



**HANDBOOK FOR EXECUTIVES, MINISTERS AND
MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL MÉTIS COUNCIL**

(Approved by the Provincial Métis Council on November 9, 2019)



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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1.0 PURPOSE

This handbook is intended to present core principles and practices to support the fulfillment of day-to-day roles and responsibilities in the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan’s system of responsible government.

Specifically, it seeks to provide guidance to Executives, Ministers and Provincial Métis Council Members by presenting information on the roles and conduct of Provincial Métis Council Members as well as addressing a range of administrative, procedural and institutional matters to support them in fulfilling the duties of their position. It also provides guidance and useful information for staff and others who support these individuals in achieving their mandate.

PART II: VALUES & ETHICS

2.0 CONFIDENTIALITY, SOLIDARITY, AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

The Members of the Executive and the Members of the Provincial Metis Council (PMC) are responsible for the overall conduct of the affairs of the government. Confidentiality, Solidarity, and Collective Responsibility are critical to good government and are long-standing and necessary features reflected in other governments in Canada and around the world. Together, these principles are meant to encourage and protect the ability to engage in open and frank discussions on issues in private meetings that lead to the best possible collective decisions.

Confidentiality refers to the idea that all discussions, including any individual viewpoints or contrary opinions, expressed at meetings should remain private so that Members feel able to freely express themselves and their ideas and perspectives.

In practice, the principle of confidentiality requires that:

- The deliberations at meetings are kept confidential so that discussions can be as frank as possible and so that no Member need fear speaking his/her mind to his/her colleagues. Full and respectful consideration of different, perhaps opposing, points of view are to be encouraged.
- The obligation to maintain confidentiality of what a person said at meetings extends not only to members of the Executive and PMC but also to staff and invited guests to meetings.
- Minutes of a meeting of PMC are confidential and not for distribution unless authorized by PMC . The minutes should be taken by the Secretary and retained in a secure, confidential place.
- At the end of each meeting, PMC can authorize the sharing of information and how it can be shared (see 2.1 below).

Note that this kind of convention on confidentiality is distinct from general legal and ethical obligations to safeguard personal information officials may be privy to as part of executing their duties. For more on general obligations related to safeguarding of personal information see section 6.0.

Solidarity and Collective Responsibility means that PMC Members may disagree and state their personal opinions during private meetings but must present a unified front on all decisions to the public. Members should publicly support the decisions made by the PMC as a whole. Collectively, PMC Members will be held accountable for these decisions, even if they do not personally agree with them.

In practice, the principles of Solidarity and Collective Responsibility require that:

- When one speaks his/her mind in meetings it is done with respect, courtesy, and a genuine attitude to resolve issues in a collegial way, putting aside personal interests, for the benefit of the Nation as a whole.
- However, once the PMC makes a decision, the minutes shall show whether the decision was unanimous or if a vote was taken and the results of the vote shall be recorded. All Members assume collective responsibility for that decision and should refrain from public criticism of these decisions.

- At times, Members may find themselves in disagreement with a PMC decision, but each Member has an obligation to his/her colleagues, and to PMC as a whole, and to Responsible Government to maintain solidarity with PMC decisions. Exceptions to this are mentioned under **2.0**

2.1 Exceptions to the Principles of Solidarity and Confidentiality

PMC may authorize the sharing of information from a PMC meeting.

If a Member of a Standing Committee or a Member of PMC puts on the record at the meeting where a matter is decided that they do not agree with the decision and that they wish to advise the Assembly of that, an exception can be made by PMC to the principles of Solidarity and Confidentiality.

2.2 Consequences for Breach of the Principles of Solidarity and Confidentiality

Where a Member or staff person breaches confidentiality or solidarity, that Member or staff person may be disciplined by PMC. Censure could include the temporary removal of a Member from PMC by majority vote at PMC.

3.0 CODE OF CONDUCT

3.1 Purpose and Scope

As public office holders, PMC Members must act with honesty and must uphold the highest ethical standards in their personal and professional lives so that Metis citizens' confidence and trust in the integrity of government is maintained and enhanced. This policy establishes minimum expectations for the behavior of Provincial Metis Council and applies to all elected Members.

3.2 Principles

PMC Members should ensure that they adhere to strict standards of conduct guided by the following principles:

Integrity: All PMC members are keepers of the public trust and must uphold the highest standards of ethical behavior. All PMC officials are expected to: make decisions that benefit the Metis community; act lawfully and within the authorities of the Metis Nation Constitution and laws of the Nation; and be free from undue influence and not act, or appear to act, in a way that gains financial or other benefits for themselves, family, friends, or business interests.

