



**POLICY: INDIGENOUS CITIZENSHIP VERIFICATION PROCESS**

<b>Date Approved:</b> 7 December 2022
<b>Last Review:</b> March 2024

**Preamble**

The Midwifery Association of British Columbia (MABC) acknowledges the significant contributions of Indigenous midwives in providing safe care to Indigenous and non-Indigenous birthing individuals, newborns, families, and communities across British Columbia (BC). Following the 2021 Arbitration award, the Indigenous Midwives Advisory Council (IMAC) was established to offer strategic guidance in Indigenous midwifery within BC, recommend measures for culturally appropriate sexual and reproductive healthcare for Indigenous peoples, reinforce the recruitment and retention of Indigenous Midwives, and oversee the allocation of funds for Indigenous midwifery.

**Purpose**

In Canada, colonial actions removed Indigenous Peoples from their autonomy, refusing to acknowledge us as self-determining Nations and undermining our sense of belonging. Policies aimed at forced assimilation and displacement disrupted our communities, pushing many to find belonging elsewhere. However, institutions have permitted self-identification for Indigenous Peoples to access resources, aiming to redress past injustices. The current issue of fraudulent identity claims through the self-identification process highlights the critical need for a practice that promotes integrity, transparency, and accountability in processing and verifying Indigenous identity.

This policy delineates a transparent procedure to ensure Indigenous midwives access designated opportunities and support. Additionally, it establishes a mechanism to verify the Indigenous identity of those claiming to be Indigenous Midwives, thereby increasing safety within Indigenous communities and genuine, credible representation amongst stakeholders. The personal documentation provided for citizenship verification is confidential and secured within the MABC internal data management system.

**Verification**

The process validates an individual's claim to Indigenous identity by confirming their citizenship with their Nation and community through either:

1. The midwifery applicant will submit a First Nation or Inuit Status card or a Citizenship Card in a recognized Métis Nations or Beneficiary of either the Nunavut, Inuvialuit (Northwest Territories), Nunatsiavut (Labrador Inuit), Nunavik (James Bay Northern Quebec) specific agreements, or
2. The midwifery applicant will submit two impartial non-relative letters confirming the connection to the identified community.

Further documentation will be requested if necessary.



## MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION of BRITISH COLUMBIA

### **Verification Application Steps**

1. The midwife will email a copy of the document(s) to the IMAC Co-Chairs, found on the MABC website.
  - a. The email is to include complete contact information, including full name, phone number(s), and email(s).
2. Members of IMAC will conduct an Introductory Interview for all applications.
3. IMAC will email verification outcomes within 30 days of document submission and interview completion. Once verified, Indigenous midwives are exempt from repeating the process.
4. At any time, if evidence of substantial fraud is discovered and/or alleged:
  - a. IMAC will organize and lead the verification review within 30 days of the allegations.
  - b. An interdisciplinary-multigenerational group with a minimum of 3 Indigenous members, including Elders, form the final decision.
  - c. The final decision will be communicated and shared by IMAC to provide transparency and accountability to those affected, ensuring our responsibility to our communities of care.

### **Information Storage and Dissemination**

Personal documentation, such as status cards, provided to IMAC for citizenship verification, will be kept confidential and secured within our internal data management platform. This information will only be accessed by the appropriate MABC staff and IMAC members.

In submitting the application, the midwife consents for any organization in possession of personal information relevant to verifying citizenship in any Indigenous Nation, to release all information relevant for this purpose to MABC's Indigenous Midwifery Advisory Council (IMAC). This may include the release of documentary records and consent to engage in discussions or interviews to provide such information orally to any representative of IMAC.

Once IMAC verifies an Indigenous Midwife, MABC may list information about their midwifery practice, including the Midwife's name and practice contact information, on its website. Further, MABC may share this information with other organizations to promote access to Indigenous midwifery for Indigenous individuals, families and communities and to promote connection and collaboration among service providers.

### **Resources**

**First Nation Profiles Interactive Map:** <https://geo.sac-isc.gc.ca/cippn-fnpim/index-eng.html>

#### **Métis Rights – Government of Canada:**

<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100014413/1535468629182>

**Métis National Council:** <https://www.metisnation.ca/about/about-us>

**Inuit Nunangat:** <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/rcaanc-cirnac/Map/irs/mp/index-en.html>

Language Map of Canada: <https://fpcc.ca/stories/first-peoples-map/>



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This formal policy structure ensures clarity, transparency, and respect for Indigenous midwives and communities, aligning with MABC's commitment to supporting Indigenous midwifery and upholding cultural integrity.