



# Indigenous Family Court Worker Job Description

## **SUPERVISION:**

Under the direction of the Executive Director / Director of Operations, the Indigenous Family Court Worker is responsible for the effective and efficient delivery and administration of the Indigenous Family Court Worker Program.

## **JOB SUMMARY:**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker's primary responsibility is to assist Indigenous youth and families in contact with family, child protection and youth court to better understand their options, responsibilities and rights when appearing before the courts. The Indigenous Family Court Worker will collaborate with the client in the development of a plan of care directed towards addressing the root causes which brought them before the courts. Frequent and consistent follow up with the client will be required to support the client to complete their plan of care. This position will collaborate with members of an interdisciplinary team.

## **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Preferred Community College diploma, University degree or equivalent in Social Services and/or a minimum of 5 years work in a social or justice services environment.
- Knowledge of the structure and procedures of justice systems and their functions, including Canadian criminal procedure, Criminal Code of Canada, and related court decisions regarding Indigenous persons.
- Knowledge of sentencing principles, alternative measures and restorative justice principles.
- Strong knowledge and awareness of Indigenous culture and history, with particular emphasis on family violence, child welfare, incarceration, the impacts of trauma, engagement and community outreach; knowledge of an Indigenous language(s) will be considered an asset.
- Ability to engage people to build trust and rapport; effective verbal and listening communication skills; excellent interviewing skills.
- Self-motivated individual with ability to work with minimal supervision in a team-oriented setting.
- Excellent case and file management skills, stress management and time management skills; meet deadlines.
- High flexibility with strong interpersonal skills that allow one to work effectively in a diverse environment.
- Ability to prioritize and manage conflicting demands; ability to problem solve and take initiative.
- Must be able to maintain confidentiality.
- Ability to work flexible hours, evenings and/or weekends.
- A satisfactory Vulnerable Sector Clearance Check is a condition of employment.
- Must have a valid driver's license and reliable transportation. Will require a valid Drivers Abstract upon hiring.

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### **CORE COMPETENCIES:**

- **Inter-Cultural Competency Informed** – Able to incorporate a personal responsibility to increase sensitivity, awareness and implementation of TBIFC’s cultural teachings and organizational practices in both professional conduct and work related deliverables. Ideally carries traditional knowledge and understands the history of Indigenous people and is considered to be of Good Mind.
- **Trauma-Based Practice Informed** – Able to incorporate a trauma-informed approach to recognize and respond to all forms of trauma and the necessity of supporting Indigenous people in a culture of tradition and safety in their healing journey.
- **Restorative Justice Practice Informed** – Able to incorporate a restorative-justice informed approach to promote, recognize and respond to restorative justice principles and the necessity of supporting Indigenous people in a culture of tradition and effective justice interventions in their healing journey.
- **Indigenous Gender-Based Analysis Informed** – Able to incorporate an intersectional approach to gender, race and discrimination, and aware of subsequent intergenerational impacts affecting Indigenous women and their families.

### **JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker shall have responsibility for the following:

#### **1. CLIENT (Indigenous Youth and Adults):**

- Assist Indigenous persons who come into conflict with the law.
- Act as a liaison between the client and court administrators to ensure information is brought forward relevant to the various stages of the legal processes. First Appearance and Bail Court are priority.
- Collaborate with the client in the development of a plan of care that addresses the root causes of the clients’ behaviour that brought them before the courts.
- Explain client rights to obtain a lawyer (private, legal aid or duty counsel) and to speak for themselves in court.
- Ensure the client understands the charges and their legal rights and responsibilities in response to charges.
- Remind clients of court and send letters advising of upcoming dates.
- Advocate an Indigenous cultural and / or language interpreter is available, through the court, if the client requires or requests one.
- Be knowledgeable of and work with community agencies and referral sources who will be in a position to assist clients in meeting immediate and long term goals.
- Explain the nature and meaning of any and all sanctions/conditions/requirements taken against or applied to the client and/or their family by the courts and any other processes that arise as a result of contact with the mainstream justice system.
- Assist victims of offences, to understand their rights and responsibilities and to refer them to appropriate supportive services if not in conflict with the accused person. When conflict arises

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the Court Worker shall refer the client to another community resource or Friendship Centre program(s).

- Work with Friendship Centre programs to promote a coordinated client service approach to ensure client needs are addressed.
- Liaise with client families and significant others as appropriate.
- Provide ongoing advice, information, and support to service users.