Accountability: All PMC members are obligated to answer to the responsibility that has been entrusted to them and are held responsible for the decisions they make. This responsibility includes acts of commission and acts of omission. Decision-making processes must be transparent and subject to public scrutiny with proper records kept and audit trails in place.

Responsibility: All PMC members must act responsibly within the law and within the authorities of the Constitution and Nation Laws ensuring they observe the Code of Conduct. This means disclosing actual or potential conflict of interest relating to their public duties and taking steps to resolve the conflict for the protection of public interest (see section 4.0 for more on conflict of interest). They must exercise all conferred power strictly for the purpose for which the powers have been conferred.

Leadership: All PMC members must demonstrate and promote the key principles of the Code of Conduct through their decisions, actions, and behavior. Their behavior must build and inspire the public's trust and confidence in their government. Behaviour that would undermine public faith in their leaders, such as excessive gambling, aggressiveness and coarse conduct should be avoided.

Respect: All PMC members must conduct public business efficiently, with decorum and with proper attention to the Nations diversity. They must treat each other and others with respect at all times. This means not using derogatory language towards others, respecting the rights of other people, treating people with courtesy and recognizing the different roles others play in government decision making. Members should familiarize themselves with the policy on a Harassment Free Environment (See Appendix D) and ensure they adhere to its principles strictly.

Openness: All PMC members have a duty to be as open as possible about their decisions and actions without breaching any duty respecting confidentiality. This means striking an appropriate balance between communicating information to the public about decision- making processes and issues being considered; encouraging appropriate public participation; communicating clearly; and providing appropriate means for recourse and feedback while also respecting individual privacy and confidentiality.

3.3 General Conduct

When making decisions, All PMC members must consider all relevant facts, opinions and analyses of which they should be reasonably aware.

All PMC members are obligated to question any request to act or make a decision that they think may be unethical or unlawful.

All PMC members must carry out duties in a manner that allows members and the public to remain informed about government activity and practices.

Should there be uncertainty about the ethical issues around a conduct or decision, PMC members should consider the following:

- Is the conduct or decision lawful?
- Is the conduct or decision consistent with MN-S policy and laws, PMC objectives and the Code of Conduct?
- Will the outcome of the decision or conduct provide a private benefit for the individual, family, friends or business interests?
- Can the decision or conduct be justified in terms of the public interest and would it withstand public scrutiny?

3.4 Consequence for Breach

Breaches of the Code of Conduct are subject to the procedures outlined in Section 7.0 of this Handbook.

4.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

4.1 Purpose and Scope

The integrity of the PMC rests on Members making decisions for the benefit of the community. This requires that they be free from undue influence and not act, or appear to act, in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, family, friends, or business interests. This policy sets out rules to govern real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest and applies to all Members.

4.2 Definition

A conflict of interest exists where the Member has private interests that could improperly influence, or be seen to influence, the performance of his or her official duties and responsibilities or in which the Member uses his or her office for personal gain. A *real* conflict of interest exists at the present time, an *apparent* conflict of interest could be perceived by a reasonable observer to exist, whether or not it is the case, and a *potential* conflict of interest could reasonably be foreseen to exist in the future.

4.3 Requirements

PMC members must appropriately resolve any conflict or incompatibility between their personal interests and the impartial performance of their public or professional duties. When considering whether or not a conflict of interest exists, it is important to consider whether there are any grounds for a reasonable person to think that a conflict exists. Members should be mindful of the difference between real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest.

A Member maintains public confidence in the objectivity of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan by preventing and avoiding situations that could give the appearance of a conflict of interest, result in a potential for a conflict of interest or result in an actual conflict of interest. Conflict of interest does not relate exclusively to matters concerning financial transactions or financial gain. While financial activity is important, conflicts of interest in any area of activity can have a negative impact on the perceived objectivity of the Member.

It is impossible to foresee every situation that could give rise to a real, apparent or potential conflict of interest. When in doubt, Members must fully disclose to PMC, in confidence, any direct or indirect pecuniary or other interest or any bias or undue influence with respect to any matter they are dealing with as soon as practicable. If a PMC member is uncertain whether a conflict exists, the situation must be immediately presented to the PMC for guidance.

More specifically, Members duties include:

- Taking all possible steps to recognize, prevent, report, and resolve any real, apparent or potential conflicts of interest between their official responsibilities and any of their private affairs;
- Refraining from having private interests which would be unduly affected by Métis Nation - Saskatchewan matters in which they participate, or of which they have privileged knowledge or information;
- Not knowingly taking advantage of, or benefiting from, information that is obtained in the course of their duties that is not available to the public;

- Refraining from the direct or indirect use of, or allowing the direct or indirect use of Métis Nation - Saskatchewan property of any kind for anything other than officially approved activities;
- Not assisting private entities or persons in their dealings with the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan where this would result in preferential treatment of the entities or persons;
- Not interfering in the dealings of private entities or persons with the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan in order to inappropriately influence the outcome;
- Ensuring that any real, apparent or potential conflict that arises between their private activities and their official responsibilities as a Member is formally brought to PMC and resolved in the public interest.

