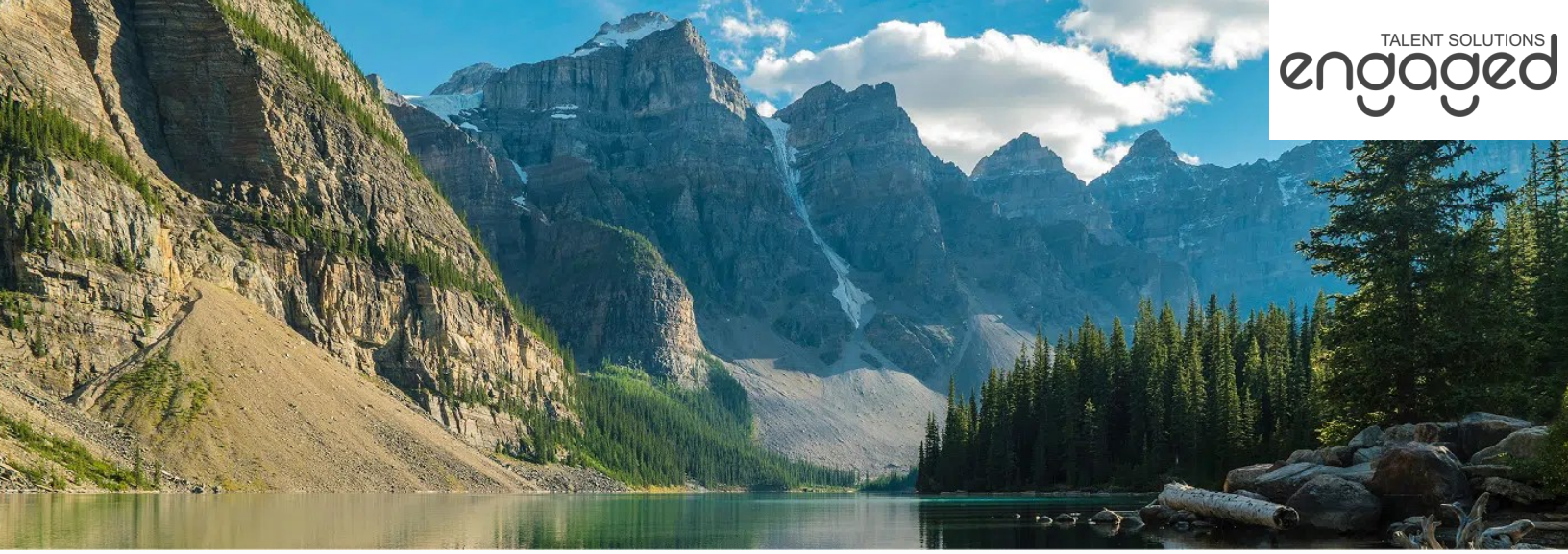

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BC FIRST NATIONS
JUSTICE COUNCIL

Chief Operating Officer

Opportunity Profile

Take your career to the next level

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BC FIRST NATIONS
JUSTICE COUNCIL

Who we are

Justice Through Self Determination. The BC First Nations Justice Council was created in 2015 by the BC Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs to represent First Nations in British Columbia on justice-related issues and bring about transformative change within the legal system. Guided by First Nations and accountable to the communities it serves, the Council works to strengthen Indigenous approaches to justice while supporting meaningful change within the broader justice system. Its work is anchored in the BC First Nations Justice Strategy, which advances change along two interconnected paths: reforming the current justice system and supporting First Nations in restoring their legal traditions and structures.

At the heart of this work is a commitment to healing, community wellbeing, cultural safety, and the recognition of Indigenous laws as living and enduring sources of authority and guidance. Through its province-wide network of Indigenous Justice Centres, BCFNJC provides culturally appropriate information, advice, support, and representation directly to Indigenous people at the community level.

The Centres take a holistic approach, recognizing that justice issues are connected to broader social, cultural, health, family, and community realities. These Centres create pathways to justice that are responsive to community realities while upholding dignity, belonging, and self-determination.

The Council's work is guided by the wisdom of Elders and Knowledge Keepers and strengthened through relationships with First Nations, community partners, and governments. It is committed to fostering conditions in which Indigenous laws, legal traditions, and ways of knowing can flourish and continue to guide future generations.

Mission

The BC First Nations Justice Council supports the well-being of future generations by transforming the status quo today in a sustainable way – upholding self-determination, reclaiming legal traditions and addressing systemic injustice.

Vision

BC First Nations children and families thriving in peace and security, their dignity and well-being supported by a trusted and representative justice system.

Values

- **Culture**: We draw upon our ancestral practices, customs and traditions to shape transformative change.
- **Safety**: We support the holistic physical, emotional, and cultural security and well-being of our citizens and staff through our behaviours, services and policies.
- **Respect**: We uphold human dignity in all interactions, and honour the diversity of teachings and perspectives of BC First Nations. Our work draws upon and integrates the strengths of both First Nations and western legal traditions.
- **Empowerment**: Our strategies, advocacy and services are grounded in the principle of self-determination and the goal of increasing the freedom of our Nations and citizens to make their own decisions.
- **Trust**: Our processes and actions create stability and credibility internally amongst our staff and Council members, between the Council and our communities and citizens, and with our partners.
- **Results**: Our work has meaningful and material impact that advances healing and improves the experiences of BC First Nations citizens that interact with the justice system.

