

# **OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council**



## **Orientation Manual**

# Table of Content

|                                       |        |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Glossary.....                         | 3      |
| Introduction.....                     | 4      |
| Background of the OFIFC—IYC.....      | 5      |
| Background of the OFIFC.....          | 6      |
| OFIFC - Indigenous Youth Council..... | 7 - 8  |
| Information Flow Chart.....           | 8      |
| Roles and Responsibilities.....       | 9 - 11 |
| Regional Representatives.....         | 10     |
| Executive Committee.....              | 11     |
| Elections.....                        | 12     |
| OFIFC - IYC Meetings.....             | 13     |
| Accountability.....                   | 14     |
| Annual Youth Gathering.....           | 15     |

# Glossary

**Indigenous** - Anyone of Indigenous ancestry (including status, non-status, Inuit and Metis).

**Centre** - Refers to any Indigenous Friendship Centre located in Ontario.

**Executive Committee** - Refers to positions of the Co-Chairs, Communication Liaison, and Youth Executive.

**Regional Representatives** - Refer to the delegates from each region.

**OFIFC** - Refers to the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres.

**Provincial Youth Membership** - Registered youth between the ages of 14-24 residing in Ontario and supporting the aims and objectives of their local Friendship Centre.

**Youth** - Refers to those person between the ages of 14-24.

**Not-for-Profit Organization** - An organization that do not earn profits for the owners, by instead utilizing the monies to further their social cause and mandate for the community.

**Steering Committee** - A temporary selected group of people used to build the governing body, or settle any internal disputes that the council.

**Ex - Officio** - a non-member of a committee that acts as a support and to serve the committee.

**Terms of Reference** - Defines the purpose, structure and responsibilities of a collective group (ie. Committees, councils etc).

**Acclamation** - Unanimous consent on a decision and/or election.

**Quorum** – number of people that must legally present for a meeting to proceed.

# Introduction

Welcome to the OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council!

This orientation package was developed to assist OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council (OFIFC - IYC) members entering into new position to gain a better understand of their roles within the council. The package includes a background and history of the OFIFC - IYC and its sponsoring organization the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC), while also including council member's roles and responsibilities, elections and accountability.

Youth members on the OFIFC - IYC are local Friendship Centre Youth representing their respective region. The OFIFC - IYC is an opportunity for youth to be apart of a council that is trained and mentored to become strong advocates, for issues within their community they want to address. They are able to gain a multitude of skills from chairing a meeting to organizing a provincial gathering. The OFIFC role is to support the youth that sit on the council, but ultimately the OFIFC - IYC determines the direction and mandate in which they will conduct their business.

Youth should prepare to be challenged, excited and inspired. You can make change within your communities. Based upon the principles and teachings of our ancestors the OFIFC - IYC is guided by past, present and future. You are knowledgeable of your past histories, working hard in the present, to create a better future for the youth.

# **Background of the OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council (OIYC)**

The OFIFC - IYC was established to ensure that there was regional representation from the local Friendship Centre communities, and to provide a voice for all Indigenous youth in Ontario.

Originally, a youth Steering Committee (SC) was created to develop a youth council structure. The SC decided that there would be a structured youth council but without the hierarchical positions. Their reason was to include, not exclude youth and to allow each position to be as important as the next. The SC also developed the OFIFC - IYC Terms of Reference which includes the mission statement, mandate, aims and objectives, code of ethics, meeting of the members, and elections process.

The SC was dissolved once the first OFIFC - IYC Executive Committee was elected at the OFIFC Youth Gathering, an ex-officio from the SC was asked to stay for a one year period, to act as a resource and technical advisor.

The OFIFC - IYC falls under the umbrella of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, with selected OFIFC - IYC members to also sit on the OFIFC Board of Directors. It is through these positions that many of the Ontario Indigenous youth issues and concerns are heard and addressed.

Each year the new OFIFC - IYC members are elected, totaling an eight member council, with the executive committee being selected at a special meeting on a later date. The OFIFC - IYC reviews the Terms of References annually to ensure that they are still relevant, and develop short and long-term goals for that year.

The OFIFC - IYC has not been without its ups and downs. It has gone through many changes and challenges and many different youth have come and gone throughout the years. Many Indigenous youth involved with the OFIFC - IYC have gone onto bigger and better opportunities, in which the OFIFC - IYC continue to be extremely proud of.

# Background of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC)

The Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) is a provincial Indigenous organization representing the collective interest of twenty-nine Friendship Centres located in towns and cities throughout the province. The OFIFC administers a number of programs which are delivered by local Centres. Local Friendship Centres also design and deliver local initiatives in areas such as education, economic development, children and youth initiatives, and cultural awareness. The vision of the Indigenous Friendship Centre Movement is

*“To improve the quality of life for Indigenous people living in an urban environment by supporting self-determined activities which encourage equal access to and participation in Canadian society, and which respect Indigenous cultural distinctiveness”*

A culturally appropriate Code of Ethics is the cornerstone to the OFIFC’s award winning culture-based approach to communication, lobbying, training and program support.

