

Taking Action on Reconciliation

2023-2025



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
British Columbia Branch

Guiding Principles

We are guided by the Calls to Action issued by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, the Calls to Justice issued by the *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, and the lessons from ongoing and future developments.

We are guided by the principles embodied in the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and B.C.'s *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

We acknowledge with regret the significant harm to Indigenous people resulting from the roles the legal system and the legal profession played in the implementation and enforcement of laws and policies in Canada.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit members of CBABC are instrumental in establishing and implementing the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Our commitment is ongoing and we will allocate resources to implement these goals over the short, medium and long term. We will work proactively with other institutions to avoid duplication and coordinate efforts to effectively leverage human and financial resources.

Overview

In September 2018, the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch adopted our first Reconciliation Action Plan. Throughout 2021-22, our Truth & Reconciliation Committee undertook a comprehensive review of the original plan, our progress made, changes within the legal profession, and reports from Indigenous peoples. This engagement included Indigenous and non-Indigenous members throughout the association.

The new CBABC Reconciliation Action Plan was finalized by the CBABC Board of Directors on December 9, 2022, on recommendation of the Truth & Reconciliation Committee. The Plan guides the Board of Directors in establishing priorities and objectives each year and the CBABC staff in executing annual operating plans.

The Plan covers a three-year period from 2023 to 2025. Progress is reported annually in the CBABC Annual Report and a review will be completed in 2025.

Strategic Goals

The CBABC Reconciliation Action Plan includes four Strategic Goals identified as critical to reconciliation. Within each goal, CBABC will undertake specific initiatives over the three-year period covered by this Plan.

Cultural Awareness	CBABC provides Indigenous cultural awareness professional development for our members.
Support & Advancement	CBABC encourages and creates environments for Indigenous lawyers to be welcomed, feel supported and have opportunities for advancement in the legal profession.
Policy & Advocacy	CBABC develops and advocates for law and policy reform to achieve meaningful change for Indigenous people in justice, policy, implementation of <i>DRIPA</i> and regulation of the legal profession.
Governance & Operations	CBABC as an association reflects principles of reconciliation in our governance and operations.

Goal 1: Cultural Awareness

CBABC provides **Indigenous cultural awareness** professional development for our members.

- Maintain an annual Indigenous cultural awareness series including events to recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Increase support for and direction to Section-initiated Indigenous cultural awareness activities.
- Establish and execute a campaign to increase Reconciliation Response Plan development in law firms and organizations employing lawyers.
- Increase initiatives to recognize and support Indigenous lawyers who provide Indigenous cultural awareness programming through CBABC.



Goal 2: Support & Advancement

CBABC encourages and creates environments for Indigenous lawyers to be **welcomed, supported and have opportunities** for advancement in the legal profession.

- Increase Indigenous lawyers' engagement in the CBA.
 - Increase number of Indigenous lawyers in CBABC membership, Aboriginal Lawyers Forum, and in volunteering (committees, sections, speakers, writers).
 - Maintain opportunities for leadership by Indigenous lawyers in CBABC.
- Support Indigenous lawyers and law students in the profession.
 - Engage Indigenous lawyers and law students in CBABC mentorship and coaching programs.
 - Establish relationships between career development officers and Indigenous lawyers in preparation of Indigenous law students for practice.
 - Resource activities of the Aboriginal Lawyers Forum in support of Indigenous lawyers and law students.
 - Identify and support intersectionality in establishing new initiatives (consider Indigenous 2SLGBTQSI+, or Indigenous women, or people with Indigenous and Asian heritage).
- Establish and create initiatives to encourage and support the advancement of Indigenous lawyers in the legal profession.

Goal 3: Advocacy & Policy

CBABC develops and **advocates for law and policy reform** to achieve meaningful change for Indigenous people in justice, policy, implementation of *DRIPA*, and regulation of the legal profession.

- Advocacy on provincial law and policy reform

- Review and renew CBABC positions on law and justice policy reform ([Agenda for Justice; On Matters of Indigenous Justice](#)).

- Monitor the BC Government's progress on CBABC's recommendations, including alignment of the province's laws with UNDRIP.

- Prepare and engage members to understand and apply UNDRIP in CBABC's law and policy reform recommendations.

- Develop and execute advocacy campaign to advance recommendations.

- Advocacy on legal profession regulation

- Develop and establish recommendations to the regulator to apply principles of reconciliation to the regulation of the profession through the rules, Member Services, Practice Advisors, etc.

- Develop and establish recommendations to the Federation of Law Societies of Canada National Committee on Accreditation process to apply principles of reconciliation.

- Advocacy to the courts

- Develop recommendations to judicial education committees regarding Indigenous cultural awareness training.

Goal 4: Governance & Operations

CBABC as an association reflects principles of reconciliation in our **governance and operations**.

- Review and update all governance policies, member programs and communications to reflect CBABC's commitment to reconciliation and the guiding principles.
- Establish a staff position to support staff and volunteers in enhancing and executing CBABC's reconciliation initiatives.
- Continue Indigenous awareness training for staff and ensure new staff are brought up to existing staff awareness levels.
- Monitor and report to members on progress under this Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Support connections and collaboration among committees, the Aboriginal Lawyers Forum and other Sections regarding their contributions to the work under this Plan.

