

Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”)

BETWEEN

NORTHERN ONTARIO SERVICE DELIVERERS ASSOCIATION (“NOSDA”)

AND

**ONTARIO FEDERATION OF INDIGENOUS
FRIENDSHIP CENTRES (“OFIFC”)**

1.0 BACKGROUND

The OFIFC is a provincial Indigenous organization that represents the collective interests of twenty-seven (27) member Friendship Centres, fifteen of which are located in towns and cities throughout Northern Ontario. Its mission is to improve the quality of life of Aboriginal people living in an urban environment by supporting self-determined activities which encourage equal access to and participation in Canadian society and which respects Aboriginal cultural distinctiveness.

The OFIFC administers a number of programs which are delivered by local Friendship Centres in areas such as health, poverty reduction, homelessness, ending family violence justice, family support, and employment and training.

OFIFC member Friendship Centres currently deliver culture-based programs and services, which has had a positive impact on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities across Northern Ontario through:

- Designing innovative, community-driven programs and services that reflect the community need;
- Supporting Aboriginal people and families transition successfully off-reserve into urban and rural communities across the North;
- Providing cultural competency training to external partners and stakeholders, fostering cross-cultural understanding and inclusivity;
- Participating in community events, board and committees to enhance the quality and accessibility of services;
- Advocating to ensure that the views of urban Aboriginal people are represented and accommodated in local place-based initiatives; and,
- Gathering place for Aboriginal, and non-Aboriginal people alike, to celebrate and share in their culture in an urban setting.

As such, Friendship Centres are recognized as Aboriginal community hubs in the cities and towns in which they are located, providing services in a self-determining, holistic and integrated manner to local Indigenous people and communities.

The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) is an incorporated body that brings together Service Managers in Northern Ontario who are responsible for the local planning, coordination and delivery of a range of community, health and social services.

NOSDA is composed of ten District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), a form of governmental board unique to Northern Ontario, and one municipal Service Manager (City of Greater Sudbury) that cover the entire geography of Northern Ontario (with the exception of First Nations) from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border.

NOSDA members currently plan and coordinate the delivery of public services and infrastructure programs across the North that result in measurable gains to the quality of life of Northerners through:

- Providing financial and other supports to persons in financial crisis and/or having difficulty entering or re-entering the labour force;
- Creating, providing and maintaining affordable and social housing;
- Addressing homelessness through funding and delivering diverse emergency shelter and homelessness prevention services;
- Providing quality early learning and child care services to promote child development while enabling parents' educational/skills upgrading and employment; and,
- Delivering emergency medical transportation services in times of medical crisis in areas that have undertaken to do so.

2.0 HISTORY

The OFIFC and the NOSDA have been working together over much of the last two years in the interest of identifying areas of mutual concern and potential collaboration, both at the provincial and local levels between our member organizations in Northern Ontario. Since 2011, the OFIFC and NOSDA have collaborated on a number of initiatives that have created tangible opportunities for our respective member organizations to engage and collaborate in local and regional initiatives. It is our common objective that this MOU will build the foundation for an OFIFC-NOSDA relationship for many years to come, with the aim of improving outcomes for our collective memberships across Northern Ontario.

3.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This MOU is a statement of intent to consult, collaborate and exchange program and policy information to advance the interests of our collective memberships across Northern Ontario.

4.0 SCOPE OF AGREEMENT

This MOU does not create any binding legal obligations on the parties or any authorities for one party or another.

5.0 SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES: CONSULTATION, COLLABORATION and INFORMATION SHARING

The OFIFC and NOSDA agree to work together in areas where our interests coincide. As such NOSDA and the OFIFC agree to consult, collaborate and share information between our respective organizations in the interest of our memberships.

a) Consultation

The OFIFC and NOSDA commit to consult with one another in legislative, policy and programmatic areas where we share interests or objectives in a manner that is respectful of the OFIFC-NOSDA relationships. This may include, but is not limited to matters pertaining to Ontario Works, Social Housing/Housing and Homelessness and Children's Services. Consultation may also include engaging local Friendship Centres and DSSABs in areas of mutual concern, as necessary.

b) Collaboration

The OFIFC and NOSDA agree to collaborate across relevant programmatic and policies areas in the interests of our membership. Such activities could include identifying future opportunities for education and training and exploring joint advocacy in areas of mutual concern, such as but not limited to:

- Ontario Works and Employment Programming
- Social Housing/Housing and Homelessness; and,
- Children's Services and Early Learning

c) Information Sharing

The OFIFC and NOSDA will work towards creating increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and ongoing communication between the OFIFC and NOSDA staff and our collective membership. This involves sharing relevant program and policy information including research/policy papers and best/wise practices. Information exchanged should be considered confidential, unless otherwise specified by the OFIFC and NOSDA.

6.0 TERMINATION

The OFIFC or NOSDA may terminate this agreement with 90 days written notice to the other party.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Therefore, in signing this agreement we the undersigned agree. It is further agreed that should additional activities and areas of collaboration be identified they will be included in the spirit and intent of this agreement.

Date: Ch. Stent
9/4/14

Gary W. Scripnick
Gary Scripnick, President, NOSDA

WITNESS:

(Signature)

(Print name)

Date: 9 April 2014

[Signature]
Gary Sutherland, Vice President, OFIFC
(on behalf of Sheila McMahon, President)

WITNESS: [Signature]

(Signature)

(Print name)