Friendship Centres are not - for - profit corporation which are mandated to serve the needs of all Indigenous people regardless of legal definition. Friendship Centres provide vital social services for their community members, including: family care planning, employment counselling, housing, health programs and much more.



## OFIFC

Ontario Federation of  
Indigenous Friendship Centres

# OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council

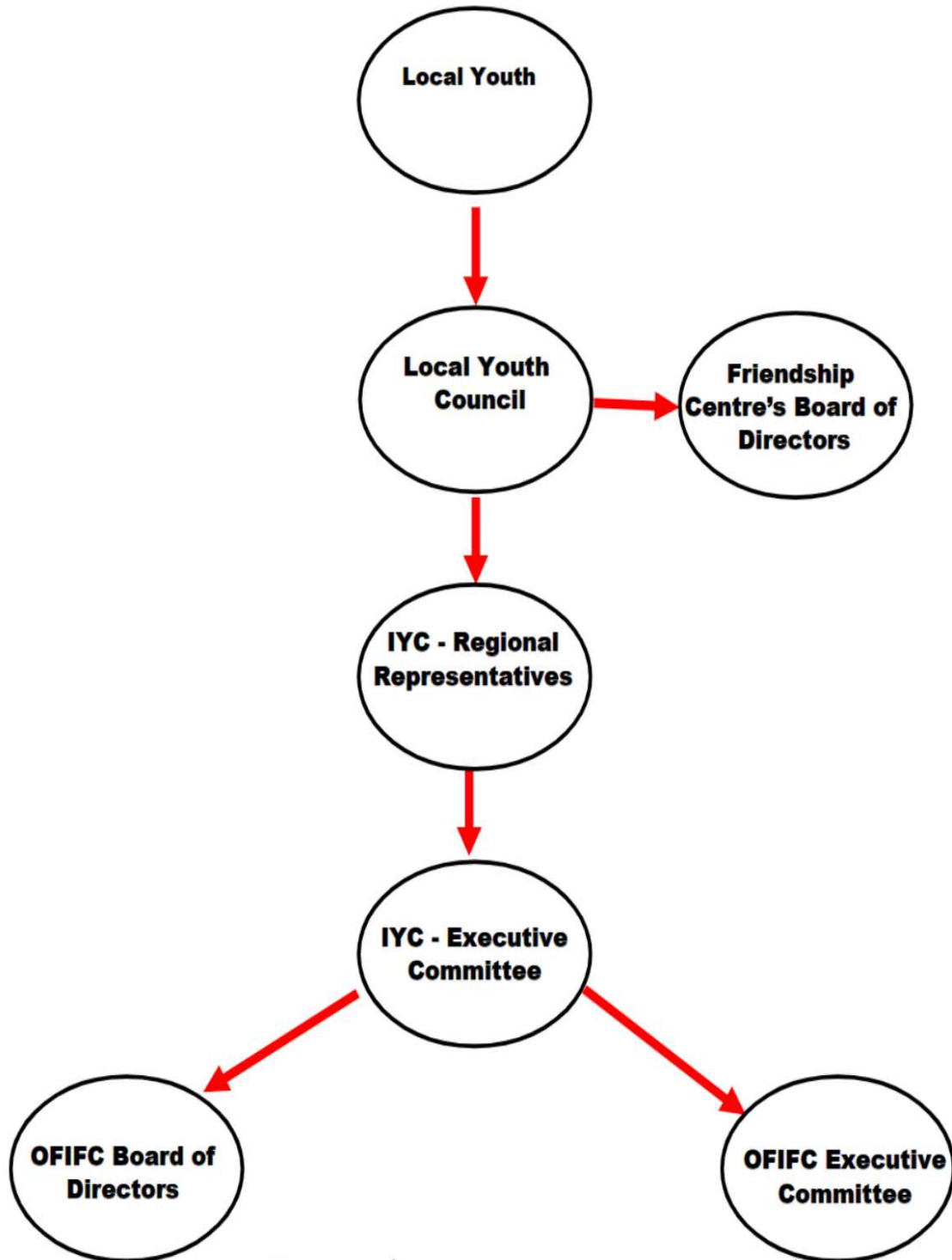
## OFIFC - IYC Mission Statement

*“The OFIFC-IYC progressively works to increase youth involvement in local Friendship Centers across Ontario to support the growing needs and achievable goals of Indigenous youth in urban areas”*

## OFIFC - IYC Aims and Objectives

- Provide appropriate youth representation and advocacy respective to their local Friendship Centre Boards of Directors and through the OFIFC board of directors.
- Maintain strong relationships with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Traditional person(s) to learn about culture and teachings for future generations to thrive.
- Recognize youth leaders and their accomplishments to promote mentorship and role modeling within local and provincial youth councils.
- OFIFC-IYC will communicate with and be accountable to OFIFC member Friendship Centre Youth Councils so that positive working relationships are formed.
- Working to create opportunities for training and regular interaction to encourage the development of an autonomous relationship within the regional youth councils.
- Support each other internally through transparent lines of communication to collaborate effectively as a council and within the respective communities.

# OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council Information Flow Chart





# **Roles and Responsibilities**

## **- Overview of Council Duties -**

### **General Responsibilities**

- At minimum, the OFIFC - IYC will hold meetings via conference calls bi-monthly and two face to face meetings annually.
- Attend, be prepared and actively participate in all OFIFC - IYC meetings.
- Ensuring youth concerns and issues are be identified and addressed.
- Maintain contact and provide written reports to the OFIFC Board of Directors and the provincial youth members.
- Produce quarterly reports and one annual report.
- Provide and promote youth related initiatives happening at local Friendship Centre.
- Adhere and uphold the Code of Ethics and Terms of Reference.

### **General Executive Committee Duties**

- Shall act with the full delegated authority of the full council in between meeting when necessary.
- Decisions of the executive to be confirmed within the next meeting of the OFIFC - IYC.
- Liaison between the IYC Executive Committee to the OFIFC Board of Directors.
- Attend all general and executive meetings.
- Develop and provide written reports to the OFIFC Board of Directors.
- Report and keep council updates on all Executive activities
- Address concerns and related business as it arises within a timely manner.

# **Roles and Responsibilities**

## **- Regional Representatives -**

### **Regional Representatives—Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, Southeast**

- Maintain contact with local Friendship Centres within their respective region - contact can be through a centres council, social media, program staff or youth board member.
- Identify concerns and/or issues that affect the youth within their region.
- Provide written and verbal regional reports to the Communication Liaison, and the OFIFC - IYC.
- Keep OFIFC - IYC Executive Committee updated on local youth initiatives,, events and activities.

### **Friendship Centres by Region**

**Northwest Region:** Atikokan, Fort Francis (United), Drydan, Red Lake, Thunderbay, Sioux Lookout (Nishnawbe-Gamik), Geraldton (Thunderbird), Kenora (Ne 'Chee)

**Northeast Region:** Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Sudbury (N'Swakamok), Cochrane (Inineew), Kapuskasing, Timmins (and Moosonee),

**Southeast Region:** Toronto (Council Fire), Hamilton, Brantford, Fort Erie, Ottawa (Odawa), Peterborough (Nogojiwanong), Niagara, Peel

**Southwest Region:** London (N'Amerind), Sarnia, Windsor (CanAm), Owen Sound (M'Wikiwedong), Barrie, Midland (Georgian Bay)

# **Roles and Responsibilities**

## **- Executive Committee -**

### **Co-Chairs - Northern and Southern**

- Chairs all OFIFC - IYC meetings—alternative between Co-Chairs.
- Represent OFIFC - IYC on external committees.
- Organize and confirm attendance for all OFIFC - IYC meetings, and ensure notifications of meeting are sent in a timely manner.
- Determine external relations.
- Appoint members to external committees.
- Call meetings of the Executive Committee and/or OFIFC - IYC as circumstances require.

### **Communication Liaison**

- Ensuring OFIFC - IYC social media pages are being kept active.
- Oversee and/or create all OFIFC - IYC media pieces.
- Be in regular contact with the OFIFC - IYC regional representatives regarding reports and issues within their regions.
- Using the regional representatives reports, provide the Youth Executive with the proper information to present at OFIFC Board of Director meetings.

### **Youth Executive**

- Member of the OFIFC Executive Committee.
- Must attend all OFIFC Board of Director meetings and OFIFC executive committee meetings.
- Present the OFIFC - IYC board report at Board of Director meetings.
- Act as a liaison between the OFIFC - IYC and OFIFC.
- Any other duties delegated by the OFIFC Executive Committee.

# Elections

General Youth elections will happen at the annual OFIFC Youth Gathering and the OFIFC AGM. With four positions being elected during the OFIFC Youth Gathering by the provincial youth membership to fill regional representatives. While the other four youth regional positions will be elected at the respective regional meetings hosted by the OFIFC. Resulting in two council members from each region.

The Executive Committee will be elected within 30 days of the Youth Gathering at a special meeting and will be chosen from the already eight elected regional representatives. Three Executive Committee position will be elected by the eight regional representatives during the Executive committee elections meeting. The Youth Executive is elected by the OFIFC membership during the OFIFC AGM elections, and is the only executive position not elected solely by the youth.

