

Honoraria and Expense Reimbursement for Indigenous Services

1. Preamble

BCCNM has made a public commitment to:

- promote Indigenous cultural safety, cultural humility and anti-racism as core competencies in its work and for the professions it regulates;
- ensure it operates in the legal framework of the *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* which includes creating pathways for Indigenous ways of knowing and being;
- build partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations; and
- draw on the teachings, experience, and knowledge of Indigenous individuals to guide the college and support its efforts in promoting awareness, evoking change, and working intentionally towards dismantling Indigenous-specific racism within the healthcare system.

As BCCNM engages with Indigenous partners, it is customary to provide an honorarium and/or gift to Indigenous individuals in recognition of the time and expertise they share. This is a tangible gesture of respect and gratitude (*not* a payment for services rendered), and must be carefully considered through a lens of cultural humility, appropriate to the Indigenous services or knowledge being provided, and delivered in a culturally safe way that honours the protocols and traditions of Indigenous communities. Any process must be carried out in a way that clearly demonstrates knowledge or services are being shared and not sold.

This policy must always be used in conjunction with the *Guideline for Working with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers*.

2. Authority

The honorarium and expense reimbursement amounts established in this policy have been approved in consultation with two Knowledge Keepers from the Host Nations, as well as the BCCNM Board, pursuant to Section 47(a) of the bylaws.

3. Purpose

BCCNM, when working with Indigenous individuals, will compensate and/or honor their work. This means paying an appropriate amount that is commensurate with their time, knowledge, and experience, and is culturally sensitive. It is not culturally appropriate to work with Indigenous individuals in a transactional manner as this implies payment for a service rendered.

The purpose of this policy is to assist staff in understanding the types of Indigenous services that may require consideration of an honorarium, what an appropriate honorarium amount might be for Indigenous individuals providing those services to BCCNM or participating in college meetings or events, and ensuring that expenses necessarily incurred by Indigenous individuals in connection with such meetings or events are properly reimbursed.

Any honorarium or expense reimbursement offered must be fair, reasonable, and culturally appropriate. Any process applied for arranging honorarium and expense reimbursement must be clear, transparent, uncomplicated, and culturally safe.

4. Scope

This policy applies only to Indigenous individuals supporting BCCNM's journey towards cultural safety, cultural humility, and anti-racism. This policy does not apply to contracts in place prior to its effective date, nor does the policy apply to Indigenous individuals in other BCCNM roles such as board, committee or staff members.

This policy is for use by staff who arrange and administer honoraria and expense reimbursement for Indigenous individuals providing services within an Indigenous context ("Indigenous services") to BCCNM.

This policy is not intended to supersede payment arrangements established with consultants and other professionals who normally follow a fee-for-service contract model. Rather, it speaks to forms of engagement with Indigenous partners (including advising of a cultural nature, ceremonies, and territorial acknowledgements) that necessitate a gift rather than a payment for service. Although these gifts may be monetary in nature, they are:

- given in recognition of a person's respected cultural contributions, and to highlight the value of their unique and sacred knowledge; and
- not a payment for a service but an exchange in a culturally appropriate manner to recognize appreciation for a person's time and the teachings shared (such as cultural advising, knowledge sharing, an opening prayer at an event, or a territory welcome).

5. Policy

INDIGENOUS SERVICES

BCCNM will provide honoraria to Indigenous individuals offering the following services:

