



# DECLARATION of COMMITMENT

## Cultural Safety and Humility in Emergency Management Services for First Nations People in BC

Our Declaration of Commitment is an important symbol of our shared intention to embed cultural safety and cultural humility throughout emergency management in British Columbia, recognizing that how emergency management is conducted can have a lasting impact on First Nations health and wellness. We as leaders believe that cultural safety and humility are essential features and attributes of emergency management coordination, specifically where emergency management and health emergency management intersect across the four pillars of emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. This reflects a personal commitment to serve as champions of cultural safety and humility and to create a supportive environment to involve other people and organizations to become champions for positive change in emergency management more broadly.

This Declaration of Commitment is based on the following guiding principles of cultural safety and humility:

- Cultural humility builds relationships founded in mutual trust and respect, and enables cultural safety.
- Cultural safety and humility must be understood, embraced and practiced at all levels of the emergency services system including governance, organizational, and within individual practice.
- We have achieved cultural safety when First Nations and Indigenous People tell us we have.

We, Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), understand that strong leadership and concrete actions at multiple levels are how we will demonstrate our commitment to embed cultural safety and humility as a means to deliver improved coordination and quality of emergency services to First Nations individuals, families, and communities in British Columbia, recognizing that this will also be of benefit to other Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations.

### CREATE A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

- Articulate the pressing need for cultural safety within emergency management services in BC.
- Openly and honestly address concerns and lead by example.
- Support the development of a coalition of influential leaders and role models who are committed to advancing cultural safety and humility.

- Communicate the vision for a culturally safe emergency management system through bringing a cultural humility approach to health emergency management in BC.

### ENGAGE, EDUCATE & ENABLE

- Communicate the vision of a culturally safe emergency management system for First Nations in BC and the absolute need for commitment and understanding on behalf of all coordinated agencies.
- Open an honest and convincing dialogue within our circles of influence to show that change is necessary and is identified in the Chief Maureen Chapman and George Abbott report, *Addressing the New Normal: 21st Century Disaster Management in British Columbia*, the need for compassion in emergency management. The report, *From the Ashes: Reimagining Fire Safety and Emergency Management in Indigenous Communities*, acknowledges the need for training for key staff on traditional cultures and practices in order to ensure that high-quality and culturally appropriate services are delivered. This work is supported by BC implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action 57, the draft 10 principles and the Gender Based Analysis Plus provincial mandate.
- Identify and remove barriers to progress and look for opportunities for synergies and implementation of wise practices into emergency management operations.
- Visibly celebrate accomplishments.

### IMPLEMENT & SUSTAIN CHANGE

- Lead and enable successive waves of action until cultural humility and safety are integrated elements across BC's emergency management system.
- Embed cultural safety and humility training within orientation, learning and development.
- Identify systemic levers to "hardwire" cultural safety and humility into policy, practice and quality.
- Develop and implement cultural safety and humility strategies and workplans to track, report, and evaluate progress for continuous learning.
- Support and implement EMBC's Learning for Reconciliation Strategy.

**SIGNED THIS 22 DAY OF MAY, 2019 ON THE TERRITORY OF THE LEKWUNGEN-SPEAKING PEOPLE.**

Joe Gallagher, Chief Executive Officer  
First Nations Health Authority



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

Lori Halls, Deputy Minister,  
Emergency Management Services



Emergency  
Management BC