



**Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative, Human Rights Domain**

**Aboriginal Ombudsman (Advocate) Development Research Project  
Phase II**

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August 2007

**Acknowledgements:**

Calgary Workers Resource Centre, Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission, Ontario Human Rights Commission, Trade Winds to Success Aboriginal Training Society, Awo Taan Aboriginal Women's Shelter Society, Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund, Alberta Children's Services Child & Youth Advocate, Native Counseling Services of Alberta Aboriginal Court Worker(s), United Way of Calgary and Area, UAS-INAC, City of Calgary FCSS, Aboriginal community members & service providers

Acknowledgement of the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund and  
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development for their support and providing funding for this project.



## BACKGROUND

*“The CUI Human Rights Domain is accountable to provide opportunities for the Aboriginal community and identified stakeholders, and to work in collaboration to address the needs of our people in Calgary. We will advocate and communicate on behalf of the Aboriginal community.”<sup>1</sup>*

The CUI Human Rights Domain touches into all other domain sectors—Education, Employment, Funding, Health, Housing, Justice, Services—however, it is also very distinct and plays a unique role on its own. In February 2005, an Open House was conducted to bring together those individuals and organizations that have a vested interest in the area of human rights. An initial focus group highlighted issues of systemic racism and discrimination as primary concerns. The *Workplace Environment* with the goal of “addressing workplace discrimination and creation of an Aboriginal Ombudsman position” was identified as a priority. This research is a direct response to this priority, in support of the creation of an Aboriginal “ombudsman,” advocate or similar position.

### PHASE I:

Phase I of research into establishing an Aboriginal ‘advocate’ or ombudsman-like position in Calgary took place March to June 2006. An initial review was conducted to establish if any such position existed that served specifically the needs of the Aboriginal population in Alberta and in Canada. This was completed with the participation of the Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission SRO, and with the Métis Settlements Ombudsman in Edmonton.

As part of this research, a preliminary Community Consultation in Calgary was conducted (location: Mount Royal College June 2006) that asked:

- What level of awareness the Aboriginal community had of the AHRCC and its processes;
- What were specific areas of concern of violations (need); and
- To determine the level of understanding by the Aboriginal community between human rights and treaty rights.

A discussion with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal was held. These were provinces that had, or were in the process of establishing, an Aboriginal Liaison within their departments. A review of the services the Alberta Ombudsman Office, Government of Alberta offers was also completed.

A Final Report of this phase was submitted to CUI in June 2006.

### PHASE II:

Phase II is now completed, formally conducted March to August, 2007 with findings and recommendations encompassed within this report. Primary objectives included the following:

1. To hear from the Aboriginal community specifically in Calgary, via a community questionnaire (needs assessment) the level of need for an advocate-position.
2. To identify possible funding sources, organizations/departments that may be able to appropriately support this position.

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<sup>1</sup> CUI Human Rights Domain Objectives.

## I. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

### Community Consultations

Four formal Community Consultations were conducted, each one targeting a specific segment of the Aboriginal community in Calgary:

- Aboriginal Service Providers
- Urban population
- Downtown Core
- Rural/Reserve

The researcher reviewed the history and findings of the previous Phase I and explained the focus of the Community Consultation. The Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission participated as presenters at two of the four Community Consultations (Rural/Reserve and Downtown Core).

Approximately 250 community questionnaires were distributed with a total of 94 being returned to the researcher.

Participants at the Aboriginal Service Providers consultation included representatives from the Child & Youth Friendly Calgary, Calgary Health Region Foothills, Aboriginal Friendship Centre Calgary, Native Counseling Services, Calgary EMS, Personal Support Development Network.

Participants at the Downtown Core consultation included the Calgary Workers' Resource Center, the AHRCC with local media coverage. A representative from the Canada Revenue Agency requested time for presentation; however was unable to attend.

Participants at the Urban population and the Rural/Reserve population attended as private citizens.

### Attendance at Community Meetings

Presentations and questionnaires were also distributed to various community organizations, meetings, conferences and online responses:

- Trade Winds to Success Training Society (Aboriginal Apprenticeship program)
- Awo Taan Parent Link Program Native Women's Shelter Society
- CUIAI Community Conference and CUIAI network
- Siksika Child & Family Services
- Aboriginal Interagency MRC
- Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth
- Calgary Workers Resource Centre
- CUIAI Services Domain Daycare

## Methodology

The Community Consultations were completed using a combination qualitative/quantitative approach, with the intent to allow participants as much flexibility as possible. Plain language was used in the wording of the questionnaire and in presentation.

In groups, questionnaires and information was collected in a semi-structured format. When necessary, the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews. Questionnaires were also distributed via email through the CUAI network. Participants were provided with twelve questions, and the researcher went through the questionnaire with participants and answered any questions participants had.

### Questionnaire

1. *Do you feel there should be an independent Aboriginal 'ombudsman' or advocate position in Calgary?*
2. *Would you go to the Aboriginal 'ombudsman' or advocate for assistance if one existed?*
3. *What authority and job description/attributes do you feel the Aboriginal advocate must have in order to be the most benefit to you?*
4. *What is your primary occupation?*
5. *Do you think this position would support the work you do in your own community?*
6. *Do you live inside/outside the Calgary boundaries?*
7. *Do you work inside/outside the Calgary boundaries?*
8. *Do you feel you have ever experienced a human rights violation?*
9. *Can you please explain in what context and what happened?*
10. *Do you identify yourself as an Aboriginal person (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)?*
11. *Are you aware of the Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission and the services it offers for human rights violations to Aboriginal people?*
12. *Do you feel the creation of an Aboriginal 'liaison' within the AHRCC would encourage you to file a human rights complaint?*

\* **Questionnaire, Participant Responses Verbatim** are found in the **APPENDIX IX**

## Respondent Profile

### *What is your primary occupation?*

Aboriginal Consultant  
Aboriginal Coordinator CMMA  
Aboriginal Mental Health Wellness worker CHR  
Aboriginal service provider  
Administrator  
Apprentice pipe fitter  
Business owner  
Calgary Police Service, public servant  
Canadian Human Rights Commission, federal employee  
Career consultant  
Career development officer  
Career practitioner

Carpenter  
Case Worker, workers' rights advocate  
Child support counselor  
Child and Youth Advocate, Children's Services  
Community social worker  
Community worker  
Correctional Worker  
Court worker  
Crisis counselor  
Dental technician  
Food service worker  
Graduate student  
Government worker  
High school student  
Housing Advocate  
Human Resources worker  
In transition  
Iron worker  
Laborer  
Manager  
Managing Editor, New Tribe magazine  
Meat cutter  
Outreach worker, front line  
Paramedic  
Police Officer, Recruiting Unit  
Political Science student, University of Calgary  
Project Assistant  
Project Manager  
Recruiter  
Sales Coordinator, major industrial company  
Single parent  
Social Policy Officer  
Social workers  
Tradesperson  
Unemployed  
Welder