INDIGENOUS SERVICES	BENEFITS	HONORARIUM AMOUNT ¹
Welcome/Opening	Territorial welcome: grounds the work, sets the tone for the day and starts it off in a good way.	\$300 - \$400 per person per event day (includes one hour of meeting time)
Closing	Reflects on the learnings and teachings from the meeting/event. Re-centers the work and closes in a good way.	\$300 - \$400 per person per event day (includes one hour of meeting time)
Half Day Meeting/Event Attendance (includes open/close)		\$400 per person per day (1-4 hours' meeting time)
Full day Meeting/Event Attendance (includes open/close)		\$800 per person per day (4+ hours' meeting time)
Leading Ceremony (e.g., blanket, smudging, brushing, sweats, cold water bath or ceremony appropriate for the region, etc.)	Provides authentic Indigenous-centered direction, prayer, support, instruction and sacred traditional teachings.	\$800 per person per day
Ceremonial Floor Manager	Provides direction to the family and the speaker. Organizes speakers and the work on behalf of the family.	\$400 for half day (1-4 hours) \$800 for full day (4-6 hours)
Witnesses	Integral part of the ceremony and work. They are responsible for sharing what they have seen and heard and speaking to the work. Staff members supporting these types of events are responsible for ensuring they have an adequate amount of change prior to the event. Typically, each witness is offered four (4) coins for their service, at the beginning and end of an event.	\$ Quarters, Loonies or Toonies (dependent upon who is leading ceremony)
Speakers (e.g., workshops/staff meetings/symposiums) This is not the same as opening/closing	Provides traditional sacred teachings, reflections, learnings, and knowledge sharing.	\$300 half day (1-4 hours) \$600 full day (4-6 hours) (Note: this may be different if the speaker has a set speaking fee)
Cultural Performance/Entertainment	Provides meaningful experience to increase awareness of cultural activities and traditional ways of being.	\$150 per dancer/ singer/drummer per event day (or set rates communicated by artists up to, \$200 per/person)
Elder Support Person	Supports Elders feeling safe when travelling to and from events and ensures their health and wellbeing.	\$250
Informal consultation/meeting	Meeting to provide advice, direction, and guidance grounded in Indigenous knowledge and ways of being.	\$200 per hour

¹ Rates include preparation time. Related expenses are not included in these rates and will be approved and reimbursed separately under this policy.

APPROVAL & PROCESSING OF HONORARIA

Approval of Honoraria

Decisions regarding honoraria must be carefully considered and approved by staff authorized to engage Indigenous individuals in providing their time or services to college work *prior* to making a commitment to pay or submitting a request for payment. Staff must also check whether the Indigenous individual will be accompanied or supported by another person(s) when attending college meetings or events, to consider if it is appropriate to provide honoraria to acknowledge their time.

The Registrar or a Chief Officer may also choose to:

- approve a gift in place of, or in addition to, an honorarium (when appropriate);
- approve a donation in place of an honorarium, if requested by the Indigenous individual;
- approve an honorarium for an Indigenous service not listed above, up to a maximum of \$250 per hour (or as approved by the Board); or
- adjust the rate for any of the Indigenous services listed above if it is meaningful or culturally appropriate to do so.

Processing Honoraria

All honoraria (or gifts, if applicable) must be prepared or processed before, or as soon as possible after, the Indigenous service is provided so it is presented to the Indigenous individual in a timely way. Requests received later than four months from the date of the Indigenous service will require approval from the Registrar or a Chief Officer before being processed.

- 1) For special or discrete Indigenous services, staff may request that cash or a cheque be placed in a sealed envelope which can be gifted to the Indigenous individual directly at the meeting or event.
- 2) Staff may request cash in advance to be gifted at ceremony or event.
- 3) For Indigenous individuals supporting the College at multiple meetings, events, over a longer term, or those who have an established relationship with BCCNM, staff may arrange in advance for Indigenous individuals to complete a form that will record their information so that direct payment can be made to their financial institutions (see also Section 6, “*Exceptions*”).

Staff must provide Finance with the following *minimum* information in order for any honorarium request to be processed:

- the name of the Indigenous individual receiving the honorarium
- the date and name of the event
- the Indigenous service provided
- the amount to be gifted
- all appropriate approvals

Depending on the circumstances, honoraria may be considered taxable as employment income by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), in which case payroll taxes will be applied and Indigenous individuals will be issued an annual T4 tax form (also see Section 6, “*Exceptions*”).

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Staff may clarify with the Indigenous individual ahead of time if they expect to incur any out-of-pocket expenses related to the Indigenous service or, if they are being accompanied by another person(s), the associated costs for them. Expenses should be reimbursed on the day of, or as soon as possible after, the Indigenous service is provided.