4.4 Pro-Active Disclosure Requirements

Members are required to report to the PMC all outside activities, assets, liabilities and interests that might give rise to a real, apparent or potential conflict of interest in relation to their official duties. This includes ensuring that they consider the potential for conflicts of interest to arise every time a major change occurs in their personal affairs or official duties. If a real, apparent or potential conflict of interest exists, he or she is to file a report to PMC disclosing the matter in a timely manner.

4.5 Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Examples of conflicts that may be encountered by PMC Members include but are not limited to:

- ***Obligation to others*** - PMC members must not place themselves in a situation where they may be under obligation to someone who has business dealings with the Nation, and who would benefit from special consideration or treatment.
- ***Special advantage/disadvantage*** - When PMC members gain special advantage because of their position or when the Nation is disadvantaged as a result of the other interests of Nation.
- ***Representation to PMC, its Committees, Boards or Tribunals*** - PMC members must not represent any private interest(s).
- ***Litigation involving the NATION*** - PMC members must not be party to any litigation against or involving the Nation.
- ***Use of MN-S-owned equipment*** - PMC members must not use Nation owned equipment, materials, staff time, or property, for purposes other than business related to work of the PMC and the Nation, unless specifically authorized by the PMC.
- ***Discounts/Rebates*** - PMC Members may not take advantage of discounts/rebates on personal purchases from suppliers having an existing business relationship with the Nation, unless those suppliers offer the same discounts/rebates to the general public.
- ***Preferential Treatment*** - PMC members must not expect or request preferential treatment for themselves or their family because of their position. They must also avoid any action that could lead members of the public to believe that they are seeking preferential treatment.

4.6 Conflict of Duties

Members should also be aware of and avoid situations which could give rise to a real, perceived or potential conflict of duties. A conflict of duties arises not because of a Members' private interests, but as a result of one or more concurrent or competing official responsibilities. For example, these roles could include his or her primary position as a Member of PMC and his or her responsibilities in an outside role

that forms part of his or her official duties, such as an appointment to a board of directors, or other outside function.

4.7 Relationship with Affiliates and Other Arms-Length Entities

As custodian of Metis Nation Saskatchewan funds, MN-S elected officials are responsible for ensuring oversight, transparency, and accountability with respect to public funds. As such, MN-S elected officials must be independent and have no real, perceived or potential conflict of interest or duties.

The following independence test criteria should be used to ensure that an elected official is not in conflict of interest and to ensure independence and objectivity when providing policy direction and advice.

An elected official shall not:

- Be a paid employee of an affiliate or associate.
- Accept an honorarium from an affiliate or associate.
- Directly or indirectly benefit financially from MN-S, an affiliate or associate, except to the extent legally allowed through policies of MN-S, such as policies respecting salary and benefits.
- Bill or claim travel or expenses from another organization, whatsoever, if the same has been paid or reimbursed by MNS. Double dipping is not allowable in any circumstances.

Elected officials shall declare all travel, expense claims any kind of reward/salary to the MN-S. If an elected official is not sure whether he/she can collect a fee from an affiliate or associate or another organization, he/she should contact the CFO or the CEO to determine whether the fee is allowed within the rules and policies of MN-S.

In the interest of openness and transparency, MN-S has the right to publish details of an elected official's salaries, travel and other allowances paid by MN-S.

4.8 Outside Employment

Members may be employed outside the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan and take part in outside activities unless the employment or activities are likely to give rise to a real, apparent or potential conflict of interest or would undermine the impartiality of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan or the objectivity of the Member.

Members are required to provide disclose to PMC when their outside employment or activities might subject them to demands incompatible with their official duties or cast doubt on their ability to perform their duties or responsibilities in a completely objective manner. The PMC may require that the outside activities be modified or terminated if it is determined that a real, apparent or potential conflict of interest exists.

4.9 Consequence for Breach

Breaches of the Conflict of Interest rules are subject to the procedures outlined in Section 7.0 of this Handbook.

5.0 GIFTS AND PERSONAL BENEFITS

5.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out rules to govern the handling of gifts and personal benefits received by PMC Members.

5.2 Definition

Gifts and personal benefits are items or services of value that are received by PMC members for their personal use. Gifts and personal benefits include, but are not limited to, cash, gift cards, tickets to events, items of clothing, jewelry, pens, food or beverages, discounts/rebates on personal purchases, free or subsidized drinks or meals, entertainment, and invitations to social functions organized by groups or community organizations.