## Demographics

Demographics of all participants and respondents are as follows:

*Do you identify yourself as an Aboriginal person (First nations, Métis, Inuit)?*

### Background

66%	First Nations
17%	Métis
1%	Inuit
2%	Aboriginal (not identified from which group)
12%	Not Aboriginal or Not Application to them
2%	No Response

### Age Grouping (approximate)

60% Age 18 to 30  
35% Age 31 to 55  
5% Age 55+

### *Do you LIVE inside/outside/both of the Calgary boundaries?*

#### Residence

91% Reside **inside** Calgary boundaries  
4% Reside **outside** Calgary boundaries  
5% Reside **both inside/outside** Calgary boundaries (ie on-reserve/rural)

### *Do you WORK inside/outside/both of the Calgary boundaries?*

#### Employment

79% Employed **inside** Calgary boundaries  
0% Employed **outside** Calgary boundaries  
12% Employed **both inside/outside** Calgary boundaries  
7% Unemployed or N/A (ie students/retired)  
2% No Response

## Findings

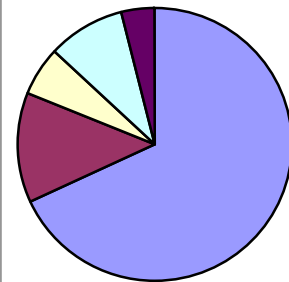
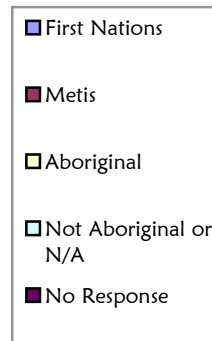
Under provincial definitions of the Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission (AHRCC), respondents provided the following information:

### *Do you feel you have ever experienced a human rights violation?*

60% Yes  
35% No  
5% No Response

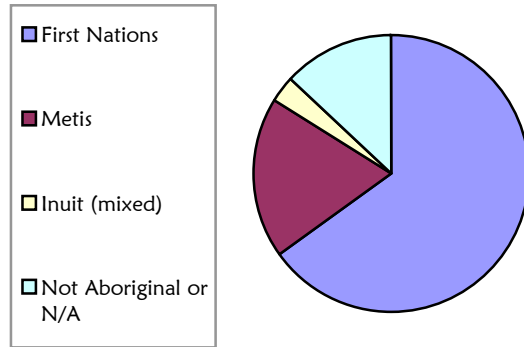
Of the 'Yes' responses:

68% First Nations  
13% Métis  
6% Aboriginal (not identified from which group)  
9% Not Aboriginal or N/A  
4% No Response



Of the ‘No’ responses:

65%	First Nations
19%	Métis
3%	Inuit (mixed)
13%	Not Aboriginal or N/A

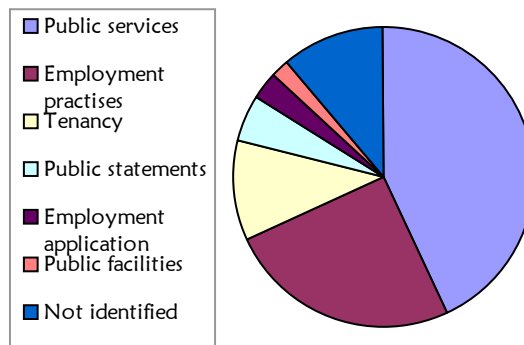


Of those who feel they have experienced a Human Rights violation, as defined by the AHRCC, the following **AREAS** and **GROUND**S were identified:

*Can you please explain in what context and what happened?*

Principle **AREAS** in which respondents felt their human rights were violated are as follows:

Public services	43%
Employment practices	25%
Tenancy	11%
Public statements	5%
Employment application	3%
Public facilities	2%
Anonymous (not identified)	11%

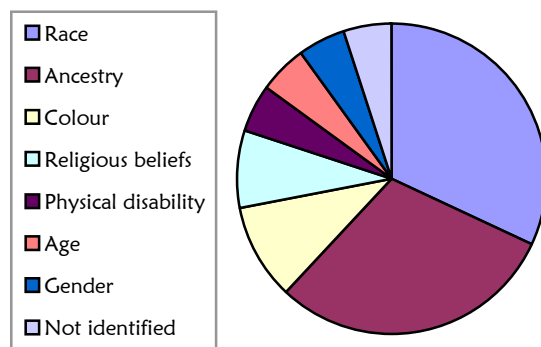


Within each of these Areas, principle **GROUND**S on which respondents felt their human rights were violated are as follows:

(ie Area of “Public Services” on the Grounds of “Race, Ancestry, Colour, Religious Beliefs, etc).

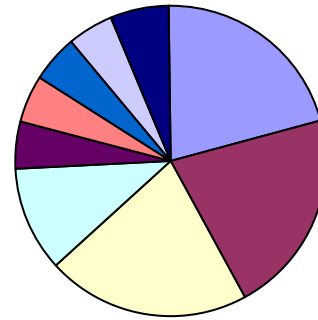
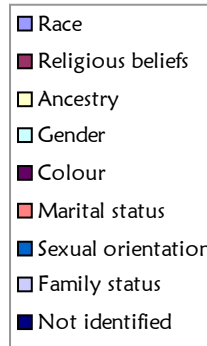
**Public Services**

- Race 32%
- Ancestry 30%
- Colour 10%
- Religious beliefs 8%
- Physical disability 5%
- Age 5%
- Gender 5%
- Not identified 5%



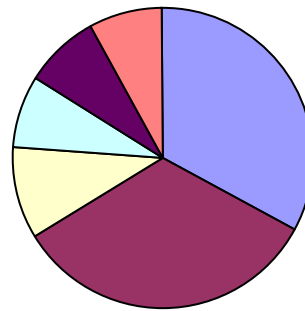
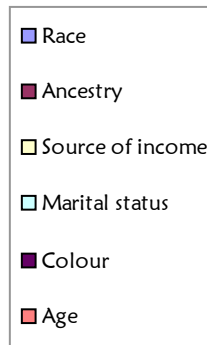
**Employment Practices**

- Race 21%
- Religious beliefs 21%
- Ancestry 21%
- Gender 11%
- Colour 5%
- Marital status 5%
- Sexual orientation 5%
- Family status 5%
- Not identified 6%



