

Civil Resolution Tribunal
2026 Reconciliation Plan



“Achieving reconciliation is like climbing a mountain — we must proceed a step at a time. It will not always be easy. There will be storms, there will be obstacles, but we cannot allow ourselves to be daunted by the task because our goal is just and it is also necessary.”

The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair

“I want to ask you to get comfortable with discomfort. If Canadians want reconciliation, they can’t turn away.”

Jesse Wentz, Journalist and Broadcaster, Banff Centre Truth and Reconciliation Summit Moderator

"Reconciliation is a way of seeing and living life. It is about being intentional in how we interact with one another—how we show respect. Reconciliation is a shared responsibility between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. I see the potential of reconciliation in so many things, in both small gestures and large public acts. Reconciliation will thrive if we nurture it, in our workplaces and our homes. It will thrive if taught in our schools and our public offices."

Governor General Mary Simon

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Territorial Acknowledgement

The Civil Resolution Tribunal respectfully acknowledges the ancestral territories of more than 200 First Nations throughout British Columbia. We are grateful to carry out our work on these lands. We also acknowledge the rights, interests, priorities, and concerns of all Indigenous peoples - First Nations, Métis, and Inuit – and respect their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments.



Statement by the CRT Chair

Reconciliation is an essential part of our work at the CRT. We know that BC's justice system has not always been safe or accessible for Indigenous peoples, and we are committed to changing that. This updated Reconciliation Plan reflects our responsibility to do better, to listen, and to act.

Our goal is clear: Indigenous peoples should feel welcomed, respected, and safe when they use the CRT. This means increasing awareness of our services, building stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, and ensuring our processes support self-determination and cultural safety.

We are also committed to making the CRT a place where Indigenous people see themselves reflected—in our staff, in our tribunal members, and in the way we work. Representation matters. So does the environment we create for the people who choose to work with us.

This plan sets out practical, meaningful steps toward these goals. We recognize this won't happen overnight. It will evolve as we continue learning from Indigenous peoples and partners. Reconciliation is ongoing work, and we understand that trust is built through consistent action.

Thank you for engaging with this plan and for supporting our commitment to a more accessible, more just, and more culturally safe tribunal for everyone we serve.

Shelley Lopez

Chair, Civil Resolution Tribunal



About the Civil Resolution Tribunal

The Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) is Canada's first online tribunal. It is quasi-judicial, independent, and neutral, operating under the authority of the *Civil Resolution Tribunal Act*. The CRT helps people resolve disputes in the following areas:

- Small claims \$5,000 and under
- Vehicle accident disputes, including accident benefits and fault determinations
- Strata property disputes, regardless of amount
- Incorporated societies
- Cooperative associations
- Claims about sharing or threatening to share an intimate image without consent

We focus on resolving disputes through collaboration and problem-solving rather than a traditional courtroom approach. We offer quick access to legal information, self-help tools, and resolution services to help settle claims early. If participants can't agree through negotiation or facilitation with a CRT case manager, a tribunal member will make a binding decision that can be enforced by the courts.

For claims involving intimate images, our top priority is ensuring the process is fair, safe, and accessible for vulnerable applicants. These claims are fast-tracked to reduce harm. A case manager works with the applicant from the beginning to help them submit their evidence and arguments so that a tribunal member can issue an order quickly.

In delivering its services, the CRT is guided by 5 core principles that shape its processes and decision-making: timeliness, flexibility, accessibility, affordability, and efficiency. The CRT continually works to strengthen its ability to uphold these principles in a changing and resource-constrained environment.

The CRT Process

The CRT is an online tribunal by design. Because of this, we do not have a physical, public-facing office. Our online model is meant to improve access to justice by letting people use the CRT at times that work for them, including evenings and weekends.

CRT case managers have flexibility in determining how facilitation or settlement discussions will take place: by phone, email, with all parties together or separately.

Parties who choose to self-identify as Indigenous can tell their case manager about any cultural supports or adaptations they need, including an oral hearing. The CRT has built this into its new Rule 10.1(5)(b), which lists Indigenous identity as a factor in considering oral hearing requests.