### **2. Court & Justice System:**

- Work with all justice personnel to ensure that Indigenous people who come into contact with the law receive equitable and reasonable treatment during the court process.
- Assist upon request in the preparation of Pre-Disposition Reports/Pre-Sentence reports, Gladue reports, Plans of Care, Review of Custody, Affidavits, Case Conference, Mediation and Motions. This input will encourage a full and unbiased presentation of any pertinent facts relating to the Indigenous person charged with an offence or before the court.
- Explain to the client the importance of complying with the conditions of their disposition. The Indigenous Family Court Worker will clarify the meaning of forms or measures such as probation, bail/recognizance/undertaking, conditional release, community service orders etc. The Indigenous Family Court Worker will not supervise bail, probation, Community Service Orders or custody and supervision orders.
- Provide oral submissions when requested by the client or justice personnel with approval from the client and/ or with guidance from legal counsel acting for the accused.
- Ensure that the courts are aware of the provision and its appropriateness when dealing with an Indigenous offender within the Canadian Criminal Code and to reference the principles of Gladue (Section 718.2 (e)).
- Ensure that there is a working relationship with the Justice Services Program Manager to ensure that all clients meeting the criteria are diverted at the earliest stage of the process.
- Liaise with other agencies including Legal Aid, Defense Attorneys, and the Crown as required, and advocate for client needs.
- Attend Indigenous Peoples' Court and scheduled regional courts, as required.

### **3. Restorative Justice Programs:**

- Support TBIFC Restorative Justice Programs by communicating regularly with the program staff, providing diversion referrals, and conducting follow up activities in collaboration with the program staff.
- Advocate the Restorative Justice Programs as a primary option for eligible clients.
- Collaborate with Justice Services Program Manager in the identification of clients appropriate for diversion referrals.
- Promote the Restorative Justice Programs to mainstream justice personnel by explaining and advocating the diversion process and client eligibility criteria.
- Ensure that all necessary paperwork is completed in advance of submitting referrals.
- Provide diversion applications immediately to the Justice Services Program Manager attention.
- Attend and participate in weekly Justice Program team meetings.

**4. Resources Outside the Courts:**

- Attend meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences that relate to the Indigenous Family Court Worker duties.
- Participate as a resource person at training sessions, committee meetings, etc., to ensure that information on the culture, needs, concerns and aspirations of Indigenous people are expressed.

**5. Community Development & Outreach:**

- Work with Friendship Centre staff in support of the development of culture-based work plans that best support program and service design and provision for urban Indigenous participants.
- Attend, participate, and/or facilitate relevant meetings, conferences or workshops as a representative of TBIFC.
- Promote the program and services of the Indigenous Court Worker Program and/or other programs provided by the TBIFC.
- Respond to general enquiries the Indigenous Court Worker Program's purpose, processes and procedures and/or any other information being requested.
- Research appropriate agencies for relevant referrals, resources and available community programs.
- Network and liaise with other TBIFC programs, community agencies, funding sources, etc.
- Explain to the client's family and / or First Nation community, where appropriate, the legal procedures and steps taken by the justice system.
- Organize and/or participate in public education about the law and justice system and/or crime prevention workshops for the community, at least twice per year.
- Support and participate in the development of Indigenous community justice initiatives.

**6. Program Administration:**

- Submit written reports to the Executive Director / Director of Operations outlining programming activities, committee work, participation in Friendship Centre activities, and any other reports as required.
- Compile and submit statistical data using designation database systems.
- Accurately record statistical information as required and as it changes.
- Maintain comprehensive and up-to-date client files and systems that are essential components of good program management, which demonstrate the program is being delivered according to proposed work mandate and work plan.
- Respond to correspondence and information requests as required.
- Attend TBIFC Annual General Meeting.
- Complete internal administrative tasks i.e. time sheets, mileage logs, expense reports, etc.
- Participate in case audits, compliance audits, program evaluations and any other specially designed processes that may be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the Indigenous Family Court Worker Program.
- Ensure easy client access to legal educational materials in appropriate areas, keeping publications up to date.

**7. Training & Professional Development:**

- Participate in relevant conferences, training workshops and related courses and meetings for professional development as required or directed.
- Attend workshops, staff meetings, etc. as directed.
- Keep apprised of relevant legislation or policy changes in relation to the judicial, child welfare, and social services fields.
- Identify professional development / training needs and brings to the attention of the Justice Services Program Manager and the Director of Operations for approval.
- Remain current and implement wise practices in social justice service provision from a culturally informed perspective.

**8. Health & Safety:**

- Observe health, fire and safety regulations; uphold health and safety standards.
- Ensure Health and Safety policies incorporated into daily working practices are adhered to.
- Ensure appropriate supervision of direct-service users and activities at all times.
- Maintain Standard First Aid Level C with AED certification.

