

IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Senior Policy Advisor	
Position Number(s)	Community	Division/Region(s)
71-7204	Yellowknife	Policy, Legislation and Communications

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Policy Advisor is responsible for providing strategic policy advice and analysis on a wide variety of education, culture and employment related subject-matters to staff and senior management across the Department and the Minister. The Senior Policy Advisor leads the development and review of departmental policies, directives, briefing notes, and decision-making documents. This requires the incumbent to develop and contribute to a wide variety of complex documents for senior management, the Minister, Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly.

The core purpose of this position is to provide strategic, systems-level analysis and advice to senior management and the Minister. The incumbent leads the development of, and provides expert advice on, the Department's cross-functional and inter-departmental activities and responsibilities. The size and complexity of the Department and its arms-length institutions, combined with the numerous and varied responsibilities of the Department and Minister, means that the incumbent is called upon to understand, synthesize, analyse, and provide accurate and strategic advice on the operations of the entire Department.

Aside from the traditional functions of a Senior Policy Advisor, the incumbent also leads the Department's intergovernmental and Aboriginal rights activities. This includes the Department's contributions to, and participation in, Federal / Provincial / Territorial / Aboriginal government forums and initiatives, and leading the Department's participation in the negotiation and implementation of Aboriginal land, resources and self-government agreements.

SCOPE

The position is located in Yellowknife, and reports the Manager of Policy and Legislation. The incumbent is required to work on a wide variety complex issues arising out of the broad and varied mandate of the Department in relation to early childhood education, K-12 education, post-secondary education, labour and employment, income security programs, heritage resources, and the protection and promotion of culture and languages, and to present viable approaches and options for managing these issues.

The incumbent provides strategic analysis and advice to members of the Department's senior management team, the Deputy Minister, the Minister, and ultimately for the consideration of Cabinet, on territorial, national and international issues as they affect the Department's mandate.

The issues and concepts that the incumbent must understand and analyze are diverse, complex, and highly abstract. The operating environment is high-pressure and subject to change, and may be impacted by political considerations. This requires the capacity for expert analysis and advice, culminating in innovative and creative solutions to new and emerging challenges and opportunities that will impact the operations of the entire Department, other departments, education authorities, the culture and heritage of the territory, and nearly all territorial residents including children, students, and employees.

The incumbent regularly works independently and with limited supervision, often leading inter-divisional teams and working directly with senior management. The incumbent is required to use their judgement, problem-solving skills, and initiative to find creative policy solutions. Discretion, diplomacy and self-control must be displayed at all times, particularly when representing the Department or the GNWT. The incumbent must provide advice to ensure that the operations of the Department are performed in compliance with GNWT direction and relevant legislation, regulations, contracts, agreements and memoranda. The provision of incorrect advice has the ability to damage working relationships between the GNWT and other governments.

The incumbent also leads the development of, and provides expert advice on, the Department's cross-functional and inter-departmental activities and responsibilities. This position regularly liaises with key representatives from other departments, particularly the Department of the Executive and Department of Justice on matters relating to policy development, and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations on matters relating to Aboriginal rights and intergovernmental activities. Sound knowledge of GNWT priorities, policy and legislative requirements, as well as sensitivity to inter-departmental and inter-governmental relationships, is essential.

Aside from the traditional functions of a Senior Policy Advisor, the incumbent also takes the lead on the Department's intergovernmental and Aboriginal rights activities. This includes the Department's contributions to, and participation in, Federal / Provincial / Territorial / Aboriginal government forums and initiatives, and leading the Department's

participation in the negotiation and implementation of Aboriginal land, resources and self-government agreements.

The majority of the duties and responsibilities of this position involves providing support and advice directly to the Minister, as the incumbent is responsible for developing the Department's Executive Council submissions, Session preparation and follow-up commitments, briefings for Cabinet and Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly, directly supporting the Minister's participation in inter-governmental meetings and forums, and leading the Department's activities relating to Aboriginal land, resource and self-government negotiations and implementation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Develop, evaluate and assess broad education, culture and employment policies and related documents as identified by the Minister and Senior Management.