If vacancies are created during the Youth Gathering and/or throughout the year, they shall be filled via Friendship Centre call-outs for interested youth to submit to the OFIFC-IYC, a letter of intent and a letter of support from their Friendship Centre. Current members on the council can also run for a vacant position, providing there is no conflict and Terms of Reference are being adhered to.

## Requirements to be Elected

- Youth aged 18—24, and actively involved in a Friendship Centre.
- Provide a letter of intent as well as a letter of support from their local Friendship Centre.
- The candidate must receive 50 percent plus 1 of the vote; or be approved by acclamation.
- All motions and nominations must have movers and seconders as well as ot must be recorded.
- Have a prepared nomination and acceptance speech.
- Present a Vulnerable Sectors Check from the Canadian Police Information Centre to the OFIFC-IYC within 90 days of their election.

# **OFIFC - IYC Meetings**

The OFIFC - IYC must be actively meetings and ensuring the council is at least hosting a minimum number meetings. Ensuring related council work, events and reports are being completed and conducted in a timely manner.

## **Face to Face Meetings**

The OFIFC - IYC will have a minimum of two face to face meetings throughout the year. The location of these meeting can be self-determined by the OFIFC - IYC. Meeting are normally on the weekend, and over the course of two - three days.

## **Conference Calls**

At minimum the OFIFC - IYC should have bi-monthly conference call meetings. Conference calls can be conducted via video, or telephone.

## **Orientation**

Once the eight council members have been elected by the assembly, they will meet within 30 days to complete their orientation. In this meeting the OFIFC - IYC will be formally trained on hosting and chairing meetings, report writing, lines of communication and getting a general overview of their council duties. This ensures new members are prepared to take on their duties as council members, and give them the skills and knowledge to be successful on the council.

## **Executive Committee Elections**

The Executive committee elections will happen at a special meeting that will be held within 30 days of the annual Youth Gathering. The eight OFIFC - IYC members will elect the executive committee amongst themselves.

## **Special Meetings**

At anytime during the year the Executive Committee can call a special meeting using any method to address immediate concerns/issues, to fill vacancies, and other arising business that requires immediate attention.

# Accountability

To ensure council work is being completed and members are attending meetings, they will be held accountable according to *article 10* of the OFIFC *Indigenous Youth Council* Terms of Reference.

- members must attend all meetings but if the member is unable to attend a notification of 'regret' must be sent to the entire OFIFC-IYC at least one week in advance. OR;
- If an unforeseen circumstance occurs which causes the absence of a member, the OFIFC-IYC meeting Chair may bring forth to the council a vote on whether to excuse this member from their consequence due to absence
- Illicit drug and/or alcohol usage while executing any Friendship Centre or OFIFC-IYC business will result in a letter communicating immediate dismissal from the OFIFC-IYC

## First Breach

If the member;

- i) Fails to attend one Face to Face meeting, OR;
- ii) Fails to attend two conference meetings, OR;
- iii) If a member is not meeting their Roles and Responsibilities

Then they will receive one notice, and a letter will be sent to the member and to their supporting Friendship Centre on behalf of the OFIFC-IYC, explaining that if they are to miss another meeting or not fulfil their duties it will be considered a second breach.

## Second Breach

If the member;

- i. Fails to attend a second face to face meeting, OR;
- ii. Fails to attend a third conference call, OR;
- iii. Continues to not meet their roles and responsibilities

Then the member will be dismissed from the council. A letter will be provided to both the individual and the supporting Friendship Centre, explaining their dismissal from the OFIFC-IYC.

# Annual Youth Gathering

The annual Youth Gathering is hosted every year prior to the OFIFC AGM in early July. Organized by the OFIFC – IYC to address youth needs, provide training and skill development, networking opportunities, and workshops. This is also the time for the OFIFC— IYC to discuss IYC business and elections.

The council will send out invitation to all 29 member Friendship Centre, in the hopes of having 29 youth delegates as the Provincial Youth membership.

The OFIFC - IYC will determine themes, agendas, and topics to cover for the gathering. As well as aid in Elder selection, development of workshops/trainings, excursions, evening activities, and community outreach.

The gathering will be developed based on the data collected throughout the year. Allowing the council to narrow their focus and theme to address the wants and needs of the Provincial Youth Membership.

The Gathering is also the time in which the OFIFC - IYC should review formalities items. The Council should complete an annual review of the OFIFC Indigenous Youth Council Terms of Reference, noting any amendments. The annual Board report shall also be reviewed to ensure the provincial youth membership, are being kept up to date on the council's activities and involvement. To finish the Gathering there needs to be elections to fill any vacant position on the council.