



**LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA  
AND  
ISLAND HEALTH**

This Letter of Understanding made this 22 day of March, 2019

Hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”

**WHEREAS** the Métis are a distinct Aboriginal people who are recognized in Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act (1982)<sup>1</sup>;

**WHEREAS** the mandate of the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) is to develop and enhance opportunities for Métis Chartered Communities throughout British Columbia by implementing culturally relevant social and economic programs and services;

**WHEREAS** the Métis Nation British Columbia signed the Métis Nation Relationship Accord II with the Provincial Government, November 2016;

**WHEREAS** the Métis Nation Relationship Accord II identifies health (community, families and individuals) and data collection as two of its nine objectives;

**WHEREAS** the Métis Nation British Columbia has signed the Métis Community Governance Charter with the 6 Métis Chartered Communities of:

- Cowichan Valley Métis Association
- Mid-Island Métis Nation Association
- North Island Métis Association
- Alberni-Clayoquot Métis Association
- MIKI'SIW Métis Association
- The Métis Nation of Greater Victoria Association

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1 for information on the Métis Nation British Columbia, including the Métis Nation Relationship Accord.

**WHEREAS** Island Health provides health care to the residents of the Island Health region as prescribed in the Health Authorities Act, Section 5(1) and Section 5(2)<sup>2</sup>.

### **Definitions**

In this Letter of Understanding:

1. Métis means an Aboriginal person as defined in Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act (1982); who identifies themselves as Métis, is of historic Métis National Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.
2. "Métis Community" means a group or body of Métis persons in subparagraph (1) above living in the same place, gathered closely together in forming a recognizable unity, having common characteristics and a community of interest based on Métis language, culture, history and traditions.
3. "Joint Committee" refers to a committee jointly established by the Parties to oversee the implementation and review of the Letter of Understanding.

### **Purpose**

The Purpose of this Letter of Understanding is to recognize and acknowledge that:

1. The Parties have common goals of (a) equitable access to health services and (b) improved health and wellness outcomes, for Métis people within the Island Health region.
2. The Parties agree that the Métis Nation BC Regional Governance Councils of Vancouver Island in the Island Health region have the responsibility as elected officials of the Métis Nation British Columbia, to advise and influence the delivery of Aboriginal health services provided within the Island Health region, for their respective communities.
3. The Parties agree to ensure that the planning and delivery of health services to Métis individuals, family and communities within the Island Health region are culturally appropriate.

### **Principles**

This Letter of Understanding is based upon the following principles:

1. Collaboration and inclusion
2. Mutual respect and cultural recognition
3. Transparency
4. Reciprocal accountability
5. Integrity

### **THEREFORE THE PARTIES HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING UNDERSTANDING:**

1. This Letter of Understanding constitutes a framework in which the Parties will work together to increase the influence of the Métis Nation British Columbia in decisions related to health services that impact Métis individuals, families and communities within the Island Health region (see map in Appendix 3). This framework encompasses new approaches to how Métis health services may be initiated and how Métis communities are meaningfully engaged in planning with Island Health through the Joint Committee.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 2 for more information.

2. The Parties will support the Métis Chartered Communities to maximize their capacity to meaningfully participate in the planning and provide direction in the planning and delivery of health programs to Métis individuals, families and communities.
3. Recognizing the importance of the social determinates of health, the Parties will seek to improve the health outcomes for Métis individuals, families and communities by effective shared decision-making and shared accountability that will (a) reduce both real and perceived barriers and (b) improve access to health services.
4. Métis Nation British Columbia will aspire to have continued participation in Island Health's Aboriginal Health Council supporting the health and wellness of Métis people within the Island Health region depending on capacity for Island Health to support this participation.
5. The Parties will use a cooperative, collaborative approach to improving the health status of Métis individuals, families and communities through the design, delivery and evaluation of health services.

The Parties will identify the available human, financial and capital resources (both internal and external) that are required to achieve the purpose of this Letter of Understanding. Island Health will work with Métis Nation British Columbia to better understand the needs of Metis people and how these needs can be addressed within the Island Health region.

Notwithstanding anything else to the contrary in the Letter of Understanding, Island Health and Metis Nation agree that this Letter of Understanding is intended to be a general statement of goals but is not intended to create, and does not create, legally binding obligations on the parties, nor is it enforceable against either of the parties in any court of law or otherwise.

#### **Evaluation of the Letter of Understanding**

The Parties will review the effectiveness of the Letter of Understanding and undertake a formal evaluation prior to any renewal or review based on criteria agreed by the Joint Committee.

