



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Health and Social Services	Assistant Director, Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Relations	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
49-0208	Yellowknife	Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Relations

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Assistant Director, Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Relations is responsible for supporting the Director of Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Relations by leading and managing the policy, legislation, and intergovernmental relations functions of the division. This includes strategic leadership and advice respecting policy and legislative analysis, development, and implementation; close cooperation with the Health and Social Services Authorities (HSSAs), professional associations, federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) governments, Indigenous governments, and other stakeholder groups; briefing the Minister, Executive Council, Financial Management Board (FMB), Standing Committees, HSSAs, and stakeholder groups as required; and coordination of Indigenous self-government activities.

The Assistant Director's work is vital to ensuring the development and implementation of new, and amendments to existing, policies, statutes, regulations, and other special projects administered by the Department of Health and Social Services (Department) are consistent with Executive Council direction, the strategic objectives of the Department, self-government agreements, and federal and territorial legislation, and are reflective of the realities of providing health and social services in rural and remote northern communities.

## SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife, the Assistant Director reports to the Director of Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Relations and provides direct support to the Minister and Deputy Minister and advice and recommendations to senior managers in the Department, the HSSAs, and the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. This position is responsible for managing and directing the work of Policy and Intergovernmental Analyst positions and ensuring a work plan is in order for the unit. The Assistant Director will be responsible for acting in the Director's position and will also be the main point of contact in the division in the



absence of the Director of Policy, Legislation, and Intergovernmental Relations and therefore must remain current on all divisional activities.

The Department is responsible for over 30 pieces of legislation and their associated regulations that cover a broad spectrum of subject areas related to health and social services delivery and professional regulation. Considerable and continuous modernization of these pieces of legislation is required in an integrated manner to accommodate the complex and evolving northern, national, and Indigenous governance regimes. The incumbent is responsible for all legislative and major policy initiatives of the Department. This includes coordinating the development of new, and amendments to existing, policies and legislation; providing policy and legislative advice and direction to senior managers in the Department and HSSAs; and working with stakeholders, program divisions, and the HSSAs to ensure the implementation of Departmental initiatives, policies, and legislation comply with federal and territorial statutes. The incumbent's familiarity with case law, federal, and territorial policy and legislation, as well as legislative innovations respecting health and social services are critical to ensuring NWT legislation and policy is effective, relevant, and timely.

The incumbent is also responsible for monitoring political activities at the national, provincial, and territorial levels and anticipating potential impact; preparing briefing materials for the Minister and Deputy Minister as required; and leading all Indigenous self-government activities for the Minister, Deputy Minister, and Department staff. This includes analyzing issues pertaining to Indigenous affairs, such as inherent rights as it relates to health and social services; developing the Department's negotiating position at all self-government tables; and leading, directing, and coordinating the GNWT's participation in Coordination Agreement and Fiscal Agreement discussions under federal distinctions-based legislation, such as *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*.

The incumbent may be required to work under tight deadlines with information of a confidential nature and often responds to complex, conflicting, and highly sensitive situations, requiring creative and strategic solutions. The incumbent works closely and collaboratively with program divisions, the HSSAs, professional associations and other stakeholder groups, FPT and Indigenous governments, as well as the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs and legislative drafters and legal counsel from the Department of Justice.

One significant challenge faced by governments is that mainstream organizations, like health and social services, cannot be separated from the legacy of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada. In health and social services settings, present day anti-Indigenous racism or systemic racism, impacts access to services, quality of care, and health outcomes for Indigenous peoples. This also results in a system that inherently privileges the ideas, needs, and norms of the dominant white settler population, including the privileging of western knowledge over Indigenous approaches and ways of knowing.



The HSS system is committed to addressing anti-Indigenous racism and promoting cultural safety and anti-racism. DHSS staff are expected to honour and promote a culturally safe and anti-racist environment at all times and to interact with clients, families, community members, partners, and colleagues in a relationship-based approach. This involves being tactful, respectful, self-aware, and humble in order to develop and maintain ongoing and trusting relationships.

