



Ontario

Introductory Statement

On May 27, 2021, Ontario released [Pathways to Safety: Ontario's Strategy in Response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), the province's response to the National Inquiry. We are grateful for the strong, resilient voices of Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and Asexual plus (2SLGBTQQIA+) people who bravely shared their experiences and offered their advice and expertise to guide our path forward.

Ontario's whole-of-government strategy seeks to address the complex and long-standing root causes of violence against women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Ontario is building a future where all Indigenous women, children and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people live in safety and security, free from violence and exploitation, supported by accountable and ongoing systemic and structural changes.

Current Progress

Ontario worked in collaboration with the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council to develop Pathways to Safety. Members of the Council are Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ leaders and violence prevention experts from across the province.

Ontario has a strong foundation of well-established initiatives that have demonstrated positive outcomes – initiatives Indigenous partners have named as wise practices that should be followed. Some of the key initiatives being bolstered under the Strategy include: Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy; a distinct Indigenous approach to Child Welfare Redesign; the Family Well-Being Program; and, the Indigenous Healing and Wellness program.

Fulfilling the 231 Calls for Justice will require long-term, ongoing, systemic, structural, government-wide actions guided by the following principles:

- ★ Anti-Indigenous racism and equity
- ★ Partnership and collaboration
- ★ Local, specific and tailored interventions
- ★ Sustainability, responsibility and accountability.

Ontario's strategy integrates initiatives across 12 ministries to support six pathways for action connected to the four principles identified by the National Inquiry. The actions under these six pathways will help create the systemic changes required to eliminate the root causes of violence, restore Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples' power and place within society, and advance meaningful reconciliation.



Pathways for Action:

★ **Pathway to Safety and Security: Prevention and Healing:**

- ★ Promoting safety, healing and wellness for Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people through prevention-focused resources, investments and programs.

★ **Pathway to Culture: Education and Language:**

- ★ Focusing on Indigenous-informed approaches to education, training, employment and language revitalization in First Nation, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities.

★ **Pathway to Health and Well-Being: Community-Led Renewal and Restoration:**

- ★ Ensuring Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+-centered approaches to health system delivery, including programs and services to improve access, promote safety, and increase culturally relevant services across Ontario.

★ **Pathway to Justice: Systems Transformation and Structural Change:**

- ★ Focusing on systems-wide transformation informed by Indigenous perspectives in priority areas including justice, policing, and child welfare.

★ **Pathway to Responsibility and Accountability:**

- ★ Delivering strong accountability measures, including a performance measurement framework and an annual progress report together with Indigenous partners to be released annually on or before June 3rd.

★ **Pathway to Identifying and Addressing Systemic Anti-Indigenous Racism and Indigenous Gender Based Analysis:**

- ★ Focusing on a government-wide approach to addressing anti-Indigenous racism and developing an Indigenous gender-based analysis approach to inform Ontario's strategy.



Priorities and Next Steps

An integral part of Ontario's strategy is to work with Indigenous partners to develop a performance measurement framework, to report publicly on progress, and to identify areas for further work. Strengthened by this renewed commitment to meaningful progress, Ontario will continue to collaborate with Indigenous partners, including the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council, to ensure Indigenous voices guide implementation of the strategy.

Closing Statement

Ontario is building upon the strong work we have done together and focusing on advancing cross-cutting change across all sectors of society to more fully respond to the complex and long-standing issues that continue to impact Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. In partnership with Indigenous leaders and organizations, we will continue on these pathways to safety by confronting and eliminating the root causes of violence so future generations of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people are safe to live their lives free from violence.

As Ontario looks forward, we are working with the guidance of Indigenous partners to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous youth in the justice system. We are improving access to health services, supporting postsecondary Indigenous learners and addressing widespread systemic racism experienced by Indigenous peoples in our health care system. Finally, Ontario will build improved awareness of anti-Indigenous racism among the Ontario Public Service.