#### **Dispute Resolution**

1. The focus of the dispute resolution process is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of Métis individuals, families and communities.
2. In the event of a dispute between Métis Nation British Columbia and Island Health with respect to the interpretation, application or implementation of this Letter of Understanding, if the Joint Committee is unable to resolve the dispute, the issue will be passed to the respective signatories within the Parties for resolution.

#### **Term**

1. The Term of the Letter of Understanding will be five years from the date of its signing.
2. The Letter of Understanding may be renewed with written consent of both Parties.
3. Either Party may terminate this Letter of Understanding providing sixty days written notice including the reason for the termination.

Dated on the 22 day of March, 2019:

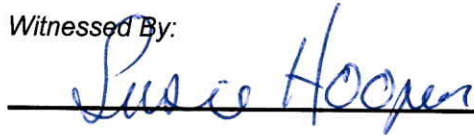


**Clara Morin Dal Col**  
President  
Métis Nation British Columbia



**Leah Hollins**  
Chair, Island Health

Witnessed By:



**Susie Hooper**  
Minister of Health  
Métis Nation British Columbia

Witnessed By:



**Kathryn MacNeil**  
President and CEO  
Island Health

## MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA BACKGROUNDER

Métis Nation British Columbia was established in 1996 and continues to evolve today as an accountable governance structure, working on behalf of the 89, 405 Métis people in BC (2016 Census) including over 18,000 provincial registered Métis Citizens. In BC, there are currently thirty-eight (38) Métis Chartered Communities with registered community members, in seven regions throughout BC. The provincial Board of Directors of MNBC, along with the Métis Women of BC (MW-BC) and the Métis Youth of BC (MY-BC) are elected by Métis Citizens through provincial mail-in elections.

The Board of Directors consists of seven (7) Regional Directors, a provincial Women's Representative and a provincial Youth Representative, Vice President and President. Métis Nation BC has three (3) levels of governance, which include: the thirty-eight (38) Chartered Communities, seven (7) Regional Governance Councils and the MNBC Board of Directors.



In November 2016 MNBC signed a historic bilateral agreement with the Provincial Government. The Métis Nation Relationship Accord II (MNRA II) provides the framework for the Province of BC and for MNBC to strengthen existing relationships, including those formed by the Tripartite Self-Government Negotiations (TSN) Process. The Accord also provides support to move forward collaboratively to close the gap in the quality of life of Métis Citizens in relation to Non-Aboriginal residents of BC. The MNRA II highlights Health as one of the nine priorities.



## BRITISH COLUMBIA

*BRITISH COLUMBIA is a place defined by its history, diversity and people. In recognition of the important role the Métis people play in our province, its past, present and future, the Province of British Columbia and the Métis Nation of British Columbia come together on this day, May 12, 2006, to sign a new accord that commits us all to strengthen our relationship and improve the quality of life of the Métis people of our province.*

*We recognize our shared responsibility and desire to ensure that all British Columbians have the opportunity to participate fully in, and benefit from, the prosperity and opportunities created in a united and strong British Columbia. We do this in the spirit of respect, recognition and renewal that reflects the true nature, heart and vision of the people and communities of this province.*

Handwritten signature of Gordon Campbell in blue ink.

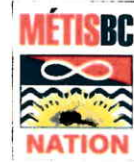
PREMIER GORDON CAMPBELL

Handwritten signature of Tom Christensen in blue ink.

HONOURABLE TOM CHRISTENSEN  
MINISTER OF ABORIGINAL RELATIONS  
AND RECONCILIATION



# MÉTIS NATION RELATIONSHIP ACCORD II



WHEREAS the history of Canada has been greatly influenced by the Métis people who emerged in west central North America with their own language (Michif), culture, traditions, and self-government structures;

AND WHEREAS Métis people have played an important role in the history of Canada, guiding the early explorers and working as fur traders;

AND WHEREAS these Métis people refer to themselves, and are referred to by others, as the Métis Nation;

AND WHEREAS this recognition of the participation of the Métis people in the development of Canada is noted in section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, which states that the Aboriginal peoples of Canada includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Canada has declared that Métis people, including those residing in BC, are included and recognized under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867;

AND WHEREAS at the First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal Issues in Kelowna on November 25, 2005, First Ministers committed to strengthening relationships with Aboriginal people based on mutual respect, responsibility and sharing as well as collaboratively working with Aboriginal people in order to close the gap in the quality of life for Aboriginal people in Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia and Métis Nation British Columbia signed the Métis Nation Relationship Accord in May 2006 specifically to strengthen relationships with Métis people and close the gap in the quality of life for Métis people in British Columbia, and now wish to renew and build upon that Accord;

Now therefore the Parties agree as follows:

## 1. OBJECTIVES OF THE MÉTIS NATION RELATIONSHIP ACCORD II

- Continue to strengthen existing relationships based on mutual respect, responsibility and sharing
- Continue to improve engagement, coordination, information sharing and collaboration.
- Continue to work toward meeting the commitments of the First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal issues as they pertain to Métis people and their aspirations to close the gap on the quality of life between Métis people and other British Columbians.