The incumbent is subject to deadlines, competing priorities, assignments from a variety of sources, and regular evaluation of the quality of work including scrutiny from the public and stakeholders. The incumbent also actively participates in high pressure, often confrontational self-government settings and committees, and is expected to think analytically, quickly, laterally and concentrate intensely. Decisions often have long-range effects.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Provide expert advice and leadership in the areas of legislation and departmental policies.**

- Provide leadership, expertise, and advice on departmental legal affairs, including the development, implementation, and evaluation of legislative and regulatory projects.
- Provide advice regarding the interpretation, evaluation, and analysis of departmental legislation.
- Analyze, provide expert advice, and report to Senior Management on the impact of federal, provincial, and territorial legislative changes, judicial outcomes, and theoretical developments on the administration of departmental activities and health and social services delivery.
- Develop options and provide expert advice to departmental staff on implementation of departmental legislation, as well as other relevant territorial and federal legislation.
- Review draft policies and legislative initiatives to ensure consistency with departmental strategic direction, while appropriately considering the legal, political, and financial issues along with stakeholder concerns.
- Coordinate policy response to major reports that provide direction to, or have legislative implications for, the Department.
- Develop briefing materials to assist in decision-making related to legislative items and legal issues.
- Lead or participate in departmental committees and interdepartmental committees dealing with issues related to departmental policies and legislation, as appropriate.
- Represent the Department's legislative interests with other departments and other governments.
- Provide expert advice about the appropriate instrument (statutes, regulations, policy, etc.) to govern the achievement of departmental objectives.



**2. Lead the development and review of legislative and policy proposals and other governing instruments.**

- Develop the legislative agenda for the Department.
- Provide advice about the legislative development process.
- Lead the development of, or amendments to, departmental legislation, regulations, policies, and other governing instruments.
- Revise and prepare documents used in the legislative process, including draft legislation, drafting instructions, legislative proposals, and public engagement documents, for conformity with standards, policy direction, and the overall priorities, goals, and objectives of the GNWT, and recommending revisions as required.
- Direct the development of routine policy changes in response to GNWT initiatives or changes in the Department's mandated programs.
- Lead consultation processes with program divisions, HSSAs, GNWT departments, professional associations, provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous governments, and other stakeholders as required regarding policy and legislative proposals.
- Lead in the development and conduct of public engagement processes related to program, policy, and legislative proposals, including analyzing the results of public engagement.
- Maintain and/or build strong relationships with key stakeholders.
- Meet with legal and legislative counsel to ensure draft legislation accurately reflects the intent of the proposed legislation and policy goals of the Department.
- Provide substantiation for policy and legislative proposals to Executive Council, its committees, and related central agencies.
- Lead the development of governing instruments for health and social services boards, including directives and contribution agreements.
- Lead preparation of major presentation or briefing materials required by the Deputy Minister and Minister on policy and legislative projects.
- Develop strategic approaches to dealing with current and emerging policy issues.

**3. Evaluate departmental and GNWT policies and programs to determine their effectiveness in meeting legislative requirements.**

- Lead reviews of policies, programs, operating procedures, and activities to assess and ensure compliance with departmental, territorial, and federal legislation.
- Review departmental and GNWT policy proposals, programs, and activities for compliance with departmental legislation.
- Provide advice on the legal implications of various initiatives that fall within the Department's mandate.
- Recommend policy approaches that would remain consistent with existing legislation or advise on legislative changes required to allow for specific policy approaches.



**4. Ensure the effective administration of response to departmental legal issues.**

- Review departmental and GNWT policies and other governing instruments to provide advice on specific legal concerns.
- Lead departmental requests for legal opinions and refer to Department of Justice for legal advice where necessary.
- Provide advice and support on legal issues as required and propose approaches to dealing with legal issues that have been identified.
- Lead the review of documents, including contracts, memoranda of understanding, and proposed policies, and referring for legal opinions where necessary.
- Participate in the preparation of strategies and supporting documents (briefing notes, Ministerial statements, submissions to the Executive Council and Financial Management Board, and information for Standing Committees as required) regarding any legal proceedings in which the Department may be involved.
- Review documents for Aboriginal self-government negotiations and activities to provide advice on issues where there may be legislative or legal implications.
- Review requests and provide advice on the disclosure of information under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

**5. Participate in intergovernmental policy and legislative activities by leading the development of and/or providing Departmental positions and perspectives on shared policy and legislation initiatives.**

- Represent the Department at FPT meetings of related to policy and legislation initiatives.
- Lead departmental contributions for the development of nation-wide initiatives that support modernized legislative and policy frameworks.
- Liaise with FPT counterparts in the preparation of joint policy papers.
- Lead the research, analysis, and development of recommendations on key issues with legislative or policy implications for the Department.
- Ensure completion of commitments made at relevant FPT tables.
- Coordinate the review and development of interdepartmental/governmental protocols and agreements.
- Maintain constant and effective communication with colleagues across the GNWT and all other jurisdictions.