With proportionality in mind, most CRT hearings are done in writing. This usually means people do not need to take time off work or attend an in-person hearing. If a tribunal member determines an oral hearing is needed, it is held by video or phone.

Our process is much less formal than court. We do not require formal affidavits or sworn evidence. Instead, participants can share their information in a straightforward way that supports fairness and clarity.

Most CRT claims move through 4 stages:

1. Negotiation – the parties try to reach agreement directly.
2. Facilitation – a neutral CRT facilitator helps the parties work toward a resolution.
3. Decision preparation – if the parties do not reach agreement, the file moves to a CRT staff team who direct the parties' submission of evidence and arguments.
4. Decision – a tribunal member makes a binding decision based on the evidence and the law. CRT decisions have the same legal force as a court order and can be enforced in the same way.

For intimate image protection claims, the process is faster. There is no negotiation stage, and a CRT case manager works with the applicant right away so a decision can be issued as quickly as possible.

To support Indigenous participants, the CRT has a Navigator who can help explain each step and assist with navigating the process.

The Role of Tribunal Members

The CRT is committed to improving access to justice, cultural safety, and meaningful representation. In carrying out this Reconciliation Plan, it recognizes the unique and important role of tribunal members.

Tribunal members are independent decision-makers. Their adjudicative independence is fundamental to a fair and impartial tribunal.

This Reconciliation Plan focuses on actions the CRT can take as an organization—through its services, processes, training, and support systems. The CRT supports tribunal members by providing the knowledge, tools, and professional environment needed to make culturally informed and respectful decisions, while fully respecting their independence. All tribunal members have received training in trauma-informed practice and on Indigenous perspectives and culture.

Although the CRT does not direct how individual disputes are decided, this organizational approach enables the CRT to advance reconciliation in a meaningful way while maintaining the integrity of its adjudicative role.



Reconciliation Plan Progress Since 2021: Highlights

In March 2021, the CRT's first [Reconcili\(action\) Plan](#) set out specific, measurable actions towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The plan guided our work to make the CRT a safe and accessible place for Indigenous peoples to access justice. For detailed yearly updates, see the [CRT's annual reports](#).

Equity

CRT Navigator: The CRT Navigator program was created to support a culturally safe environment and helps build and maintain relationships with Indigenous participants. Navigators act as a consistent point of contact to help Indigenous participants understand and navigate the CRT process. CRT Navigators receive training in cultural competency, trauma-informed practice, and cultural humility to assist participants. Since launching in 2020, Navigators have supported 354 participants who self-identified as Indigenous.

Indigenous Summer Law Student: Since 2020, the CRT has hired an Indigenous Summer Law Student each year to provide meaningful work experience and to support reconciliation by increasing opportunities for Indigenous law students in the administrative justice sector, where Indigenous lawyers have historically been underrepresented. Each year from May to August, these students contributed significantly - helping draft the CRT's Reconcili(action) Plan, preparing legal briefs, and delivering training to tribunal staff and members on incorporating Indigenous approaches to dispute resolution and Indigenous law. The CRT hopes to continue this program, subject to available resources.

Reducing Barriers: To address barriers Indigenous people may face when accessing the CRT, we have optimized our website and digital tools for smartphones and other devices, making it easier to find information and complete forms. Paper forms remain available for people living in areas of BC that have poor cellular and internet service. We provide a toll-free number for the public and dispute participants.

Our website contains plain-language information about the dispute resolution process and provides information in a variety of formats including videos, flow charts, infographics, and worksheets. In addition, we offer free telephone interpretation services in over 20 Indigenous languages.

Community

Consultation with Indigenous and Advocacy Organizations: The CRT convened a Community Advisory Council (CAC) in April 2023. The CAC included lawyers and educators from diverse Nations and communities, including the Nisga'a, Namgis, Kwakwaka'wakw, Hagwilget Village, Lheidli T'enneh, Dene, and the Métis Nation of British Columbia. The council met throughout 2023 with the CRT Chair, a Vice Chair, tribunal counsel, and 3 CRT staff members to review the CRT's Reconcili(action) Plan, the CRT website, and tribunal processes. Their work focussed on identifying barriers for Indigenous participants and recommending ways to enhance accessibility and cultural safety. In 2025, the CAC provided its recommendations to help guide the CRT's continued reconciliation work.