Evidence for Expense Claims

Acceptable evidence of an expense incurred must be provided with most expense claims.

- Supporting receipts must be provided as evidence that a person paid for the expense, unless there is a specific provision in this policy stating that receipts are not required for that type of expense.
- Expense claims missing receipts for transactions of \$25 or more must be approved by the Registrar or a Chief Officer.

Travel Expenses

Indigenous individuals may claim and be reimbursed for reasonable expenses for travel to BCCNM. The college will reimburse travel from an Indigenous individual’s place of residence to the required location. Where an Indigenous individual claims expenses for travel originating from a location other than their place of residence, a Chief Officer will review the claim to determine its reasonableness prior to reimbursement being approved.

Personal Automobile Expenses

The College will reimburse Indigenous individuals for the use of their own automobile for transportation in order to provide services to BCCNM.

Indigenous individuals may claim and be reimbursed for a per-kilometer automobile allowance, plus any ferry or toll charges, provided that:

- if there is an option to travel by air, the use of their own automobile can be shown to be less expensive than air travel,
- no other person is claiming for the same trip, using the same vehicle, and
- the expense claim provides a list of passengers in the automobile.

The reasonable allowance rate as set by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will apply and will be adjusted accordingly whenever the CRA makes an update.

Offenses such as parking violations and speeding tickets are not reimbursable expenses. However, the Registrar may authorize the reimbursement of a parking violation ticket on an exception basis.

Transportation Expenses (bus, taxi, train, car share, bike share, car rentals)

The College will reimburse Indigenous individuals for the use of reasonable transportation modes for providing services to BCCNM, such as taxis, buses and other public transit, trains (e.g., West Coast Express, VIA Rail), and car and bicycle sharing type programs.

Cars may only be rented for providing services to BCCNM when:

- travelling to a destination by air travel, and the car is rented at that destination,
- if there are other reasonable modes of transportation available, the cost of a car rental is not significantly more expensive than those other modes of transportation.

When renting a vehicle (not a car share program), loss and damage waivers deemed to be reasonable may be included in the claim and reimbursed.

Air Travel Expenses

The College will reimburse Indigenous individuals for the airfare for flights on passenger airlines taken to provide services to BCCNM. Indigenous individuals should make every effort to book air travel through the College's designated travel agent to ensure the most reasonable airfare can be found.

Indigenous individuals may claim and be reimbursed for economy non-refundable airfare for flights taken for providing services to BCCNM, including any fuel surcharges, fees for one checked bag (if no baggage allowance is included in the airfare), and seat selection fees. This does not include "premium economy" airfare, or fees for access to airport lounges.

Fees charged to reschedule a flight may be claimed and reimbursed if the reason for the rescheduling is deemed to be reasonable.

Meal vouchers purchased with airfare must be claimed as a meal expense in accordance with this policy, and not as part of the claim for airfare.

Accommodation Expenses

If an Indigenous individual is required to travel for BCCNM business, reasonable accommodation expenses based on single occupancy will be reimbursed. Exceptions or special requests will be reviewed by a Chief Officer on a case-by-case basis to determine reasonableness prior to reimbursement being approved.

Every effort should be made to book accommodation through BCCNM Staff, in conjunction with BCCNM’s designated travel agent, to ensure government or BCCNM-contracted rates are applied. Other accommodation will be considered if rates are found to be less expensive.

Indigenous individuals may claim and be reimbursed \$50 per night for staying with friends or relatives in lieu of incurring accommodation expenses when travelling to provide services to BCCNM. Supporting receipts are not required in order to claim this expense.

Meal Expenses

Indigenous individuals may claim and be reimbursed for the following meal allowances without the provision of receipts, subject to the listed requirements, when travelling within Canada for providing services to BCCNM, and if meals are not provided by a host while travelling:

Meal	Daily Allowance	Requirements
Breakfast	\$25.00	Travel must start before 7:00 am on the date of departure to claim breakfast that day.
Lunch	\$35.00	Travel must start before 12:00 pm noon on the date of departure to claim lunch that day.
Dinner	\$60.00	Travel must end after 6:00 pm on the date of return to claim dinner that day.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Indigenous individuals may claim miscellaneous expenses not provided for elsewhere in this policy subject to the prior written approval.

