possible outcome
 - Demonstrating empathy, sensitivity and understanding for the feelings of others knowing that what we say, how we say it and what we do may impact individuals
 - CHRA Board and staff will strive to a relationship of mutual partnership, where both staff and Board are striving for common objectives and impact.
- Collaboration
 - Cultivating and maintaining respectful relationships; always strive to be on good terms with others
 - Actions are for the good of the group – they are not for personal gain or self-importance
 - Ideas of others are sought out in an effort to achieve the best outcome
 - A community of sharing exists; everyone is expected to 'roll up their sleeves and contribute'
 - Information is not considered a source of power – it is a shared service
 - Collective decision-making and involving others in decisions that may impact themselves or the organization

- Representation and Governance
 - Issues impacting Indigenous peoples within CHRA must be discussed and led For Indigenous Peoples, By Indigenous Peoples. The CHRA Indigenous Caucus will be the lead body to provide input and direction on issues impacting Indigenous housing in a spirit of open collaboration.
 - Where possible, Indigenous representatives will represent CHRA for external purposes on issues impacting Indigenous housing.