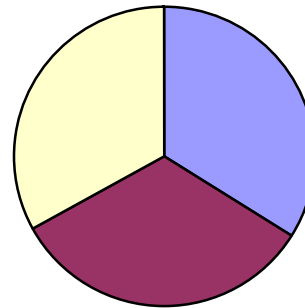
**Tenancy (Housing)**

- Race 33%
- Ancestry 33%
- Source of income 10%
- Marital status 8%
- Color 8%
- Age 8%



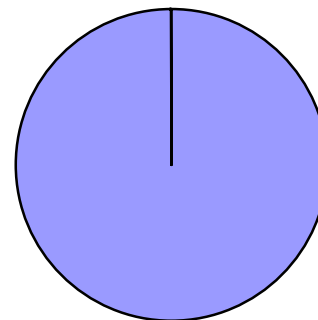
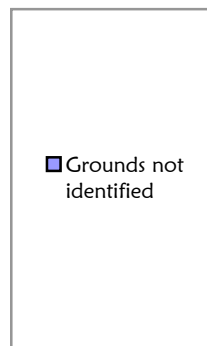
**Public Statements**

- Race 34%
- Ancestry 33%
- Colour 33%



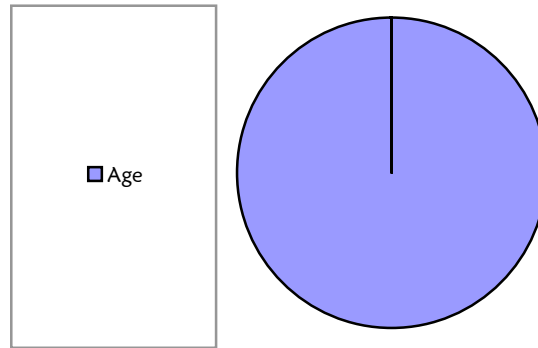
**Employment Applications**

- Grounds not identified



**Public Facilities**

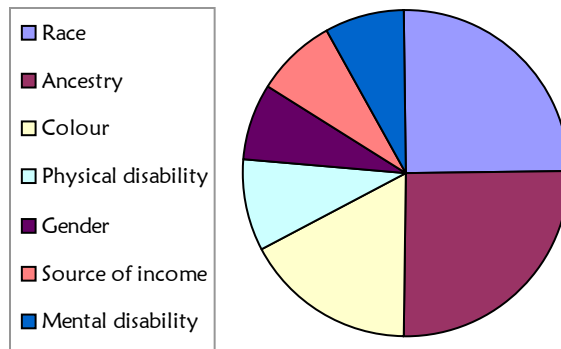
- Age 100%



**Anonymous**

(identified Grounds but not Area)

- Race 25%
- Ancestry 25%
- Colour 17%
- Physical Disability 9%
- Gender 8%
- Source of Income 8%
- Mental Disability 8%



Participants were asked if they felt there was a need for an Aboriginal advocate in Calgary, as it related to personal experiences and professional placement.

***Do you feel there is need for creation of an independent Aboriginal ‘ombudsman’ or advocate-like position in Alberta?***

*Note: researcher also asked this question specifically in regards to Calgary.*

Participants provided the following response:

- Yes 100%
- No 0%

All respondents felt there was a need for an Aboriginal advocate or ombudsman within Calgary, and there were specific suggestions as to the creation of this position provided:

- Some respondents felt there was a need for both ‘ombudsman’ and a ‘liaison’ with the understanding the each position served a different purpose.
- The term “advocate” denotes *action* and much more involvement on behalf of person victimized; the term “liaison” denotes more of a *linking role*, therefore less involvement for the person victimized.
- There was a concern an ‘Aboriginal Ombudsman’ could be restricted by legislative authority.

**Would you go to the Aboriginal ‘ombudsman’ or advocate for assistance if one existed?**

Participants provided the following response:

Yes	86%
No	9%
No Response	5%

Of the responses provided, some participants provided reasons why they answered as they did:

- Collectively, reasons for *Yes*, *No* and *No Response* were along the lines of “not Aboriginal [myself], but would direct clients there” and “if I were Aboriginal, ‘yes’ [would go to the advocate].”

Respondents were also asked if an Aboriginal ‘ombudsman’ or advocate could enhance or support the services they provided to the community:

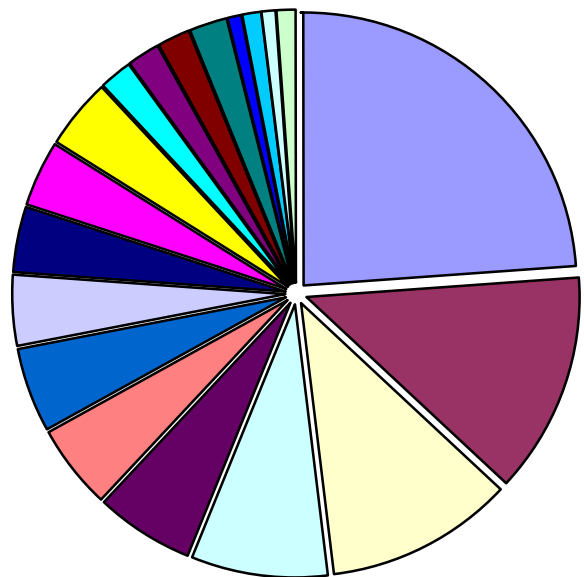
**Do you feel this position would support the services or work you do in your own organization, department or community?**

Participants provided the following responses:

Yes	84%
No	5%
Maybe	4%
No Response	7%

- Of the ‘Yes’ responses, it was in the following **areas/sectors** that respondents felt an advocate position could support them:

Community service	24%
Education	13%
Employment	11%
Social work	8%
Justice	6%
Liaison activity	5%
Advocacy	5%
Child welfare	4%
Housing	4%
Youth	4%
Administration (management)	4%
Elder care	2%
Disabled/multiple barriers	2%
Emergency services/Crisis care	2%
Training	2%
Health	1%
Industry	1%
Social welfare	1%
Media	1%



*“Education” is used in the sense of making the community, organizations, service providers, etc aware of human rights, and educating in terms of responsibilities, violations, legislation and cultural awareness, amongst others.*

- Of the ‘**No**’ response, the respondent was an employee of the Canadian Human Rights Commission (federal) and therefore felt an advocate position could not support/enhance his responsibilities.
- Of the ‘**Maybe**’ response, the respondent was not sure if he/she would actively seek the assistance of an Aboriginal advocate; however would like to see one made available, if needed.

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Participants were asked as to what **AUTHORITY** and **ATTRIBUTES** they felt the Aboriginal ombudsman or advocate should have in order to be most effective for the community.

***What authority and attributes do you feel this position must have to be of most benefit to the Aboriginal community?***

**Two key points** were raised consistently throughout the consultations:

- 1) 99% of respondents feel this ombudsman or advocate must be an Aboriginal person. Of the 1% who did not feel this is requisite, a strong understanding and knowledge of past and current issues [of the Aboriginal community] is essential.
- 2) Participants felt this position must establish **continuity** (continued presence) within the community, in order to be effective over the long term.

**Eight key points** were put forth in terms of **AUTHORITY**:

1. Authority and/or mandate given by provincial government, allowing position to be equal to comparable positions such as the Alberta Ombudsman or Métis Ombudsman.
2. Authority from federal government in order to be able to deal with on-reserve issues.
3. No provincial or federal impositions of jurisdiction.
4. Be provided with authority to effectively deal with landlords, tenants, health care providers, etc.
5. Authority to hear/act on complaints against government programs/policy.
6. Authority to make decisions; administrative power.
7. Authority to investigate and make recommendations on issues/claims specific to Aboriginal people.
8. Ability and authority to work independently within the community.
9. Relevant waiver(s) and liability insurance must be considered.

**Key points** were put forth in terms of **ATTRIBUTES**:

**Professional/Academic background qualifications and/or experience:**

1. Basic background in law and the legal/court system should be required.
2. Some background in court, justice, social and human resource background.
3. Some training related to information gathering and the interview process.
4. Must possess an understanding of Case Law.
5. Teaching and advocacy skills.
6. Knowledge of environmental law.
7. Education and/or experience in counseling, negotiations and business management.

8. People management background.
9. Must be educated, professional and supported by AHRCC.
10. Possess background and experience in media.
11. Should have public education experience.
12. Should have a university degree.
13. Previous experience, possibly in field of human rights, labor laws, social work or similar.

**Placement within the community:**

1. Must be autonomous with no perceived or actual ties to community agencies, especially social or political structures.
2. Must not be required to report directly to any of surrounding First Nations, nor the Métis Nation.
3. Advocate may occupy rental space in proximity of other Aboriginal service agencies, but not receive their pay from said agencies.

**Knowledge/Experience specific to the Aboriginal community:**

1. Knowledge of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal customs, worldview and expectations.
2. Historical, sociological and/or community development awareness of specific Aboriginal communities.
3. Knowledge of Indian Act, First Nations history and culture.
4. Extensive experience working with Aboriginal people, clients, community.
5. Clear understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal traditions, protocol.
6. Experience in providing culturally appropriate outreach to the Aboriginal community.
7. Knowledge of on and off reserve rights and implications.
8. Knowledge of common barriers and issues Aboriginal people face in regards to housing, obtaining health services, lawyers, etc.
9. Sound understanding of current Aboriginal issues (ie poverty, family violence, child welfare).

**Personal attributes:**

1. Known in community to not gossip or take sides.
2. Proven track record of being 'un-biased' throughout their career;
3. Possess excellent people skills.
4. Must be objective and fair.
5. Have street sense.
6. A grass roots person.
7. Strong presence when around others; ability to work with assertiveness and conviction.
8. Ability to speak an Aboriginal language.
9. Must have strong ties with Aboriginal communities around Calgary.
10. Must be strong at working alone and with others in the community.

**Specific job skills:**

1. Strong mediation/conflict resolution skills.
2. Strong listening skills.
3. Culturally competent.
4. Excellent consultation and facilitation skills.
5. Research skills essential.
6. Possess personal integrity and professional accountability.
7. Ability and experience in establishing partnerships.

**Knowledge of human rights and legislation relating to Aboriginal community:**

1. Not necessary to have a law background but to have a solid understanding of human rights legislation in Alberta.

2. Knowledge of AHRCC and their processes.
3. Knowledge of Constitution [federal, provincial].
4. Knowledge and understanding of policy and legislation relevant to Aboriginal people.
5. Knowledge of and authority to liaise between provincial and federal jurisdictions, jurisdictional awareness (ie rural, urban, reserve).
6. Knowledge of human rights versus treaty rights.

**Specific attributes of the position itself:**

1. Easy accessibility.
2. Provide one on one advocacy, as well as providing systemic advocacy.
3. As much in-house services as possible should be developed.
4. Mobile, active within the community (on and off reserve best for continuity).
5. Independent from government.
6. Provide education, awareness and liaison activities.
7. Educate Aboriginal people about what human rights violation truly looks like.
8. Educate wider corporations and community about specifics human rights & Aboriginal people.
9. Five year term maximum.
10. Guaranteed confidentiality.
11. Transparent.
12. Appointment (Premier).
13. Aboriginal, chosen by Aboriginal people.
14. Person/position must have security clearance.
15. Establish a form of monitoring to ensure advocate does not overstep authority.

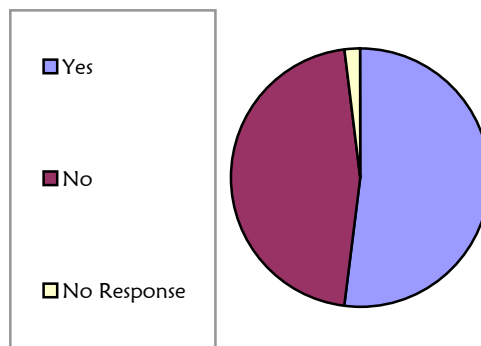
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## Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission (AHRCC)

Respondents were asked two questions relating specifically to the **Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission (AHRCC)**.

*Are you aware of the Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission and the services it offers for human rights violations to Aboriginal people?*

Yes	52%
No	46%
No Response	2%

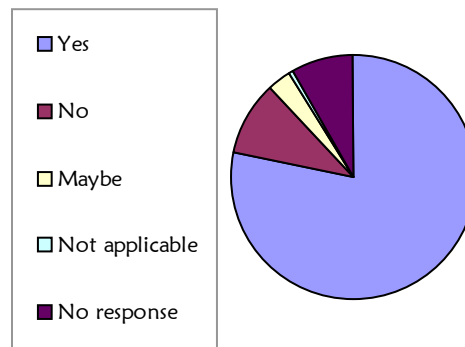


**Key points** in response to this question are as follows (encapsulated):

- Respondents were divided almost evenly in terms of awareness of the AHRCC and what is available to the Aboriginal community (and all of Albertans).
  - It must be noted that, of the 52% who were aware of the AHRCC, less than one-quarter (approximately) understood the processes, where to go or how to begin a formal complaint.
- Of the ‘No’ respondents, some felt had they known of the AHRCC, they would have called for help, guidance or brought forth a complaint.
- Most responded positively to the fact that AHRCC is willing to provide educational workshops to the community.
  - It was voiced consistently that an Aboriginal person would be most effective in establishing a positive relationship with the community at large.
- More education and awareness were main areas that people wanted to see out in the community.