6. Exceptions

There may be instances when Indigenous individuals do not wish, or feel safe, to provide personal information such as their address, date of birth, social insurance number, or financial institution details to staff or BCCNM. Should this situation arise, staff must never force an Indigenous individual to provide personal information but discuss the matter with a Chief Officer or the Registrar to approve a more acceptable arrangement to honour the Indigenous individual’s time and service, and that continues to meet BCCNM’s CRA requirements.

A Social Insurance Number (SIN) may be required to issue a T4A for cumulative annual payments of more than \$500 to comply with CRA regulations. This cumulative \$500 does NOT include reimbursements for travel expenses and only includes cash, near-cash (e.g., gift certificates), or in-kind (physical) gifts.

If BCCNM includes a request for an Indigenous individual’s SIN in the documentation process, and they decide not to provide it, BCCNM is deemed to have completed its due diligence in meeting this CRA requirement (provided this is documented).

Gifts to a person with a Status Number, given in recognition for contributions made on reserve, are not subject to the same CRA requirements as those of issuing a T4A.

All exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Registrar, or a Chief Officer acting on their behalf.

7. Review

This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Finance and Audit Committee (and, if applicable, in consultation with the Governance Committee).

The Finance and Audit Committee will undertake periodic reviews of compensation rates established by other provincial organizations and will meet or exceed those rates.

8. Related Documents

- Guidelines for Working with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- UBC Indigenous Finance Guidelines: https://iap2021.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2022/02/Indigenous-Finance-Guidelines-12-10-2021_1.pdf
- Canada Revenue Agency: [Automobile allowance rates - Canada](#)

9. History

Responsible (Role)	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Next Review Date	Date Replaced or Retired	Superseded by (name of new policy)
FAC	Board	January 27, 2022	January 27, 2022	January 2023		
FAC	Board	November 30, 2023	January 1, 2024	September 2024		

10. Glossary

In this policy:

“**BCCNM**” or “**College**” means the British Columbia College of Nurses and Midwives;

“**Board**” means the board for the college under section 17(1) of the *Health Professions Act*;

“Bylaws” means the bylaws for the college made under the *Health Professions Act*;

“Chief Officer” refers to a college employee who is designated this title, reports directly to the Registrar, and balances their individual office responsibilities with the role shared with other chief officers to oversee college operations and deliver on strategic initiatives and priorities;

“Cultural Humility” is a process of self-reflection and introspection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. It involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another’s experience;

“Cultural Safety” is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the healthcare system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving health care;

“Finance and Audit Committee” refers to the specific committee established under section 25(h) of the bylaws to provide advice and recommendations to the Board on finance and risk oversight and administration matters;

“Honorarium/Honoraria” means a symbolic gift or voluntary payment given to an individual(s) for time and services for which fees are not traditionally or contractually required. In the context of this policy, honoraria are used as a gesture of appreciation for what has been received, taught, and shared in the partnership between Indigenous individuals and the College in the spirit of promoting cultural balance;

“Host Nations” refers to the BC First Nations on whose land BCCNM's offices are situated, namely the unceded territories of the hə́nqəmíḱəm speaking peoples – xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), and selíłwítulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations, and the Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh-ulh Sníchim speaking peoples - Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation);

“Indigenous individuals” means those who identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuk (i.e., the Indigenous peoples of Canada) and are known in their communities as Elder Advisors, Knowledge Keepers, Knowledge Carriers, and Facilitators. They are neither employed by the college nor contracted to provide specific services to BCCNM;

“Indigenous services” refers to the services listed in section 5 of this policy;

“Personal information” has the same meaning as in Schedule 1 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;

“Registrar” means the registrar for the college appointed under section 21(1) of the *Health Professions Act*; and

“Staff” means the officers, employees, contractors, assessors, and inspectors of the college.