In drafting this updated Reconciliation Plan, the CRT has incorporated those recommendations where possible. For example, we updated the Reconciliation page of our website and created a new Indigenous Participants page to make it easier for Indigenous participants to find information about the CRT process and the CRT Navigator services. The CRT provided trauma-informed practice training and cultural competency training to its staff and tribunal members. We have reviewed our website and communication templates that explain our processes, to ensure they are clear and concise. Community engagement is an ongoing goal.

Participation in Community Events: CRT staff have been invited by Indigenous Friendship Centres to share information about the CRT and distribute materials about our services, including the Navigator Program. For example, CRT staff attended the Wachiay Friendship Centre's Legal Information Fair in November 2025. In August 2025, CRT staff took part in the BC Elders Gathering conference in Vancouver. Recognizing the essential role of Elders as teachers, leaders, and knowledge keepers, we shared information about CRT services and listened and to Elders' insights on the needs and priorities of Indigenous peoples across the province.

Education

Five commitments in the Reconcili(action) Plan relate directly to staff and tribunal member training. In 2021-22 we developed a staff and tribunal member Indigenous intercultural training plan.

Training: All new staff and tribunal members completed the Indigenous Perspectives Society’s workshop “Cultural Perspectives Training”, a full-day immersive course exploring the history and ongoing impacts of colonization, Indigenous sovereignty, and allyship. They also completed the Public Service Agency’s “Building Capacity in Indigenous Relations” course, offered by the Public Service Agency. CRT staff and tribunal members are required to complete trauma-informed practice training and training on recognizing implicit bias, with the exception that those who self-identify as Indigenous are offered the opportunity to participate rather than being required to do so.

Shared Learning: In 2023, the CRT began hosting quarterly “shared learning sessions”, 60 to 90-minute facilitated conversations about the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism and the residential school system on Indigenous peoples. Each session began with watching a short film or documentary together, followed by small group discussions and a larger group conversation about the themes raised. These sessions were attended by CRT staff and tribunal members.

Self-study: Each year, CRT staff and tribunal members must also complete 6 hours of training and self-study. Over the life of the Reconcili(action) plan, this has amounted to 2,640 hours of Indigenous learning.

Accountability

The CRT has incorporated territorial acknowledgements into all tribunal staff email signatures, and meetings begin with a land acknowledgment. Staff have received training and are encouraged to offer meaningful acknowledgements that reflect their own learning about the territory where they live and work. We shared updates on the implementation of actions under the Reconcili(action) Plan through our website, blog posts, and the CRT’s annual reports.

Our Commitments



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Our Commitments

The CRT is committed to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through meaningful, sustained action. Guided by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and British Columbia's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), this plan sets out the CRT's ongoing efforts to ensure our tribunal is culturally safe, respectful, accessible, and reflective of Indigenous rights, knowledge, and experiences.

We acknowledge the historical and ongoing impacts of systemic racism, colonialism, and the residential school system, including the trauma, barriers to justice, and underrepresentation of Indigenous voices that continue today. The Canadian legal system has played a role in enforcing colonial policies designed to control and assimilate Indigenous peoples, including through the *Indian Act* and the residential school system.

Reconciliation requires addressing these harms, strengthening relationships, and rebuilding trust through consistent learning, collaboration, and transparency.

To make meaningful progress towards reconciliation, the CRT commits to:

- Providing a welcoming and culturally safe process that fosters, supports, and maintains relationships with Indigenous peoples
- Building trusting and collaborative relationships with Indigenous peoples and organizations to support meaningful knowledge-sharing and better understand how the CRT can meet their needs and priorities
- Continuously improving our practices to ensure Indigenous participants feel heard, safe and supported at every stage of the CRT process
- Providing equitable opportunities for Indigenous peoples as CRT participants and as employees, leaders and tribunal members
- Being accountable for advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples

Alignment with UNDRIP and DRIPA

Our reconciliation commitments align with the principles of UNDRIP and DRIPA, including:

- Self-determination and participation in decision-making
- Recognition and respect for Indigenous laws and legal traditions
- Cultural safety and freedom from discrimination
- Access to justice and effective remedies
- Ongoing, good-faith engagement and collaboration

We will continue to track and reflect developments under BC's Declaration Act Action Plan and identify relevant justice-sector and public-service actions as we implement and update this plan.

Legal Pluralism and the CRT's Role

British Columbia is home to more than one legal system. Many Indigenous communities continue to revitalize and apply their own laws and legal traditions.

Indigenous law arises from Indigenous peoples themselves. It reflects distinct values, teachings, and decision-making processes, and it varies across Nations and communities.

Alongside Indigenous legal traditions, Canada's federal and provincial laws apply throughout the country and the province. The coexistence of these legal systems is often described as legal pluralism—multiple legal orders operating at the same time.

With UNDRIP and DRIPA in mind, how these legal systems interact depends on the specific facts of a dispute. If a matter proceeds to adjudication, it is for the assigned independent tribunal member to determine how the applicable legal frameworks apply.

The CRT applies the legislation in force in British Columbia, as well as the common law. Within that framework, the CRT respects the importance and diversity of Indigenous legal traditions. Where legislation or the courts provide for it, Indigenous law may be applied as part of the legal analysis.

At all times, the CRT can ensure that its processes are culturally safe, respectful, and accessible. The CRT remains committed to listening, learning, and contributing thoughtfully to reconciliation.

Our Approach to Indigenous Engagement

We approach engagement with Indigenous peoples as relationship-centred and guided by:

- Respect for community protocols and the leadership of Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Two-way learning and humility
- Inclusion of diverse voices (First Nations, Métis, Inuit, urban and rural, youth and Elders)
- Consent, transparency, and reciprocity
- Applying what we learn through concrete changes to policies, processes, and services

As we build relationships grounded in reciprocity, respect, and trust, we will ensure that diverse Indigenous voices, cultures, perspectives and ways of knowing inform CRT policies, processes and services.

Indigenous Data Governance and Privacy

The CRT may receive voluntary self-identification information from participants—for example, to access culturally safe supports such as the Navigator Program. When we collect identity information, we will:

- Apply the [CRT's Information Access and Privacy Policy](#)
- Use the minimum information necessary, with clear purpose and consent
- Store and manage information securely and respectfully
- Report externally using aggregated and de-identified data
- Share data only as authorized by law and with explicit consent where applicable

The CRT 2026 Reconciliation Plan

This is an evergreen plan. It will be reviewed and updated regularly in collaboration with Indigenous partners, with progress reported publicly on our website, in annual reports, and through ongoing engagement. Through this work, the CRT aims to contribute meaningfully to reconciliation by creating a tribunal where Indigenous peoples feel welcome, respected, and safe, and where their rights, voices, and perspectives are reflected throughout our organization.

The CRT will report on the implementation of the actions on our website, through blog posts, and in our annual reports.



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Goal 1

**Building Relationships to Improve Awareness
and Accessibility of CRT Services**



Goal 1: Building Relationships to Improve Awareness and Accessibility of CRT Services

Commitments:

1. The CRT will build trust and foster respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples, organizations, governments and communities.
2. The CRT will provide clear, culturally respectful information about its services to Indigenous people to support their access to justice.

Action Plan:

1. As an alternative to self-study, support tribunal staff and members to volunteer for 6 hours per year, during work hours, with Indigenous organizations and communities as a personal commitment to reconciliation, a way to build respectful, trust-based relationships, and as a means to support Indigenous-led initiatives.
2. When invited to do so, staff and tribunal members will attend events to learn and to provide information about CRT services and supports.
3. Develop and distribute accessible, plain-language digital, video and printed informational materials about CRT services to Indigenous advocacy groups and community organizations, Friendship Centres, Métis associations, First Nations government offices, law schools, colleges and universities, and courthouses.
4. Use digital media, including the CRT website and social media, to share information about our services for Indigenous participants, including through a dedicated page on our website.
5. Continue offering services online, by phone, and by mail, including the use of paper forms, to ensure accessibility for those without reliable internet access. This includes offering free telephone interpretation services in over 20 Indigenous languages.
6. Continue to provide fee waivers for low-income participants.

Goal 2

Enhance Cultural Safety
for Indigenous Participants



Goal 2: Enhance Cultural Safety for Indigenous Participants

Commitments:

1. Create a culturally safe, trauma-informed tribunal process where Indigenous participants feel respected, heard, and supported throughout the tribunal process.
2. Incorporate Indigenous cultural practices within the CRT process where appropriate and led by participant needs.

Action Plan:

1. Provide mandatory, Indigenous-led training for tribunal members and staff on cultural safety, trauma-informed practice, and recognizing and addressing implicit bias and micro-aggressions.
2. Support tribunal member professional development on Indigenous legal principles, practices, and treaties.
3. Each year, as an alternative to 6 hours of volunteering, CRT staff and tribunal members will complete 6 hours of training and self-study.
4. Support Indigenous dispute participants by providing access to a CRT Navigator, a consistent source of information and support throughout the process and continue sustained efforts to hire Indigenous staff into this role.
5. Seek voluntary feedback from Indigenous dispute participants to evaluate and improve our processes.
6. Collaborate with Indigenous participants to explore how cultural practices and supports can be incorporated in the CRT process.
7. Continue incorporating alternative dispute resolution strategies by providing facilitated discussions to support voluntary, non-adversarial resolutions.
8. Continue including images of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous artwork on the CRT website and in informational materials, ensuring that individuals have provided clear consent and artists have authorized use of their work.

Goal 3

**Increase Representation of and Support
for Indigenous Peoples
as Tribunal Members and Staff**



Goal 3: Increase Representation of and Support for Indigenous Peoples as Tribunal Members and Staff

Commitments:

1. Actively recruit and support Indigenous tribunal members and staff to ensure that Indigenous voices, perspectives, and legal traditions are meaningfully represented at all levels of the tribunal.
2. Foster an inclusive and supportive workplace culture that values Indigenous perspectives.

Action Plan:

1. Establish best practices for recruitment, training, and retention and create a hiring framework to guide this work.
2. Build and maintain relationships with Indigenous legal organizations to encourage Indigenous applicants for tribunal member positions and share information about preparing successful applications and participating in interviews.
3. Share job postings widely through the CRT's website, social media channels, Indigenous community networks, legal and professional networks, and Indigenous-focused career platforms.
4. Report annually on recruitment strategies, including how and where job postings were shared, and provide information about the hiring of tribunal members and staff who self-identify as Indigenous.
5. Hold yearly information sessions for Indigenous lawyers to provide more information about applying to tribunal member appointment postings.
6. Resources and budget permitting, continue offering a summer position for an Indigenous law student and encourage Indigenous applicants for articling positions to support valuable early-career work experience.
7. Ensure hiring processes are culturally appropriate for Indigenous candidates by:
 - Using job descriptions that value Indigenous knowledge, lived experience, and community leadership.
 - Including contact information for the BC Public Service Indigenous Applicant Advisor in job postings.

- Whenever reasonably possible, including Indigenous people on the hiring committee and interviewers training on racism and unconscious bias, cultural safety, and decolonization.
 - Conducting interviews in ways that recognize and respect Indigenous cultural identities, values, and experiences while ensuring a fair and welcoming process.
8. Offer mentorship programs for Indigenous staff through the Public Service Agency's Indigenous Leadership and Mentorship Program and Indigenous Coaching Services.

Progress Reports

The CRT commits to implementing the actions set out in this plan. We will track our progress and report regularly on our website, through blog posts, and in our annual reports, to ensure transparency in our work.