***Do you felt the creation of an “Aboriginal liaison” within the AHRCC would encourage you to file a human rights complaint?***

Yes	78%
No	10%
Maybe	3%
Not Applicable	1%
No Response	8%



**Key points** in response to this question are as follows (encapsulated):

- Most felt an Aboriginal officer or liaison within the AHRCC would encourage them to, at least, contact the AHRCC for guidance; most felt it would make the process easier.
- Service providers voiced the observation that, despite being informed of the AHRCC, [clients] are not able or uncomfortable with bringing attention to their needs/rights.
  - Felt it would help them in referring clients to AHRCC if an Aboriginal liaison was made available; it would encourage a greater perceived accessibility by community members.
  - Felt an Aboriginal officer or liaison must be actively present and visible within the community to be of greatest benefit, to both the AHRCC and the Aboriginal population.
- Huge gap by people in understanding how various systems work; this is not exclusive to the AHRCC but all government/institutions (ie Children’s Services, AHRCC, CHR, Justice).
  - Recommend Aboriginal liaison within AHRCC could provide education as to human rights within these systems.
- Establishment of a parallel position within AHRCC would encourage greater visibility and presence within Aboriginal community.
  - Recommend Aboriginal liaison to work in partnership with Aboriginal advocate to reach *all* facets of the Aboriginal community (advocate not necessarily restricted by bureaucracy).
- In terms of placing an advocate inside or outside the AHRCC, most felt they would be more comfortable in dealing with an Aboriginal advocate, instead of another government body.
  - These “levels of comfort” were distinctly divided between service providers and those comfortable with working/dealing with government, and the general Aboriginal community.

- Of those who answered ‘No’, it was because respondents themselves were not Aboriginal but would encourage use of this type of service.

## Community Consultation Discussion Points

In addition to the content provided by respondents to the Questionnaire, recommendations and concerns were provided through discussion and conversation at Community Consultations, community meetings and individual interviews:

### Community Consultation, Urban

1. Advocate to help with follow-up of a complaint or issue, as well as assisting an individual through the complaint process.
2. Make information concrete/tangible where people can take it with them.
3. Develop a targeted educational campaign to employers and potential employers in Calgary.
4. Develop a “regular” slot within Aboriginal media (ie APTN, New Tribe, Aboriginal Business, Windspeaker, Sweetgrass, E-newsletters, Métis Matters) and other avenues (City of Calgary ‘Lunch and Learn’ series) regarding human rights and the Aboriginal community.
5. Develop an ‘information center’ on human rights and Aboriginal people (ie advocate’s office) and work to have that known in the community (second nature).
6. Have services available in Cree, Blackfoot languages to allow a greater presence and acceptance by community members.

### Community Consultation, Service Providers

1. Advocate must be able to address issues such as the “revolving door court system” and how to reduce the smaller cases instead of sending people into the justice system.
  - Develop a mediation process similar to Manitoba and Saskatchewan that uses talking/sentencing circles.
2. Court worker—Aboriginal street people make complaints to the various systems of violations but nothing is ever done on their behalf. Advocate must be able to address and/or educate systemic racism.
3. Advocate must be able to work across jurisdictional boundaries (federal, provincial, municipal, institutional).
4. Avenues to “get the word out” to Aboriginal people about human rights:
  - Aboriginal human rights publication.
  - City of Calgary Aboriginal Human Rights Day.
  - Development of annual conference & workshops/gathering around human rights (possible partnership John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights).
  - Develop a training program for Aboriginal facilitators to ‘get the word’ to clients.
  - Advertising campaign, poster ads on C-Train, public transit, taxis, etc.
  - Work within the school systems to educate youth about human rights.
5. Suggestions for position qualifications:
  - Individual must have minimum Masters degree in Administrative Law, Social Work, Education, or other human-oriented fields, to build credibility in non-Native institutions, government.
    - Individual must also possess a grass-roots approach to work effectively with community members.
    - Term ‘grass-roots’ does not necessarily imply a strong ‘traditional’ background.
  - Team format required, that is, a male/female balance (if possible).

6. Strong education component developed targeting Aboriginal organizations to address the ‘reverse discrimination’ that exists in the community.
7. Develop education/awareness campaigns that target specific institutions that deal with Aboriginal people within the systems; this includes Crown Prosecutor’s Office, Calgary EMS, Calgary Police Service, Calgary Health Region, Calgary Fire Department, Alberta Teacher Association, Legal Aid Society, Child & Family Services, Calgary Young Offenders, AISH, Welfare.

### **Community Consultation, Downtown Core**

1. CWRC—recommends that Advocate can help people ‘sort out’ their facts and specific information before filing a formal complaint.
  - Educate people about what is ‘reasonable’ and assist them in interpreting what is a human rights violation.
  - Advocate services can include assisting people in actually writing out their complaint; cultural interpretation may be necessary.
2. Aboriginal advocate within the AHRCC seen as a positive point of contact to making the bureaucracy easier.
3. Aboriginal advocate can deal with the ‘day-to-day’ human rights issues, and through partnership with various agencies (ie AHRCC, CWRC, Children’s Services, etc), guide people through relevant channels along the way.
4. Advocate established as a first point of call in support, information and advice.
  - Noted in similar advocacy programs, the number of experiences shared with this first point of call differs from the actual numbers formal organization (ie AHRCC) receives.
5. Essential this individual is capable of working with the larger Aboriginal community, such as Tsuu T’ina, Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, Stoney.
6. Reality is that advocacy organizations can act only if an actual complaint is filed; Aboriginal advocate should educate Aboriginal community to this fact.
7. Approach of advocacy education important. Many Aboriginal people have the attitude “nothing is going to come of it [complaint]” and “it may lead to bigger problems.”

### **Community Consultation, Rural & CUI Conference**

1. Establish a continued presence within Aboriginal community plus a consistency of officers.
2. Establish a system of evaluation and accountability not just funding bodies but to the community as well (ie review board).
3. Focus on establishing Advocate within Calgary boundaries then build partnerships with surrounding reserves.
  - Ensure service is advocacy first, policy second.
4. Advocate needs to recognize the different processes involved with dealing with federal, provincial and municipal bodies, as well as working with Aboriginal organizations, communities, and individuals.
5. Non-political, unbiased and professional independence absolutely essential in order to build trust.
6. Huge gap in understanding by people in how various systems work (ie Children’s Services, AHRCC, CHR, Justice); Advocate should develop educational series.
7. Accessibility always an issue; establish physical location that is easy to get to plus enable Advocate to provide outreach services.
8. Advocate must establish networks and effective communication with reserve, rural communities.
  - 75% of urban Aboriginal people are from reserves.