**9. General Duties:**

- Perform other duties relevant to the program as assigned by the Executive Director / Director of Operations.
- Observe and uphold the policies, procedures, and practices of the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre.
- Actively recruit, train and provide supervision to student placements, volunteers, etc.
- Ensure client files are secured in a locked filing cabinet on a daily basis.
- Actively promote and participate in community and TBIFC annual activities in keeping with the mandate and philosophy of the Friendship Centre.
- Work with other members of the team to ensure a wholistic program of care is maintained addressing the physical, psychological, and social needs of the service users.
- Ensure the premises and program resources are safe and secure.
- Work within an Indigenous culturally competent framework.
- Notify the Executive Director or designate immediately of any difficulties including crisis or any other issues that may affect the ongoing delivery of the program.

**RELATIONSHIPS:**

**Executive Director / Director of Operations:**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker will keep the Executive Director / Director of Operations apprised of all important matters related to the Indigenous Family Court Program by providing regular written reports for review and oral reports on an ad hoc basis.

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### **TBIFC Program Staff:**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker will work with other TBIFC program staff by maintaining communication lines to allow opportunity to share information relevant to the program, to maintain appropriate referrals to programs and services, and to participate in joint programming. The Indigenous Criminal Court Worker will work closely with the TBIFC Justice Services Team staff and will be directly supervised by the Justice Services Program Manager.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY:**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker is accountable to the Executive Director / Director of Operations for the efficient performance of their function.

### **PROBATIONARY PERIOD:**

Upon commencement of employment, the Indigenous Family Court Worker will be placed on a nine month probationary period. An extended period of probation may be instituted at the discretion of the Executive Director. A performance appraisal will be completed at the end of the probationary period and will occur once annually thereafter.

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:**

1. Hours may vary but shall not exceed 35 hours per week unless prior approval has been authorized to exceed terms and conditions.
2. Adheres to policies and procedures according to the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre's *Personnel Policy Manual* - March 24, 2010.
3. Abides by the Code of Ethics as adopted by the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre.
4. Signs and adheres to an Oath of Confidentiality.
5. Maintains a clear criminal reference check (CPIC) and Vulnerable Sector Clearance.
6. Adheres and applies the following:
  - a) A Policy Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Individuals.
  - b) A Protocol for the Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Between Dilico Anishnabek Family Care and the Indian Youth Friendship Society.

### **CAUSES FOR DISMISSAL:**

Please refer to the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre's Personnel Policy Manual.

**WORKING CONDITIONS:**

**Physical Demands**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker will spend long hours sitting, standing, and using office equipment and computers which can cause muscle strain. The Indigenous Family Court Worker may be lifting equipment and materials up to 30 lbs. The worker may have to lift and carry using appropriate lifting techniques, bend, push, pull, grip, reach, kneel, crouch using good body mechanics and includes walking, sitting, standing and climbing stairs.

**Environmental Conditions**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker will be working in a busy and occasionally noisy environment. The worker will be required to move throughout the community with offices both onsite at TBIFC and at the court house. The Indigenous Family Court Worker may come in contact with community members who are ill and/or contagious and must take precautions to ensure the health and safety of all individuals including self.

**Sensory Demands**

The Indigenous Family Court Worker will be working in a busy and occasionally noisy environment. Traditional Medicines and healing practices are utilized in ceremonies and circles; these may affect senses and respiratory system. The Indigenous Family Court Worker must be very adept at listening to others and spending long hours on the computer preparing detailed reports which requires attention to detail and high levels of accuracy.

**Mental Demands**

There are regular deadlines that require attention to detail with this position which may cause stress. The Indigenous Family Court Worker must deal with a wide variety of people and will have to manage a number of requests and situations at one time.

There may be a number of activities and situations happening at once and the Indigenous Family Court Worker must be prepared to prioritize and multitask.

The Indigenous Family Court Worker must deal with a wide variety of people with challenging personal issues. Caring for people in crisis can be stressful.

The Indigenous Family Court Worker must ensure that clients are supervised at all times and that clients are involved in safe and appropriate activities.

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**CERTIFICATION:**

I certify that I have read and understand the responsibilities to this position.	Supervisor has reviewed with employee the job responsibilities as described in this document and has discussed expected standards of performance.
Employee Signature	Supervisor's Title
Printed Name <span style="float: right;">Date</span>	Supervisor's Signature <span style="float: right;">Date</span>

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by the incumbent(s) of this job. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities and activities required of the position.

This job description is not an employment agreement or contract. Management has the exclusive right to alter the scope of work within the framework of this job description at any time without prior notice.

November 2022