



Prince Edward Island



Introduction

A Message from the Premier of Prince Edward Island

As Premier of the Province of Prince Edward Island, I am pleased to provide our jurisdiction's progress towards implementing the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice. This work signifies PEI's commitment to ending violence against Indigenous women and girls and provides an update of existing and ongoing initiatives to address these issues.

In March 2020, recognizing that a review and implementation of the Calls for Justice will require an effort across all departments, Executive Council approved a process to establish an Interdepartmental Working Group and an Indigenous Working Group to determine and coordinate priorities, next steps, and future actions within the provincial jurisdiction. I am proud of the close collaboration over the past year between the Province, the Lennox Island First Nation, Abegweit First Nation, the PEI Aboriginal Women's Association, Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI and the Native Council of PEI through the MMIWG Indigenous Working Group. To date, PEI has tabled in the Provincial Legislature two updates that provide an overview of initiatives the Province of Prince Edward Island has undertaken in recent years to improve the overall health, safety and wellbeing of the Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous people on Prince Edward Island.

The Province remains firmly committed to working together to advance reconciliation and achieve positive and lasting outcomes for the Mi'kmaq and all Indigenous people on the Island.

Current Progress in Prince Edward Island

The implementation of the Calls for Justice will require extensive coordination across jurisdictions and departments at all levels of government. The Government of PEI has taken a staged approach to the work of implementing recommendations in the Final Report.

Since the release of the Final Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the Government of PEI has committed to reporting on the status of the implementation of the Calls for Justice through a report tabled in the Legislative Assembly each spring. In order to chart a path forward, it is important to have a clear idea of where we are and where we have been. As a first stage of approach, information was gathered across government departments to report on any work related to MMIWG and the Calls for Justice completed or ongoing.

This preliminary report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in June 2020 and can be found [here](#).

Looking forward, the Province of PEI has endeavored to center the perspectives and voices of Indigenous people in a process of engagement and collaboration that advances the work of addressing violence against Indigenous women and girls and responding to the Calls for Justice Recommendations.

In Spring 2020, the Government of PEI established a Coordinating Committee with representatives from the Indigenous Relations Secretariat, Interministerial Women's Secretariat, and Justice and Public Safety Victim Services. The Committee was tasked with developing a process to respond to the Calls for Justice and advance the work of eliminating violence against Indigenous women and girls. Through this process, two working groups were created; an Indigenous Working Group and an Interdepartmental Working Group.

The Indigenous Working Group consists of representatives appointed by Lennox Island First Nation, Abegweit First Nation, PEI Aboriginal Women's Association, Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, and the Native Council of PEI. Through a number of meetings over the last year, the Coordinating Committee has worked closely with the Indigenous Working Group to gather ideas to inform concrete actions to address the most immediate priorities of the Indigenous community in PEI and advance the implementation of the Calls for Justice.

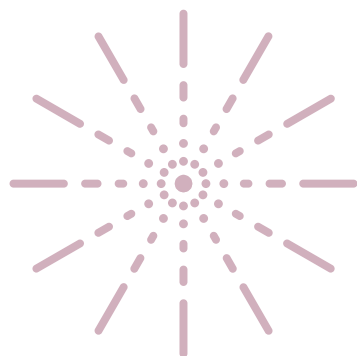
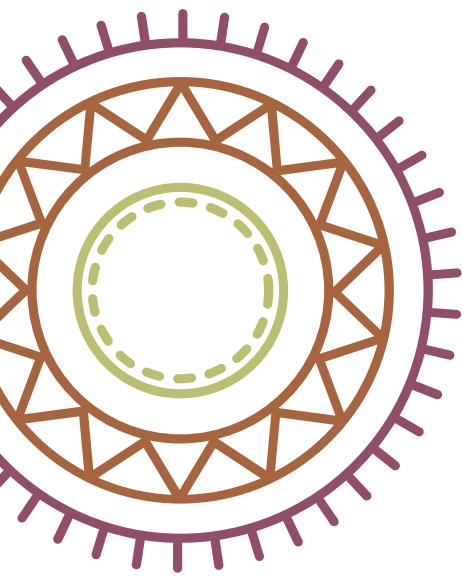
The Interdepartmental Working Group includes representatives from each provincial government department and works in conjunction with the Indigenous Working Group. These representatives advance the work of addressing the Calls for Justice by identifying opportunities within their respective departments that meet the recommendations set out in the Final Report and assist in the coordination of information flow for reporting purposes.

Priorities and Next Steps

Prince Edward Island's second status report on MMIWG was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 5, 2021. The full report can be accessed [here](#). This report not only details the work related to MMIWG being done by Departments, but in collaboration with the Indigenous Working Group, the Government of PEI has also identified immediate action items informed by the priorities outlined by the Indigenous Working Group. These include:

- ★ the development of an Indigenous Health Navigator
- ★ a dedicated funding stream for Indigenous housing
- ★ a fund to support the organizations represented on the Indigenous Working Group in their ongoing participation in this process
- ★ compulsory cultural training for the public service to enhance education and understanding of Indigenous history in Canada and the impacts of colonialism and intergenerational trauma

Through this process, it is of utmost importance that we ensure that we are listening to the Indigenous community. These immediate actions are meant to address some of the crucial themes that emerged over the course of the Indigenous Working Group meetings; better access to health care for Indigenous people, more education and awareness of Indigenous issues in the general public, an increased need for housing, and support for communities and organizations to continue MMIWG work. The above commitments are also meant to complement the work already underway in government. The Government of PEI recognizes that these commitments do not represent an exhaustive effort to address the Calls for Justice, nor do they represent the entirety of the priorities outlined by the Indigenous Working Group; they represent a point on a continuum as we move forward in the implementation of the Calls for Justice.



Closing

The Government of PEI is proud of the progress we have made to respond to the Calls for Justice since the Final Report was released. We know, however, that there is a lot more to be done to ensure better outcomes for Indigenous people in PEI and across the country. Tackling systemic issues of racism, colonialism, and the resulting intergenerational trauma does not make for light work; it will require a strategic and concerted effort that pays attention to a complex spectrum of social, economic, historical, cultural, and political factors. Through the process we have developed, we hope to create a foundation from which we can build upon to tackle the forces of oppression through a collaborative effort that places Indigenous voices and perspectives at the center of this work.

I would like to extend special thanks to the PEI Mi'kmaq First Nations and Island Indigenous organizations for their guidance and engagement in this process. Their ongoing advice and feedback will act as a compass as we navigate the path forward to ending violence against Indigenous women and girls together.