## Working Relationships

- 1) Respondents were asked, if the advocate position had to be housed within an organization, which ones they would recommend. Consistently, the **Native Counseling Services of Alberta (NCSA)** was recommended, in recognition of their long presence within the Aboriginal community and their focus on developing programs that assist/support community members. In addition, the Manager for the Urban Aboriginal Strategy-INAC recommended the NCSA as a viable location. An initial discussion by the researcher with the Aboriginal Court Worker of NCSA Calgary indicated a willingness on the part of NCSA to consider this option.
- 2) The **Calgary Workers Resource Centre (CWRC)** has offered to work in partnership with the Aboriginal advocate, when established. The CWRC provides support to workers in areas of employment, human rights violations, information/support, workshops and referrals.
- 3) The **Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission** has indicated a willingness to work in partnership with the Aboriginal advocate, in addition to possibly developing their own Aboriginal liaison position within the AHRCC.
- 4) Collectively, the majority of Aboriginal service providers indicated a willingness to work in partnership with the Aboriginal advocate when the mandate, authority and location of the position is established.
- 5) From this Phase II of research, AHRCC Communications Officer and the CUAI Human Rights Domain researcher worked together to develop an '**Aboriginal Human Rights**' publication (see **APPENDIX X**) that the Aboriginal advocate may continue to develop as part of an education/awareness campaign. Initial printing of 250 was distributed within weeks, and a second printing by the AHRCC was completed in August.

The **Aboriginal Human Rights Commission** (housed within IAAW) also participated in the development of this publication, giving their consent to be listed as a resource for the Aboriginal community-at-large.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Fully 100% of respondents felt there was a need for an Aboriginal advocate or ombudsman-like position to be established and available for the Calgary Aboriginal community and surrounding areas.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS** that emerged from the information collected are as follows:

**Two key recommendations** were raised consistently throughout the consultations:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Advocate employed must be an **Aboriginal** person.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Position developed must establish **continuity**—that is, a continued presence—within the community in order to be effective over the long term.

### Aboriginal Community:

- Recommendation 1: Common to majority of community members is they wanted information on where to go to find out if they had grounds to file a human rights complaint against their employer/landlord, etc, AND if there was someone available to explain or guide them through the process(es); recommend these key elements be integrated into position.
- Recommendation 2: Must have authority to investigate and act on complaints made by community members.
- Recommendation 3: Must be easily accessible, visible and mobile; recommend office is established in a physical location easy to get to, plus enable advocate to provide outreach services.
- Recommendation 4: Have services available in Blackfoot, Cree.
- Recommendation 5: Person employed must be known to be fair, objective, committed and known to produce tangible results.

### Aboriginal Service Providers:

- Recommendation 1: Majority indicated they would use the services of an Aboriginal advocate, referring clients AND in accessing educational or awareness workshops to their clients and/or employers; recommend advocate be active in establishing these networks or partnerships (outreach).
- Recommendation 2: Advocacy organizations can act only if an actual complaint is filed; recommended this reality must be kept in mind when establishing parameters and definitions of job description (position description should not be restricted to ‘advocacy’ only).

- Recommendation 3: Advocate position should be established as a first point of call with regards to dissemination of information and support, with a strong educational component integrated; recommend as much 'in-house' services be available in one location as possible.
- Recommendation 4: Approach of advocacy services and education is important; must be culturally relevant as well as practical to situation.

#### **Authority and Attributes:**

- Recommendation 1: Essential this position be established outside of any bureaucracy, institution or system; the advocate must be able to work independently with no perceived or actual ties to community agencies, departments, social or political structures (autonomous).
- Recommendation 2: Person employed should have, at minimum, a university degree (Masters preferred); recommended in Case Law, Administrative Law or Social Work, with strong research and mediation skills.
- Recommendation 3: Must possess demonstrated and extensive experience in working with Aboriginal community with strong understanding of current Aboriginal issues and challenges.
- Recommendation 4: A strong educational component of human rights must be incorporated, targeting Aboriginal organizations/community ('reverse discrimination') as well as non-Native community/organizations.

#### **Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission:**

- Recommendation 1: Establish a parallel 'Aboriginal liaison' position within the AHRCC to work in partnership with the Aboriginal advocate (two separate positions).
- Goal: This approach reaches those who come to the AHRCC on their own, as well as those who access the services of the Aboriginal advocate and may require the provision of legislated authority.
- Goal: Working in partnership with Aboriginal advocate creates a greater visibility and trust of the AHRCC, better reaching the Aboriginal community.
- Recommendation 2: Recommended that education and awareness, as well as liaison activities, be incorporated into liaison position.

## Working Committee

It was recommended throughout the consultation process that a relevant Working Committee be established to support the development of an Aboriginal advocate within Calgary. This Committee must comprise of recognized members from the Aboriginal community, in a professional and personal capacity. The CUIAI Human Rights Domain will provide potential Committee members with the recommendations emerging from this community assessment to help develop a comprehensive strategy plan to move forward.

It was recommended this Committee be comprised on no more than four to six members.

Potential committee members, as put forth by recommendations from community members and/or service providers include:

- Pat Loyer
- Louise Crane
- Sharon Small Goulet, City of Calgary
- Xavier Cattarinich, CWRC
- Yvonne Meunier, PSDN
- Emily Delver, NCSA
- Berle Kootenay
- Victoria Crowchild
- Doreen Spence
- Member of the Métis community

## Concluding Remarks

Overwhelmingly, respondents—Native and non-Native alike, professionals, service providers, academics, government and community members—indicated they felt there was a gap in advocacy and education of human rights to Aboriginal people in Calgary. Education and awareness were two main themes that appeared consistently, along with advocacy services. People wanted information on where to go, who to contact, what processes may be involved, and if there was someone there to help them through the various systems.

Primary Areas of human rights violations towards Aboriginal people were in Public Services (43%), Employment (25%) and Tenancy (11%), consistent on the Grounds of Race and Ancestry common to all three with Religious Beliefs listed as a third in Employment.

While this community assessment revealed the areas and grounds in which people were experiencing human rights violations, it also showed that community members want an independent, committed, continuous (long term) and fully competent advocate put in place with authority to effectively assist individuals and to provide education about human rights. Concomitant to this, it was felt this advocate must be an Aboriginal person with demonstrated, results-driven experience in working within the community, and within government/ institutional/ organizational settings.