Main Activities:

- Advise senior management of potential problem areas attributed to the development of new policy and recommend possible solutions to barriers and/or problem areas.
- Provide advice on the implementation of new programs, policy, legislation and/or regulations.
- Prepare policies for approval by the Cabinet Secretariat.
- Advise senior management on the development of new education, culture and employment strategies, policies or legislation for the government by analysing the potential political, social and economic impacts on the public.
- Assist in and prepare/develop general legislative policy proposals.
- Monitor current developments in education, culture and employment in other jurisdictions across Canada and keep abreast of any and all issues that may affect education, culture and employment within the NWT.
- Monitor political, social, economic, cultural and legislative developments which may affect education, culture and employment agencies/agents directly or indirectly.
- Monitor community and public reaction to new policies, regulation or legislation created by the Department.
- Conduct research on specific education, culture and employment issues as they arise in order to develop work plans and identify priorities for the development of legislation, regulations and broad education, culture and employment policies.
- Review work plans and arrange/co-ordinate consultation or partnerships, when required, which will ensure overall consistency of education, culture and employment policy/legislative development and evaluation.

2. Coordinate, develop and provide support and advice on documents prepared

for the Minister and Legislative Assembly as well as Ministerial briefs/statements, and act as a liaison between the Department of ECE and Legislative Assembly staff.

Main Activities:

- Provide support directly to the Minister in the preparation and coordination of documents requested by the Legislative Assembly.
- Develop and maintain procedures to ensure all relevant issues are addressed in the Ministerial briefing books.
- Coordinate the preparation of Session briefing materials for the Minister.
- Work with staff and senior management across the department to review all Ministerial briefing materials against departmental and government priorities and provide strategic advice to prepare the Minister for responses in the Legislative Assembly.
- Monitor, coordinate, provide advice on and develop responses for the Minister to oral and written questions and petitions raised in the Legislative Assembly, as well as Ministerial statements.

3. Provide strategic, systems-level policy and planning support and advice to the Minister and Senior Management

Main Activities:

- Provide guidance, advice and support to the Minister and senior management in the preparation of planning and decision documents.
- Prepare briefing notes and responses to correspondence for the Minister.
- Interpret existing policy and legislation.
- Assist in the preparation, assembly and distribution of documents developed by the division.
- Advise on other Departmental and GNWT initiatives as requested in order to coordinate with and obtain information on other related departmental and GNWT projects.

4. Lead the development of, and provide briefings and advice to the Minister on, Executive Council submissions and follow-up.

Main Activities:

- Work directly with staff and Senior Management to develop and review all Executive Council submissions for the Minister.
- Develop comprehensive briefing materials for the Deputy Minister and Minister on all proposed Executive Council submissions.
- Provide briefings directly to the Minister on proposed submissions.

- Regularly collaborate and consult with central agencies such as the Cabinet Secretariat, Financial Management Board Secretariat and the Legislative Coordinator in the development of Executive Council submissions.

5. Lead the Department's Aboriginal rights related activities.

Main Activities:

- Provide strategic advice and recommendations to the Minister and senior management on departmental issues pertaining to Aboriginal rights, including Aboriginal consultation and Aboriginal and treaty rights as they relate to the mandate of the Department.
- Assist with the development and revision of the GNWT's land, resources, and self-government negotiating mandates and positions that relate to the work of the Department.
- Ensure all positions comply with departmental policies and legislation.
- Represent the Department and GNWT at Aboriginal land, resources and self-government agreement negotiating sessions.
- Lead the Department's work to implement the aspects of completed land, resources and self-government agreements that relate to the work of the Department.
- Represent the Department and GNWT at Aboriginal land, resources and self-government implementation negotiations.
- Provide support and advice to the Minister on the Aboriginal rights agreement implementation activities of the Department.
- Develop and implement formal strategies and plans to assess and meet the Department's Aboriginal consultation and accommodation obligations.
- Represent the Department and GNWT in departmental consultations with Aboriginal Governments and Organizations.

