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## Assembly of First Nations

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## Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**Special Chiefs Assembly  
December 6,7,8, 2022, Ottawa, ON**

**Resolution no. 25/2022**

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**TITLE:** Advancing Gender Equity in Leadership for Women and Families

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**SUBJECT:** Gender Equity

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**MOVED BY:** Naa Shaáde Háni Eric Morris, Teslin Tlingit Council, YT

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**SECONDED BY:** Kúkpi7 Judy Wilson, Neskonlith Indian Band, BC

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**DECISION** Carried by consensus

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### WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Annex: Reaffirming that Indigenous peoples, in the exercise of their rights, should be free from discrimination of any kind.
  - ii. Article 17 (1): Indigenous individuals and peoples have the right to enjoy fully all rights established under applicable international and domestic labour law.
  - iii. Article 17 (3): Indigenous individuals have the right not to be subjected to any discriminatory conditions of labour and, inter alia, employment or salary.
  - iv. Article 21 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
  - v. Article 44: All the rights and freedoms recognized herein are equally guaranteed to male and female indigenous individuals.
- B. First Nations Women, Elders, Youth and the 2SLGBTQQIA+ represent vulnerable sectors within society.

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- C. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) leadership has a responsibility to ensure that the governance of the organization does no harm and that the AFN organization and administration:
- i. take action to end all forms of sexual orientation and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence within the AFN organization or administration; and
  - ii. leads by example to demonstrate and uphold a substantial commitment of integrity and ethical values to achieve the social, political and legal changes necessary to end sexual orientation and gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence and achieve gender equity.
- D. The roles of the AFN Regional Chiefs are identified in the AFN Charter. The AFN provides funding to all regions for the role of Regional Chief and core operations. There is ongoing work required to ensure that there is gender equity as well as equity between Regions and that these compensation packages are reviewed both by the Chiefs in Assembly and regionally.
- E. Over the past 20 years, the AFN has commissioned several reports on Regional Chief compensation but fell short of bringing these reports before the First Nations-in-Assembly for endorsement. Although these Reports have yet to be endorsed, they have produced some important recommendations. These include:
- i. AFN Renewal Commission Report of 2005 proposed, in recommendation #17, the establishment of a Regional Chiefs' compensation formula which states:
    - a. *"That a formula for compensating Assembly of First Nations Regional Chiefs be developed to include a base salary that is associated with the office of AFN Regional Chief, and salary increments based on each region's First Nation population, the number of First Nations in the region, portfolio responsibilities held and associated levels of engagement with portfolio responsibilities"; and*
  - ii. The AFN Secretariat engaged the Stratford Group in 2020 to conduct an independent Compensation Review for the role of Regional Chief, which resulted in a report that provided an independent perspective on fair, reasonable compensation for this role, including recommendations on leave benefits, including maternity and parental leave. ("Stratford Report").

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- F. Women in leadership positions are often challenged to be able to continue their careers and to balance family obligations and work obligations as a result of barriers for women to take maternity and parental leave.
- G. The AFN Charter, Executive Committee Code of Conduct, and other AFN governance tools are silent on equitable compensation, including maternity and parental leave.
- H. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice state:
  - i. 1.3: We call upon all governments, in meeting human and Indigenous rights obligations, to pursue prioritization and resourcing of the measures required to eliminate the social, economic, cultural, and political marginalization of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people when developing budgets and determining government activities and priorities.
  - ii. 1.4: We call upon all governments, and in particular Indigenous governments and Indigenous representative organizations, to take urgent and special measures to ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are represented in governance and that their political rights are respected and upheld. We call upon all governments to equitably support and promote the role of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in governance and leadership. These efforts must include the development of policies and procedures to protect Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people against sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and racism within political life.
  - iii. 1.6: We call upon all governments to eliminate jurisdictional gaps and neglect that result in the denial of services or improperly regulated and delivered services that address the social, economic, political, and cultural marginalization of, and violence against, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
  - iv. 3.1: We call upon all governments to ensure that the rights to health and wellness of Indigenous Peoples, and specifically of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, are recognized and protected on an equitable basis.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:**

- 1. Support the recommendation found in the Stratford Report that AFN Regional Chiefs' compensation should include benefits coverage, which would include maternity and parental leave.

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2. Support the principle that AFN Executive Members, regardless of their gender, should be supported by the AFN to pursue growing families, and direct the AFN to:
  - i. provide the AFN Regional Offices with financial support to provide for coverage (which may include a Regional Chief's designate) for maternity and parental leave.
  - ii. create a policy and special fund that would support AFN Executive Members to take maternity/parental leave, long-term leave due to sickness or bereavement, and/or leave in emergency situations, and be supported to do so.
  - iii. look at options for providing childcare at AFN Assemblies for AFN Executive Members, AFN Staff, and Chiefs and Proxies to ensure that all staff and elected officials who have families have the ability to fully participate in Assembly proceedings. These options must be brought before the AFN Management Committee for recommendation to the AFN Executive.
3. Express their support of women in leadership and direct the National Chief and the AFN to:
  - i. continue to advocate to remove barriers for women, and those who identify as women, to pursue leadership.
  - ii. provide an update to the First Nations-in-Assembly at the 2023 AFN Annual General Assembly on specific actions taken by the AFN to support women in leadership.
4. Direct the AFN to develop an advocacy strategy to advocate for the federal government to provide financial resources to First Nations to be able to provide maternity and parental benefits for elected First Nation leaders.

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