It was felt that a greater visible and active presence of the AHRCC within the community would build trust and awareness. Already, with this Phase II of research, an initial working relationship with the AHRCC has been established, a small step benefiting the community. A parallel ‘Aboriginal Liaison’

installed within the AHRCC, and working in partnership with an Aboriginal advocate established outside the government, would serve to reach all segments of the Aboriginal community more inclusively.

As much as possible, this phase of research fulfilled the following objectives, as listed in the original funding support from the AHRCC and Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development:

- ✓ Four community consultations completed with recommendations provided.
- ✓ Main objective: completed community assessment to guide further development.
- ✓ Initial partnerships and working relationships established, as listed.
- ✓ Engagement of existing or similar programs (ie CWRC, ACS Child & Youth Advocate, MSO, OHRC Communications).
- ✓ Increased awareness and education to the Aboriginal community about the AHRCC, and the possibility of an Aboriginal advocate/facilitator being established.
- ✓ Action plan: recommended that a Working Committee be formed by the CUAI Human Rights Domain and, drawing on the recommendations that emerged in this community assessment, Committee to develop a comprehensive strategy plan to continue the development and installation of an Aboriginal advocate in Calgary.
- ✓ Possible funding sources are identified within this report (Section III) with applications and criteria attached, where possible.

In developing a comprehensive strategy plan, the Working Committee, and later the Aboriginal advocate, may identify and interpret any implicated by-law, legislated legality and policy structure, as put forth by AAND. This assessment did not do this, as it was not in the listed objectives.

It is recommended that, to better reach the Aboriginal community in the future, formal consultations are not always necessary. Until the Aboriginal community becomes more knowledgeable and aware about human rights and what support is available, overall attendance will remain selective. Responses and information collected by the researcher was equaled, and in some instances made greater, by attending and presenting at already established organization meetings, conferences and informal gatherings.

### III. FUNDING SOURCES

Possible funding sources were identified through discussion with government and organization officials, community resource workers and community members. From these initial suggestions, the researcher reviewed and contacted the various funding programs to discuss how it may appropriate to this project.

Criteria and application forms may found at the end of this report in **Appendices**.

Three primary sources of funding were identified:

1. Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission, Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Grant Program 2007-08
2. United Way, Community Impact Funds
3. Alberta Lotteries, Community Initiatives Program Grant

Several other possible funding programs were also identified:

- United Way, Capacity Building Grant
- Alberta Law Foundation, Project Grant and Operating Grant
- Public Safety Canada, National Crime Prevention Strategy, Research & Knowledge Development Fund and Crime Prevention Action Fund
- Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, AB Community Crime Prevention Grant Program
- Alberta Children's Services, Community Incentive Fund

CUAI continues to conduct the Collaborative Granting Process, Urban Aboriginal Strategy INAC, a venue that may identify further funding sources in upcoming cycles. Also, CUIAI Human Rights Domain will explore further funding through the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations, Government of Alberta.

#### Primary Funding Sources, Program Summaries

<b>1. Alberta Human Rights &amp; Citizenship Commission, Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Grant Program 2007-08</b>
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APPENDIX (*attached*):

- Grant Criteria and Application
- Pathways to Change: Facilitating Full Participation of Diversity Groups in Canadian Society—Background Document

Deadlines: October 1 and May 1

Contact: Susan Coombs  
AHRCC SRO Education Fund Coordinator  
Room 310, 525-11 Avenue SW  
Calgary AB T2R 0C9  
Phone 403/ 297-2768 Fax 403/ 297-6567  
[susan.coombes@gov.ab.ca](mailto:susan.coombes@gov.ab.ca)  
[www.cd.gov.ab.ca](http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca)  
[www.albertahumanrights.com](http://www.albertahumanrights.com)

Review of AHRCC Program Grant with Education Fund Coordinator:

- No ‘advocacy’ or ‘liaison’ will be funded; **re-name** position title.
- Proposal must identify need and outcomes.
  - Education of human rights must be a priority.
- Ensure to write position job description to **actively** provide a service; however no **direct** client services allowed.
- Identify how this position will benefit/enhance the AHRCC and the Aboriginal community.
- Recommendation: a parallel position within the AHRCC may be established; fee-for-contract.
  - *Discuss this further with Education Fund Coordinator.*
- Deadlines October 1 and May 1.
- Grants may run concurrently if there is no overdue reporting requirement(s).
- No grant limits; may apply for up to 50% of overall project costs.
- No multi-year funding available; however possible up to three year “project funding.”
  - Education Fund Coordinator recommends application for one-year funding to work out the ‘kinks,’; followed the next year with an application for two-year funding based on outcomes of one-year progress.
  - Must provide an Evaluation component.
- Proposal must be “progressive” in nature; progressive mandate, that is Phase I, Phase II, etc.
  - CUAI Human Rights Domain already completing this with phase-based research into establishing position.
  - Framing of application crucial; AHRCC objective is to effect **change** over time (progressive mandate); Education Fund Advisory Committee will make funding recommendations based on how effectively the project produces change.
  - Clear and realistic outcomes.
  - “Awareness” by itself a low priority.
- If necessary, pro-rate items on proposal.
  - Items such as “Administration Fee” require some breakdown.
- Average grant awarded \$20 000-\$25 000.
  - Approximately 12 weeks (3 months) from application deadline to funding received.
- CUAI Human Rights Domain Chair must contact Education Fund Coordinator **first** to discuss proposal development.
  - AHRCC supports project-to-date.
  - Proposal to include thirteen questions that must be addressed; Education Fund Coordinator to review/provide these in consultation plus appropriate budget.

<b>2. United Way, Community Impact Funds</b>
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APPENDIX (*attached*):

- United Way Partnering for Community Impact, Open Call for 2007 Community Impact Funds—*for reference only*

Deadline: Deadline for 2007 has passed; next deadline tentatively Spring 2008 (May).

Contact: Joanne Pinnow  
United Way of Calgary and Area  
Community Investment Specialist

600, 1202 Centre Street SE  
Calgary AB T2G 5A5  
Phone 403/ 231-2608 Fax 403/ 266-1271  
[joanne.pinnow@calgaryunitedway.org](mailto:joanne.pinnow@calgaryunitedway.org)  
[www.calgaryunitedway.org](http://www.calgaryunitedway.org)

Review of Community Impact Funds program with Community Investment Specialist:

- Community Impact Funds program is a new model of funding intended to address larger systemic issues;
  - Program will support projects/groups that do systems reform, changes to long term policy, etc.
- CIF program will fund operating costs (ie building, office, salary, etc).
- Proposal may be for program or project funding.
- Sustainable funding available:
  - After first year, program will be reviewed, then recommended for further funding.
  - Application must be received each year.
- CUAI Human Rights Domain must be aware that many more applications are received than approved, less than 10%;
  - Important to contact Community Investment Specialist to review application process and updated criteria/information.

### **3. Alberta Lotteries, Community Initiatives Program Grant**

APPENDIX (*attached*):

- Grant Criteria and Application

Deadline: Applications are reviewed and processed throughout the year

Contact: Community Initiatives Program  
50 Corriveau Avenue  
St. Albert AB T8N 3T5  
Phone 800/ 642-3855  
[www.albertalotteryfund.ca](http://www.albertalotteryfund.ca)

Review of Alberta Lotteries, Community Initiatives Program (CIP):

- Provides one-time support to enhance project-based community initiatives; funding based on local needs and priorities.
- Registered community not-for-profit groups, First Nations/Métis Settlements, Social Services eligible to apply; if organization is not registered, may have a sponsor apply on their behalf.
- Supports project-based initiatives in community services, education, health, social services, senior's services.
- Maximum CIP grant \$75 000 per project per fiscal year.
- Only one CIP application can be submitted for a project; applicant may not receive funding from another lottery-funded program or foundation for the same project in the same fiscal year.
- Funding approved on a matching basis;
  - Up to \$10 000 will be considered on a non-matching basis, if approved.

## Other Possible Funding Sources, Program Summaries

### United Way, Community Impact Strategy—Capacity Building Grant

APPENDIX (*attached*):

- Capacity Building Funds—*attached (for reference only)*

Deadline: Deadline for 2007 has passed; next deadline tentatively Spring 2008.

Contact: Joanne Pinnow  
United Way of Calgary and Area  
Community Investment Specialist  
600, 1202 Centre Street SE  
Calgary AB T2G 5A5  
Phone 403/ 231-2608 Fax 403/ 266-1271  
[joanne.pinnow@calgaryunitedway.org](mailto:joanne.pinnow@calgaryunitedway.org)  
[www.calgaryunitedway.org](http://www.calgaryunitedway.org)

Review of Capacity Building Grant program with Community Investment Specialist:

- Available only to those organizations who currently receive funding and intended to strengthen the overall capacity of non-profit organizations and community.
  - Recommended: if Aboriginal advocate can receive support first year under operating funds, may then be eligible for Capacity Building Funds.
- One-time funding available \$1000 to \$ 25000.
- Criteria narrowed to Community Impact Model (*see website*).
  - Salaries not funded; development of business plans, staff & board training eligible; consultant & contract fees eligible.
- Important to contact Community Investment Specialist to review application process and updated criteria/information.

### Alberta Law Foundation

The Alberta Law Foundation currently provides support to the Calgary Worker's Resource Centre in their advocacy services; three-year funding.

APPENDIX (*attached*):

- Project Grant Application
- Operating Grant Application

Deadlines: Applicants are to contact Executive Director

Contact(s): Alberta Law Foundation  
#300, 407–8 Avenue SW  
Calgary AB T2P 1E5  
Phone 403/ 264-4701

Fax 403/ 294-9238  
[www.albertalawfoundation.org](http://www.albertalawfoundation.org)

Review of Alberta Law Foundation Project Grant and Operating Grant:

- Objectives include, among others, providing assistance to legal education and knowledge, and providing programs and facilities for those programs.
- Funding is provided on a yearly basis.

<b>National Crime Prevention Strategy, Public Safety Canada</b>
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APPENDIX (*information attached*):

- Research and Knowledge Development Fund (NCPS)
- Crime Prevention Action Fund (NCPS)

Deadlines: Research and Knowledge Development Fund  
Crime Prevention Action Fund

➤ Call for Proposals posted on website—*information attached*

Contact: National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS)

Information on Funding Programs

Joint Management Committee

Public Safety Canada

2525 Laurier Blvd, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Saint-Laurent Tower

Sainte-Foy, QC G1V 2L2

Phone 877 / 324-1190

[altabox@ps.gc.ca](mailto:altabox@ps.gc.ca)

[http://publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/cp/ncps\\_fundsindex-en.asp](http://publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/cp/ncps_fundsindex-en.asp)

Review of **Public Safety Canada, National Crime Prevention Strategy** funding:

Research and Knowledge Development Fund

- Available for demonstration projects, evaluations, research activities and knowledge transfer initiatives, especially in Aboriginal communities.

Crime Prevention Action Fund

- Crime Prevention Action Fund (CPAF) provides time-limited grant and contribution funding that support community initiatives.
- Priority is given to projects that focus on individuals/groups with multiple risk factors with capacity building support provided, especially in Aboriginal communities.

<b>Alberta Solicitor General and Public Safety</b>
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APPENDIX (*information attached*):

- Alberta Community Crime Prevention Grant Program (ACCP)

Deadlines: Alberta Community Crime Prevention Grant Program—2007 deadline passed.  
Application attached, for reference only

Contact(s): Crime Prevention and Restorative Justice Programs (ACCP)  
Policing and Community Safety Branch  
Public Security Division  
Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor North, John E. Brownlee Bldg  
10365-97 Street  
Edmonton AB T5J 3W7  
Phone 780/ 427-3457  
[www.crimeprevention.gov.ab.ca](http://www.crimeprevention.gov.ab.ca)

Review of **Alberta Solicitor General & Public Security** funding:

Alberta Community Crime Prevention Grant Program

- ACCP component of Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security Crime Prevention Strategy.
- Program provides support to communities in delivering crime prevention through social development initiatives and social support mechanisms.

<b>Alberta Children's Services</b>
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APPENDIX (*information attached*):

- Community Incentive Fund (CIF)

Deadlines: Contact Regional Prevention of Family Violence Coordinator

Contact: Regional Contact List provided.

Review of Children's Services, Community Incentive Funding:

Community Incentive Funding (CIF):

- Community Incentive Funding supports local initiatives the increase awareness of family violence and bullying, and help communities address more specific topics.
- Two types of grants are available, up to \$10 000 and up to \$75 000.

## IV. APPENDICES

APPENDIX I	Alberta Human Rights & Citizenship Commission, Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Grant Program 2007-08
APPENDIX II	United Way, Community Impact Funds
APPENDIX III	Alberta Lotteries, Community Initiatives Program Grant
APPENDIX IV	United Way, Capacity Building Grant
APPENDIX V	Alberta Law Foundation
APPENDIX VI	Public Safety Canada, National Crime Prevention Strategy
APPENDIX VII	Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security
APPENDIX VIII	Children's Services, Community Incentive Fund (CIF)
APPENDIX IX	Questionnaire—Participant Responses Verbatim
APPENDIX X	CUAI-AHRCC Aboriginal Human Rights publication