## 2. SUBJECT MATTERS FOR THE MÉTIS NATION RELATIONSHIP ACCORD II PROCESS

The Parties agree on the following as a preliminary list of subject matters for the Métis Nation Relationship Accord II process. The Parties recognize that some work is already being undertaken in these areas and these efforts provide a foundation for enhanced work:

- Children and Families
  - Education (Lifelong Learning) and Training
- Economic Opportunities (Including Procurement Opportunities with Crown Corporations)
- Health (Community, Family, Individual)
- Housing

Information sharing

Justice

Métis Identification and Data Collection

Wildlife Stewardship

Additional topics may be added at the request of the Parties to the agreement.

## 3. THE MÉTIS NATION RELATIONSHIP ACCORD II PROCESS

The Parties agree to continue to work toward the 2005 First Ministers' Meeting commitments and when appropriate, utilize a tripartite process in order to implement the objectives of the Métis Nation Relationship Accord II.

To support this relationship, the Parties to the agreement will each appoint two senior officials. These officials shall constitute the Métis Nation Relationship Accord II Secretariat. The Secretariat's primary roles will be to encourage the implementation of the provisions of the Accord and to review the progress of the implementation on an ongoing basis.

The Secretariat will assist in the coordination of strategies designed to address the social and economic gaps and arrange meetings on subject matters listed in section 2. Each Party will have the responsibility to ensure that relevant representatives will be in attendance based on the agenda topic.

Once a year, the Parties will make best efforts to convene a meeting between the President of the Métis Nation British Columbia and the Province of British Columbia as represented by the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

The Parties agree that the Métis Nation Relationship Accord II process will continue to support the overall multilateral process agreed to at the First Ministers' Meeting on Aboriginal Issues in November, 2005.

## 4. ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

The Secretariat will prepare a joint progress report on results achieved under the Accord no later than March 31st each year, which the Parties will post on the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and Métis Nation British Columbia websites.

## 5. GENERAL

The Métis Nation Relationship Accord II process will also recognize and respect existing bilateral and tripartite processes that are in place between the Parties.

For greater certainty, nothing in this Accord changes, affects, infringes on, or limits existing bilateral and tripartite processes now in place between the Parties but is intended to complement and enhance existing dialogues.

This Accord does not recognize, deny, define, affect or limit any Aboriginal rights within the meaning of Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

The Parties acknowledge the Government of Canada also has an important role to play in closing the gap in quality of life for Métis people in British Columbia. The Parties will work diligently to engage the Government of Canada while maintaining their shared commitment to progress towards the objectives of this agreement Accord.

Signed this 16<sup>th</sup> day of November in the year 2016.

On Behalf of the  
Province of British Columbia

On Behalf of the  
Province of British Columbia

On Behalf of the  
Métis Nation British Columbia

THE HONOURABLE JOHN RUSTAD  
Minister of Aboriginal Relations  
and Reconciliation

MARC DALTON  
Parliamentary Secretary for Métis Relations

CLARA MORIN DAL COL  
President, Métis Nation British Columbia

### Island Health Authority Roles and Responsibilities

Island Health Authority's roles and responsibilities according to the purpose and description under the Health Authorities Act. Section 5(1) and Section 5(2) which states that:

"The purposes of a board are as follows:

- (a) To develop and implement a regional health plan that includes
  - (i) The health services provided in the region, or in a part of the region,
  - (ii) The type, size and location of facilities in the region,
  - (iii) The programs for the delivery of health services provided in the region,
  - (iv) The human resource requirements under the regional health plan, and
  - (v) The making of reports to the minister on the activities of the board in carrying out its purposes
- (b) To develop policies, set priorities, prepare and submit budgets to the minister and allocate resources for the delivery of health services, in the region, under the regional health plan;
- (c) To administer and allocate grants made by the government for the provision of health services in the region;
- (d) To deliver regional services through its employees or to enter into agreements with the government or other public or private bodies for the delivery of those services by those bodies;
- (e) [Repealed 2002-61-4] therefore not applicable;
- (f) To develop and implement regional standards for the delivery of health services in the region;
- (g) To monitor, evaluate and comply with Provincial and regional standards and ensure delivery of specified services applicable to the region.
  - (2) In Carrying out its purposes, a board must give due regard to the Provincial standards and specified services."



MÉTIS CHARTERED COMMUNITIES WITHIN ISLAND HEALTH AUTHORITY REGION