The following are not considered to be gifts or personal benefits for the purposes of this policy: compensation authorized by law, reimbursement for out-of-pocket costs incurred for authorized travel, living and accommodation expenses associated with attendance at an event.

5.3 Acceptance of Gifts

Members must not, directly or indirectly, accept a gift or personal benefit that is intended to influence the member's performance of their respective official duties related to the Metis Nation-Saskatchewan or may reasonably be perceived as intended to do so.

Members may accept gifts and personal benefits received as an incident of the protocol or social obligations that normally accompany the responsibilities of elected office only where both of the following criteria are met:

- The gift or benefit has a value of \$150 or less, AND
- is received as an incident of protocol, representative on activities such as speaking engagements, technical presentations, business meetings, and social obligations reasonably related to their role with the Nation.

Notwithstanding the above, Members must never accept a gift of cash (for the purpose of this policy, gift cards constitute cash).

Notwithstanding Members must never accept a gift or personal benefit that could reasonably be expected to result in a real or perceived conflict of interest (see Section 4.0).

5.4 Gifts or Personal Benefit to Family or Friends

PMC members must take all reasonable steps to ensure that their immediate family members do not receive gifts or personal benefits that could appear to an impartial observer to be an attempt to subvert this policy or to influence or secure a favor from the Member. Immediate family members include parents, spouses, children and siblings.

5.5 Reporting Requirements

PMC members must disclose any gift or personal benefit they have accepted that is valued at more than \$150. If a PMC member receives multiple gifts or personal benefits valued under \$150 from a single

individual or source in one calendar year, the gifts must be disclosed if the combined value of these gifts for the year is more than \$150.

PMC members in receipt of gifts or personal benefits that they do not wish to accept have the option of immediately relinquishing the gift or personal benefit to the MN-S Secretariat.

Where a disclosure is required, it must be filed with the MN-S Secretariat by filing with the CFO as soon as practicable in written form. The disclosure must include:

- the name of the individual in receipt of the gift or personal benefit;
- a description of the gift or personal benefit, estimated value, and date that it was received;
- the source of the gift or personal benefit (if from a corporation, the full names and addresses of at least 2 individuals who are associated with the corporation);
- the circumstances under which the gift or personal benefit was given and accepted; and
- the final disposition of the gift or personal benefit.

Responsibility for relinquishing gifts and personal benefits in accordance with the section set about above and filing of the disclosure form in accordance with this policy lies solely with the recipient of the gift.

5.6 Valuation of Gifts and Personal Benefits

For the purposes of this policy, the value of each gift or personal benefit shall be determined by its replacement cost. Where the value of a gift or personal benefit is unclear, the MN-S Secretariat shall take all reasonable effort to determine its value. A Member who is uncertain if the value of a gift or benefit is more than \$150 should report this gift so a proper evaluation of its value can be done. If the gift is deemed to be less than \$150 in value, it will be return to the Member should the Member so request.

5.7 Ownership of Relinquished Gifts

The MN-S Secretariat will maintain records of all gifts and personal benefits received. The Gift will become the property of the MN-S and, if appropriate, be displayed in individual offices, general office space, or in public MN-S areas.

5.8 Consequence for Breach

Breaches of the rules on gifts and personal benefits are subject to the procedures outlined in Section 7.0 of this Handbook.

6.0 HANDLING OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

During the course of their duties, PMC Members may become privy to personal or otherwise confidential information from a variety of sources. Maintaining the confidentiality of this information is critical.

In order to ensure this information is handled appropriately, Members must:

- Protect information that is specifically marked confidential and other material understood to be confidential in nature;
- Refrain from discussing/disclosing any confidential information with/to other staff, or any persons outside the organization except as authorized;
- Take reasonable care to prevent the examination of confidential material by unauthorized individuals;
- Not use confidential information with the intention to cause harm or detriment to the PMC or any other person or body;
- Only access confidential information needed for MN-S business;
- Only use confidential information for the purpose it is intended to be used;
- Only release information in accordance with established PMC or MN-S policies and procedures and in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- Not disclose decisions, resolutions or report contents from an in-camera meeting of the PMC and/or Executive until a decision has been made for the information to become public;
- Not disclose details on Executive or PMC in-camera deliberations or specific details on whether individual Members voted for or against an issue; and
- Except in the normal course of duties, PMC members must not in any way change or alter official records or documents.

When dealing with personal information, PMC members must take all reasonable and necessary measures to ensure that the personal or private business information of individuals is protected. Personal information is information or an opinion about a person whose identity is apparent, or can be determined from the information or opinion.

6.1 Consequence for Breach

Breaches of the rules on the handling of personal information are subject to the procedures outlined in Section 7.0 of this Handbook.

7.0 BREACHES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

7.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out rules to govern alleged breaches of Section 3.0 (Code of Conduct), Section 4.0 (Conflict of Interest), Section 5.0 (Gifts and Personal Benefits) and Section 6.0 (Handling of Personal Information) of this Handbook.

7.2 Process

Alleged breaches by PMC Member or Members shall be submitted to the PMC in a written complaint addressed to the PMC as a whole within three (3) months of the alleged breach.

Upon receipt of a complaint, PMC will refer the matter for consideration to the Human Resources (HR) Committee. The HR Committee will conduct an investigation of the complaint in a manner that is fair, timely, and confidential. Upon completion of their investigation, the HR Committee will provide a written confidential report (the "Report") of their findings, including findings as to whether there has been a breach to the non-affected PMC members (as applicable) and to the Complainant and the Respondent. The Report should provide recommendations as to the appropriate resolution of the complaint, which may include:

- dismissal of the complaint; or
- public censure of a PMC Member for misbehavior or a breach;
- a requirement that a PMC Member apologize to any person adversely affected by a breach;
- provide counselling of a PMC Member, and/or
- such other recommendations as are deemed appropriate

The HR Committee may appoint an independent third-party facilitator, identified and agreed upon between the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s) as having the necessary professional skills, knowledge and experience to investigate the complaint (the “Third Party Investigator”).

The MN-S will receive and retain all prepared Reports.

Where a PMC member alleges a breach of this Code of Conduct by a fellow PMC member, all non-affected PMC members shall refrain from commenting on such allegations at meetings of the PMC, unless discussed in an In-Camera session.

PART III: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Standing Committees

The purpose of a Standing Committee is to assist the Minister in analyzing issues and responding to concerns and suggestions, to suggest policy and to help in problem solving issues that may arise.

The President will make recommendations to PMC for approval as to who sits on a Standing Committee.

The Minister is the Chair of the Standing Committee.

Either the appropriate Minister or the President may call a meeting of the applicable Standing. At least seven (7) days notice of the meeting should be given, unless urgency requires notice be waved and that shall be recorded at the meeting.

A Standing Committee shall work collaboratively with the appropriate Minister(s) in reviewing and providing recommendations on the preparation of a Submission to PMC and shall advise and consult as necessary and make recommendations to the Minister.

The Standing Committee does not prepare the Submissions. The Minister prepares the Submission, but the Standing Committee can make recommendations to the Minister for changes to the Submission. The Standing Committee can also recommend to the Minister that the Minister prepare a Submission on a particular topic.

The Minister may accept or ignore the recommendations of the Standing Committee; however, the Standing Committee may always table their recommendations with PMC regardless of the position of the Minister on any recommendations. PMC is ultimately responsible for approving the Submission and may consider any recommendations a Standing Committee may provide in their deliberations.

When the Standing committee votes for or against a Submission, they shall approach PMC in solidarity on that decision (see section 2.0). However, if a member of a Standing Committee disagrees with a decision of the Standing Committee and wishes to speak against that decision at PMC, that Member should put their position on record at the Standing Committee meeting and the fact he/she wishes to speak at the PMC.

8.2 Minister

In addition to the specific roles and responsibilities based on their respective portfolios, Ministers have a responsibility for supporting and advancing the overall priorities of government.

8.3 Portfolio Directors

Portfolio Directors are charged with providing their respective Minister with strategic advice on major policy, program and operational issues within that Minister's various portfolios. Portfolio Directors are staff of the Secretariat and each Portfolio Director ultimately reports to the CEO. Also, the Minister may give program and policy direction to the Portfolio Director.

Although Ministers are consulted on the appointment or reappointment of their Portfolio Director, the CEO retains sole authority to recommend Directors for appointment or reappointment.

In considering an appointment or reappointment, the CEO must consult with the Minister, the Executive and the appropriate Standing Committee.

Portfolios Directors are responsible to:

- Establish and maintain an effective working relationship between the Minister's office, the Secretariat and the Executive.
- Provide strategic advice and support to their Minister on major policy, program and operational issues that affect the Minister's portfolios.
- Gather critical information in order to provide advice on all issues related to the Minister's portfolios.
- Analyze issues being addressed by the Minister, assess what more is needed or would contribute to advancement of the matter.
- Liaise and consult with other Directors, Executive, Secretariat, Communications and the appropriate Standing Committee(s) etc.
- Facilitate the development and maintenance of a co-operative working environment within the government.
- Respond to a request for information from the Minister, follow up on action required, deal with any urgent matters and contribute to the co-ordination and facilitation of the workflow in the Minister's office.
- Serve as a primary point of contact between the Minister's office and the general public.
- Review all incoming documents (letters, briefs, invitations, etc.) and prioritize items for the Minister's attention and offer advice on appropriate referrals;

8.4 Conventions Respecting the Collective Responsibilities of Ministers/Executive/PMC

All important issues or questions that may be construed as involving government policy should be considered by PMC. And all Members of PMC are collectively responsible for any decisions or actions of PMC.

It is imperative that good communication be established between Ministers, the Executive and Members of PMC so that all of them are informed in advance of any major initiatives taken to the Assembly.

At all times when considering major issues, every attempt should be made to consult with and obtain the views of Members of PMC, local presidents, Metis Women, the Youth and any subject experts that may be required in order to work towards consensus if it is at all possible. Where consensus is not possible, a vote shall be taken.

A Minister, or a Member of the Executive or PMC must never bind or attempt to give a commitment for another Minister in respect of the latter's ministerial responsibilities.

Ministers or Members of PMC should not be publicly asking one another to make commitments or give undertakings or criticizing another's decision. Any such concerns and requests should be raised at PMC.

Also, on all matters that should go before PMC, Ministers' can not commit PMC to a particular course in advance of full discussion at PMC, unless authorized by resolution of PMC and/or MNLA.

If the requirement of confidentiality mentioned in section 2.0 is broken by a Minister or Member of PMC, the PMC may prescribe consequences for the Minister or Member.

PART IV: PROCESS & PROCEDURE

9.0 PROVINCIAL METIS COUNCIL MEETING PROTOCOLS

9.1 Rules of Order and Procedure

Meetings of the PMC are conducted following the Metis Nation-Saskatchewan *Interim Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure* in keeping with Robert's Rules of Order.

9.2 Meeting Schedule

PMC approves a Meeting Calendar annually that sets out meeting times for the year. The President may call additional meetings if it is warranted.

9.3 Notice of Meetings

Notice shall be given at least seven (7) days prior to a meeting. Should an emergency meeting be required without the proper notice, all members must waive notice and agree to short notice.

9.4 Quorum

Eleven (11) members of the Provincial Metis Council constitute a quorum.

9.5 Decorum

Discussions and motions at PMC should be conducted formally following the *Metis Nation Saskatchewan Interim Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure* (Robert's Rules of Order). Debate and discussion should be professional and not personal. Members should refrain from using cellphones or texting during meetings.

9.6 The Authority of the Chair

The President is the Chair of PMC meetings. All members of PMC must respect the authority of the Chair. The Chair is neutral and does not advocate a specific position. If the Chair is sponsoring a Submission, the Chair should step down while sponsoring the Submission at which time the Vice-President would take over as Chair.

The Chair only votes if there is a tie.

9.7 Motions

Decisions are made by formal motion and require a mover, a seconder, an opportunity for discussion and a vote. When there is no motion, any general agreements of Members will be reflected in the minutes as expressions of support for a particular position.

9.8 Minutes

The MN-S Secretary prepares the PMC meeting minutes and submits them to PMC for approval. The minutes should be stored in a safe and confidential place.

9.9 Agenda

The agenda for PMC is drafted by the Secretary in consultation with the Executive.

A typical agenda might include:

- Roll Call – Call to Order
- Prayer
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Previous Minutes
- Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
- Business Arising from the Minutes
- Items for Future Consideration (most often used to advise Members of complex issues that will be addressed in upcoming meetings)
- Discussions and Briefing (Ministers should give written brief updating PMC)
- Ministerial Submissions requesting approval or direction
- Legislative Proposals
- Draft Legislation
- Decisions Items
- Information Items
- Information Items
- Ministerial Travel Plans
- General Discussions
- Items to be returned for further consideration (a list of outstanding issues where Ministers were given explicit direction to undertake further action and directed to return for further PMC consideration)
- Determination of what materials can be shared publicly
- In Camera Discussions
- Closing Prayer
- Adjournment

9.10 Meeting Packages

Meeting packages are prepared and distributed to all Members at least five (5) days before the meeting and should include the agenda, any previous minutes, all signed Submissions, information items, draft legislation, any relevant briefings and assessment reports.

Members of PMC are expected to have read all the meeting package materials before attending PMC and be fully prepared to participate at PMC.

9.11 In-Camera Discussions

In-camera discussions are meant for sensitive topics such as employee and personnel issues, disciplining a member of PMC, discussing CEO and/or staff performance etc. Personal information discussed at such a meeting must be kept private in all circumstances.

PMC may invite appropriate individuals or officials to attend an in-camera session when needed.