**6. Co-ordinate and manage self-government activities for the Department.**

- Lead the GNWT's participation in Coordination Agreement and Fiscal Agreement discussions under federal distinctions-based legislation related to health and social services, such as An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families.
- Ensure the interests of the GNWT and residents of the NWT are fully taken into account in all Indigenous relations work.



- Anticipate and strategize to prevent or mitigate legal, constitutional, and technical conflict or issues arising from Agreement proposals.
- Where applicable, support or carry out the GNWT's legal duty to consult with Indigenous parties.
- Develop departmental positions in the various subject areas.
- Ensure consistency of positions across tables, and between the subject areas.
- Ensure all positions comply with GNWT and departmental policies and legislation.
- Attend negotiating sessions on behalf of the Department, as required.
- Advise Senior Management, the Deputy Minister, the Minister, and other GNWT departments with respect to the negotiation of inherent rights in relation to health and social services delivery.

**7. Manage human and financial resources of the unit in order to meet divisional and departmental objectives.**

- Manage the unit's budget.
- Ensure unit staff have access to necessary resources, supplies, equipment, and information.
- Inform staff about governmental, departmental, and divisional priorities.
- Develop and implement annual work plans which establish short and long term objectives for the unit.
- Organize staff, contracts, intergovernmental committees, information resources.
- Complete human resource functions within the division, including staffing and performance reviews, discipline, etc.
- Identify training requirements and opportunities for staff.

**8. Perform other tasks, duties, and functions as assigned by the Director, including acting as the Director when required.**

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical Demands**

No unusual demands.

**Environmental Conditions**

No unusual conditions.

**Sensory Demands**

No unusual demands.





## **Mental Demands**

No unusual demands.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Ability to analyze, evaluate, interpret, and synthesize a wide range of complex information, including legislation, policies, FPT and department initiatives, Cabinet and FMB direction, financial data, legislative proposals, and strategic plans, and apply it within the unique sociopolitical environment in the NWT.
- Legislative and policy knowledge and application, including the ability to read and interpret legislation, regulation, and policy, and to understand the impact of policy changes on programs and services in a way that can be contextualized for colleagues, staff, and the public.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire knowledge of relevant GNWT programs, policies, and structures.
- Understanding of the impacts of colonization, institutional and structural racism and biases have had on society and the Indigenous population.
- Knowledge of geographic, social, and political issues and factors which affect the delivery of health and social services in the field.
- Knowledge of negotiating and the ability to communicate with diplomatic skills in order to calmly and assertively express and defend the views of the GNWT.
- Knowledgeable about Indigenous, national, provincial/territorial, and domestic political environments and other governments' positions and policies, and be capable of assessing possible implications for the NWT.
- Knowledge of research and analysis.
- Familiarity with key pieces of NWT and Federal legislation that relate to departmental operations.
- Leadership and management skills, including decision making skills; the ability to assign, delegate, and coordinate work assignments and projects; and ability to manage conflicting and rapidly changing priorities.
- Strategic thinking ability.
- Conflict-resolution skills.
- Ability to manage complex issues of a sensitive and confidential nature.
- Ability to work in highly stressful situations.
- Ability to work under tight deadlines and respond effectively to frequently changing deadlines.
- Ability to effectively represent the Department and its position accurately and professionally.
- Ability to adapt communication styles to multiple cultural environments.
- Ability to engage the public in a culturally appropriate manner both in writing and orally.



- Ability to incorporate the perspectives of all members of the community in decision-making processes.
- Skilled in teamwork with members from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.
- Ability to consider diverse literacy levels across the general population when developing documents and resources.
- Financial management, organizational and time management skills.
- Conceptual, oral, and written communication skills.
- Ability to operate a personal computer with a high degree of proficiency, as well as to work with a wide range of computer applications, including word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

An undergraduate degree in the Social Sciences and five (5) years of relevant experience including one (1) year of supervisory or team lead experience.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Position Security**

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

**French language** (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☐ French preferred

**Indigenous language:** Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred