



For immediate release
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Indigenous-led Police Accountability Unit launches in B.C.

OKANAGAN SYILX HOMELANDS, WESTBANK B.C.—The BC First Nations Justice Council has launched a Police Accountability Unit (PAU) to assist Indigenous people affected by police violence, misconduct, or negligence, in B.C.

Responding to the disproportionate level of harmful police interactions experienced by Indigenous communities, the unit supports individuals navigating the complex system of police oversight processes, through free legal supports.

“When one of our community members or our children experiences police violence, we all feel it, and that doesn’t go away. The statistics are there and the pattern of violence and death has been documented time and again. The PAU is a step towards taking police oversight into our own hands on a provincial level. I am proud to share this service with First Nations and Indigenous communities across B.C. who have been asking for somewhere to turn, where they know they will be heard.”

—Cloy-e-iis (Dr. Judith Sayers), BCFNJC Director and Representative for Policing and Oversight, and the President of Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council.

The PAU first launched as a pilot project in 2024 in response to a direct ask from First Nations communities to establish the service. The PAU has since taken on over 220 files, demonstrating the need for the Indigenous-led accountability support—now an official BCFNJC service.

The PAU advances [Strategy 7: Stronger Oversight and Accountability](#) of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy, aligning with BCFNJC's mandate to improve justice outcomes for Indigenous people in B.C. The PAU is an independent program funded by the Law Foundation of BC.

The unit’s staff lawyers provide comprehensive legal services ranging from summary advice, to filing police complaints, to pursuing civil actions in court, to filing complaints before tribunals like the Human Rights Tribunal. The PAU may take on cases related to municipal police forces, RCMP members, bylaw officers, and individuals in other law enforcement roles.

About BCFNJC

BCFNJC represents the 204 First Nations in B.C. on justice-related issues and has been entrusted with the mandate to transform the justice system and create better outcomes for Indigenous people. Through the implementation of the [BC First Nations Justice Strategy](#), BCFNJC is working to reform the current justice system and to support the rebuilding of Indigenous legal structures. Visit [Tracking Justice](#) for more information.

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