10.0 PROVINCIAL METIS COUNCIL SUBMISSIONS

10.1 Items Requiring a Submission

Certain actions or decisions require a formal submission to PMC to be made. This includes:

- Actions requiring PMC authority as directed by legislation, regulations or PMC approved policies.
- Proposals for legislative change.
- Significant new initiatives, or actions which are likely to have substantive public or intergovernmental impacts.
- Specific issues or actions that PMC has directed should come to PMC for approval or consideration.
- Revisions to an item previously approved.
- Actions requiring PMC authority, direction or review as required under PMC approved strategies or procedures.
- Appointments that are significant, such as the appointment of the CEO, or the appointment of people to committees or to conduct public inquiries etc.
- Any matter that falls within a Minister's mandate, but which, in the Minister's opinion should be considered by PMC as a whole.
- Any Budgetary matters.

Note that not everything a Minister does needs to go to PMC. For example, if PMC directed that an inquiry be set up on a matter, the Minister would request the Secretariat to rent the space for the inquiry and to ask the CEO to hire the clerical staff etc. But the Minister prepares the Submission for PMC to appoint the people who will sit on the inquiry, the terms of reference for the inquiry and other substantive directions. And the Submission would go to PMC for ratification.

10.2 Submission Procedures

A Minister directs staff (generally the relevant Portfolio Director) to develop a Submission for PMC consideration. The Submission might be a discussion item, an information paper, an options paper with recommendations, or a legislative proposal.

The Portfolio Director will conduct the appropriate research on the issue, engage with people who will be affected and do any analysis required depending on the nature of the submission. The extent of engagement will depend on the issue. The Portfolio Director will then prepare a draft submission based on the policy direction of the Minister. This draft is reviewed by the Chief Operating Officer (COO) to ensure it is within the vision and goals of MN-S and the Strategic Work Plan. If the COO signs off on it and the submission has financial impacts, the Portfolio Director prepares a budget to accompany the submission and it goes to Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to determine if there are monies available. Once the CFO signs off, it goes to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

Thereafter, submissions sponsored by the Minister should go to the applicable Standing Committee for review. Suggestions made by the Standing Committee should be incorporated into the Submission where appropriate (See 8.1 for more on the role of Standing Committees). Once reviewed by the Standing Committee, the submission should go to the Financial Committee and the CEO to be assessed for any financial and administrative consequences flowing from the proposals. Finally, the Submission should be reviewed by

the Executive. If there are further changes required by the Financial Committee, the CEO, or the Executive, it may have to go back to the Standing Committee before being presented to PMC.

10.3 Submissions Impacting Other Portfolios

Ministers should consider whether their submission impacts the portfolio of other Ministers and should ensure there is consultation and consensus with Ministerial colleagues on the submission. A Submission could be sponsored by more than one Minister and co-signed by the Ministers involved.

10.4 Deadlines to Present to PMC

Once the Submission has been vetted by the appropriate Committees, CEO and Executive, two copies of the original signed Submission are forwarded to the MN-S Secretary for presentation to PMC. The Minister may wish to include a covering letter.

Other than information items, Submissions and draft legislation must be received by the MN-S Secretary ten (10) working days before the next scheduled PMC meeting before being put on the agenda. Information items need only be received seven (7) working days before the PMC meeting.

The Submission must be signed by the Minister and if not signed or significant issues have not been addressed when it is presented to PMC, PMC may require that it be returned with changes and along with a written assessment of the issues and changes.

10.5 Withdrawal, Deferral or Replacement of a Submission

A Minister may wish to withdraw or replace a previously signed Submission. If withdrawing the Minister shall request in writing that the Submission be withdrawn or deferred to another PMC meeting and/or replaced with a revised Submission. If the agenda has already been set, the withdrawal or deferral will be put in the minutes.

If the Minister wishes to revise a Submission once the agenda has been approved and the Chair agrees to accept a revised Submission, the Minister is responsible for distributing copies of the revised Submission.

10.6 “Walk-in” Submissions

A “walk-in” submission is one that is not on the approved meeting agenda for consideration. Only the President can make additions to the agenda following the set deadline for Submissions (see 4.2). Should a Minister wish to make a Submission after the deadline, a written request should be made to the President and if approved, the Minister is then responsible for ensuring that all materials are distributed to Members of PMC.

While exceptions might be made where an emergency arises, walk-ins present a number of challenges as there may not be sufficient time for Members to thoroughly review the Submission and make an informed decision. Therefore, walk-ins should be discouraged.