Thank you

We extend our sincere thanks to the Indigenous community members who generously took the time to review and provide feedback on our draft Reconciliation Plan. Their thoughtful input was invaluable in informing the finalization of this plan.

The Artist

All artwork in this plan is licenced from Clayton Gauthier. Clayton was born in Prince George BC and is Dakelh, Lhts'umusyoo (Beaver Clan) Nak'azdli Whut'en and of Northern Cree descent. He has been making art since he was a child. He is a multimedia artist producing drawings, paintings, carvings, drums, rattles, logos, mirror etchings, tattoos, graphic art, and murals. He is a graduate from the En'owkin Centre's National Aboriginal Professional Artist Training Program (NAPAT).

“Walking this journey as an artist, I have learned a lot about myself and the arts. My bloodline is Cree and Dakelh. The art I produce is revolved around our traditional teachings that we have learned from our Elders, the Spirit within and our Mother Earth. Artwork in my life gives me a feeling of serenity that nothing can replace. I love to share my gifts to the ones who want to learn. We are as beautiful as our art.”

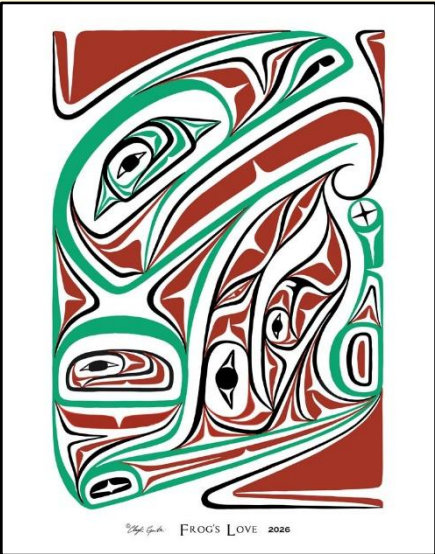
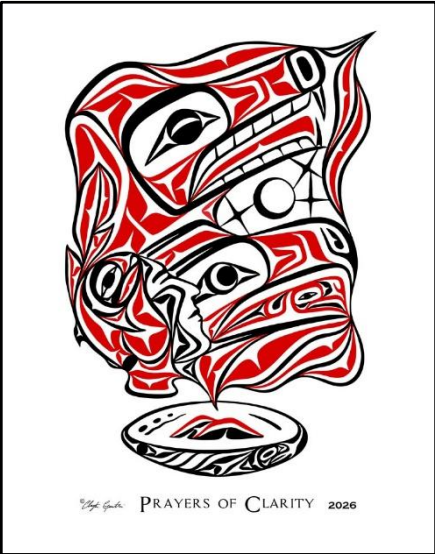
The paintings, “Frog’s Love”, “Chanupas Prayer”, “The Spawn”, and “Prayers of Clarity” honour the connection that Indigenous peoples have with the land and water and share with all peoples. CRT staff and tribunal members are deeply honoured that Clayton shared his work with us.

In 2021, Clayton completed “Nenachalhuya - The Cedar Plank Project” at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George. The 32 carvings surround the walls of Lhuhuhwhezdel: The Gathering Place at UNBC and represent all the various and diverse northern BC First Nations. The artwork on each panel was chosen by northern BC First Nation communities to reflect their community and their students. Nenachalhuya is a Dakelh word meaning “you have done us great honour” or “we are thankful for what you have done”.

Clayton’s work titled “Mother-Caretaker and Child” is the Orange Shirt Day design for 2024 drawing from his personal journey. “Love, as I’ve experienced, is the most powerful gift we give our children.” Clayton is also an author and illustrator of 2 children’s books that incorporate his artistry, his nation’s language, and traditional knowledge. In 2020, Clayton was awarded a Periodical Marketers of Canada Literature Award for his book, “The Bear’s Medicine”.

He hopes to help awaken his nation's language by presenting it though this story which is written in English and translated into Dakelh.

See Clayton Gauthier's carvings and artwork on X @CGauthierArtist or by searching Clayton Gauthier on Facebook.



The Civil Resolution Tribunal

civilresolutionbc.ca