6. Lead the Department's Federal / Provincial / Territorial / Aboriginal (F/P/T/A) inter-governmental activities.

Main Activities:

- Provide direct support to the Minister for Western Premiers', Annual Premiers' and First Ministers' Conferences and bilateral meetings with Aboriginal Governments.
- Accompany the Minister and senior management and provide direct support and advice at F/P/T/A meetings, as required.
- Negotiate with other jurisdictions regarding development of positions and communiqués for Ministers and Deputy Ministers.
- Represent the Minister and GNWT on various F/P/T/A officials-level committees.
- Liaise with other departments to ensure a consistent, government-wide response to multi-sectoral issues.

- Review and assess material developed for F/P/T/A meetings and provide advice directly to the Minister and senior management on these materials.
- Review, evaluate and maintain currency on various issues related to territorial departments and agencies.
- Co-ordinate and monitor positions taken at the various F/P/T/A tables and ensure positions are consistent with departmental and government policies.
- Review and monitor intergovernmental arrangements that are pertinent to the effective management and program development within the department.
- Communicate positions and developments at the national, federal and provincial level to senior management.
- Provide research, analysis, and recommendations on key issues impacting the department or the GNWT.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Specialized knowledge of policy analysis and formulation.
- Knowledge of federal/provincial/territorial/Aboriginal government relations.
- Knowledge of Aboriginal land, resources and self-government rights and how they relate to the political environment of the NWT.
- Knowledge of northern, circumpolar and Aboriginal education, culture and employment issues.
- Written communication skills to ensure the development of policy, Executive Council submissions, and briefing materials that are clear and concise and convey complex information and detailed recommendations.
- Verbal communication skills to effectively communicate with a wide variety of audiences, including Senior Managers and Ministers on complex subjects, and to engage in delicate negotiations with internal and external parties.
- Ability to develop and express ideas, concepts and recommendations in a clear and concise manner using appropriate verbal, written and graphic means.
- Strategic-thinking skills and judgment, as well as a demonstrated ability to research, analyse and synthesize multiple concepts and priorities.
- Analytic and problem-solving skills to synthesize complex information, identify cross-divisional and departmental linkages, and assess risk and opportunity.
- Demonstrated ability to be assertive and confident with strong interpersonal and negotiation skills.
- Exceptional organizational and time management skills, including the ability to prioritize tasks, perform work under pressure, and meet deadlines.
- Demonstrated ability to independently lead files and provide support and advice directly to the Minister and senior management.
- Ability to work with a wide range of computer applications, including word processing and presentation software.

TYPICALLY, THE ABOVE QUALIFICATIONS WOULD BE ATTAINED BY:

- Completion of an undergraduate degree (e.g. Bachelor's) in the social sciences, humanities, education, or a related field. A graduate degree (e.g. Master's) will be considered an asset.
- A minimum of 4 years of related experience, including a minimum of 1 year working in policy, research, Aboriginal rights, or intergovernmental relations.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

Generally minimal; however, during extended meetings, negotiation sessions, or sessions of the Legislative Assembly and Standing Committees, the incumbent is subject to physical fatigue caused by long or extended hours.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual environmental conditions.

Sensory Demands

Sensory demands include high concentration to capture important subtleties during difficult and often emotionally charged meetings. Sensory demands are for frequent periods of short duration.

Mental Demands

The incumbent is subject to high levels of stress related to multi-tasking and working to tight deadlines in a setting where there are frequently changing priorities, conflicting interests and differing perspectives. The incumbent is also subject to high levels of stress when collaborating with senior officials. Mental demands are for frequent periods of short duration.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- ☒ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust - criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position - requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