11.0 EXPENSE CLAIMS

Members should ensure that travel expenses are fair and accurate and filled out on the Travel Expense Claim. Members will be provided with the Travel Expense Claim at each PMC meeting or can obtain this online. A copy is attached to this handbook. (See Appendix B)

In claiming travel expenses:

- Include the date of travel and the purpose of the meeting.
- Each Executive Member is limited to his/her travel allowance for all in province travel. If an Executive Member goes over budget on travel, it will not be reimbursed by MN-S.
- Out of province travel expense claims on MN-S business should be approved by the President or the Vice-President and the CEO or the CFO.
- If breakfast, lunch or dinner are served in a meeting, they should not be claimed as an expense.
- If a meeting is held in your local community, hotels, transportation and meals for you are not provided by MN-S. An exception would be if the meeting was held in a restaurant over dinner or lunch and a receipt is attached to the expense claim.
- Hotel stay within Saskatchewan is subject to CEO approval and allowed only when travel for MN-S business, hotel rate within Saskatchewan is \$200 per night and outside of the province \$400 unless approved in writing by the CEO.
- MN-S has adopted Canada Treasury Board rates for mileage, per diem, hotel rates, and other travel-related expenditures. Please refer to Canada Treasury Board site for detailed guidance.
- Travel claims booked by MN-S that need to be cancelled must be cancelled 48 hours before travel. This includes where a hotel room has been reserved for a Member by MN-S so that MN-S is not required to pay for the room
- Actual receipts are required for Air, Bus, Rail, or Taxi transportation.
- If a family member accompanies you, any additional cost with respect to meals, accommodations or transportation shall be born by you.

PMC will make available for public review at the head offices of MN-S, the expenses and salaries claimed by each individual Executive Member, Minister, Portfolio Director and every member of PMC. Any member of the Metis Nation shall have access to these records. This practice is common to governments and is based on the understanding that we are using public funds and have a fiduciary duty (a duty of trust) to act responsibly and in the interests of the Nation as a whole.

12.0 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

12.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy exists to ensure Ministers, Members of the Executive and PMC use their social media accounts in safe, responsible and effective manner. Although social media can benefit MN-S, poor media communications or poorly timed activity can hurt the Metis Nation Saskatchewan.

12.2 Definition

For the purposes of this policy, social media may refer to:

- Popular social networks such as Twitter and Facebook
- Photo-sharing websites such as Pinterest and Instagram
- Professional social networks such as LinkedIn
- Discussion forums of any sort
- Question and answer-based networks such as yahoo answers
- Review systems such as yelp and Google reviews

12.3 Guidance on the Use of Social Media

It is strongly suggested that you refrain from posting anything on Social Media to do with PMC meetings or conversations you have had with a Minister or a Member of the Executive or at PMC or MNLA, financial information, personnel information or anything to do with the operations of MN-S. Members of the PMC should be mindful that the principles of solidarity, collective responsibility and confidentiality (see section 2.0) apply to all forms of public communication, including the use of social media.

While Members of PMC can and do use social media, it is important to recognize that what a Member publishes on the Internet may reflect on MN-S. When using social media for personal purposes should Members should adhere to the following:

- Use a disclaimer, such as: “The postings on this site are my own and do not represent the views or opinions of the Metis Nation Saskatchewan.”
- Recognize that anything posted on the Internet is permanent. If you attempt to delete the post, photo, comment etc. it is likely that it has been stored in any number of places.
- Recognize that if you publish inappropriate comments that reflect badly on MN-S, a Member of PMC, a Minister, an Executive Member, a staff person on your personal time that disciplinary action could follow in accordance with the processes set out in this Interim Handbook.

Individual Members of PMC may post information pertaining to PMC or MN-S only if explicitly authorized by PMC. If you have any questions, contact the CEO.

Confidential or proprietary information shall not be disclosed by a Member of PMC. The disclosure of confidential or proprietary information without prior authorization may result in disciplinary action.

Members of PMC will be held accountable for what they write or post on any social media pages. Inflammatory comments, disparaging remarks, or negative/inappropriate language may lead to disciplinary action.

Members of PMC should not engage in discussions regarding legal issues, decisions in which PMC and/or MNLA is involved or government issues pertaining to MN-S.

Members of PMC are required to respect copyrights and never post text, images or video created by someone else without proper attribution and/or authorization. If you have a question about this, contact the CEO.

Social media is not a substitute for complaints and grievances. Matters of concern should be brought up with the CEO or the President and discussed at PMC.

Members of PMC should relay important issues to the CEO as soon as possible. And always consider what (or whether) to post in response to an argumentative or accusatory post.

As an elected official, it is very important that your demeanour in your personal life, and on social media is befitting that of a representative of Metis people. The Code of Conduct in section 3.0 should guide online posts and interactions.

Inappropriate uses of Social Media include:

- Conducting illegal or criminal activities
- Distributing material that could be interpreted as libellous or defamatory
- Sharing updates, images and messages that may tarnish MN-S' public image
- Harassing others by sending offensive content and messages
- Distributing spam and chain messages

An elected person must post an opinion on social media about a personal matter (i.e. an opinion on marihuana use), where someone may think the elected person is representing the MN-S, he/she should state this is his/her personal opinion and in no way, represents the opinion of MN-S.

If a person breaches the Social Media Etiquette, the PMC may discipline that person.