Why This Work Matters

This opportunity comes at a pivotal moment in the ongoing journey to restore, strengthen, and advance First Nations approaches to justice across British Columbia. As the senior leader of the BC First Nations Justice Council, the COO will serve as a trusted relationship-builder, advocate, and steward of a Council-mandated vision that is rooted in self-determination, community wellbeing, and respect for the diverse laws, traditions, and legal orders of First Nations. The work is fundamentally about people, families, and communities, and about helping create conditions in which Indigenous approaches to justice, healing, safety, and accountability can flourish for generations to come.

Working in partnership with First Nations communities, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, talented staff, and government partners, the COO will help carry this vision forward through meaningful action. The role calls for a leader who can build and nurture respectful, reciprocal relationships, listen deeply to diverse perspectives, and bring people together around a shared purpose. As a visible and credible public voice, the COO will help advance the Justice Strategy while remaining grounded in the values, responsibilities, and relationships that guide the Council's work.

The COO will undertake this work with the support of strong partnerships and a growing foundation for long-term impact, including significant multi-year investment from the Law Foundation of BC and ongoing collaboration with 204 BC First Nations, Canada, and the Province. These relationships provide an important platform for continued growth, learning, and progress toward a justice system that is more responsive to the needs, priorities, and aspirations of First Nations peoples and communities.

For a courageous and values-driven leader, this role offers an opportunity to contribute to lasting change while walking alongside communities in a spirit of respect, humility, and service. It is a chance to help strengthen and revitalize Indigenous laws, legal traditions, and systems of accountability, while supporting a future in which the rich diversity, cultures, and teachings of BC First Nations are recognized, honoured, and reflected throughout the justice system.

Work Environment & Team Culture

The BC First Nations Justice Council is guided by the understanding that meaningful justice transformation begins with relationships: relationships with communities, with one another, with Indigenous laws and legal traditions, and with the responsibilities carried to future generations. The Council's work is grounded in Indigenous values, teachings, and ways of knowing, creating an environment where culture informs not only what is done, but how people come together to do it.

BCFNJC is supported by an Elders and Knowledge Keepers Council, which provides culturally grounded advice and helps connect implementation of the Justice Strategy with Indigenous knowledge, laws, protocols, and teachings. This influence is reflected throughout the organization, from initiatives that support individual and collective wellbeing to the development of a Kinship Protocol that brings Indigenous principles of belonging, reciprocity, shared responsibility, and lifelong learning into everyday practice.

As a newly created position, the Chief Operating Officer role reflects the Council's continued growth and commitment to building the organizational capacity needed to advance its mandate and support its expanding network of programs, services, and Indigenous Justice Centres across British Columbia. Success in the role will be rooted in the ability to build trust, foster respectful relationships, support teams through complexity, and translate Council priorities into meaningful action. Cultural safety, humility, accountability, and service are not aspirations but expectations that guide how work is undertaken across the organization.

The COO will work alongside a team, within a province-wide network of Indigenous Justice Centres. These Centres are closely connected to the communities they serve and support pathways to justice, healing, safety, and self-determination for First Nations peoples. The role requires a leader who can strengthen organizational systems, support operational excellence, foster alignment across teams, and ensure that services are delivered in ways that remain responsive to the voices, priorities, and experiences of communities.

A defining characteristic of the Council is its culture of care. Employees are encouraged to support one another, share knowledge, and contribute to an environment where people can learn, grow, and carry out their responsibilities with integrity. The organization values authenticity, humility, respect, and lived experience, while recognizing the rich diversity of First Nations throughout British Columbia and the important contributions of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous team members.

The COO will work in close partnership with the Chief Executive Officer, a relationship founded on trust, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. Together, they provide complementary leadership that supports both the organizational capacity and strategic leadership necessary to advance the Council's mandate. Because this is a new role, the COO will have a unique opportunity to help shape the position, establish operational frameworks, and contribute to defining how executive leadership best supports the Council's long-term goals and evolving priorities. This collaborative approach extends throughout the organization, where open dialogue, mutual support, and collective learning are viewed as essential to achieving meaningful and lasting outcomes.

The Council supports flexible work, encouraging in-office collaboration to strengthen relationships and teamwork while allowing remote work as appropriate. The role requires regular travel across British Columbia to visit Indigenous Justice Centres, support regional teams, engage with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and community partners, and remain connected to the people, programs, and relationships guiding the Council's work. Through these connections, the COO will help build the capacity, systems, and operational foundation needed to advance justice in ways that honour Indigenous laws, support healing and self-determination, and uphold responsibilities to current and future generations.

What We Offer

The BC First Nations Justice Council offers competitive salary and total compensation for this role that has been set according to the key factors of skill, effort, accountability/responsibility, and the working conditions required for the COO.

The Council recognizes that total compensation is influenced by multiple factors, including employee performance, market competitiveness, and organizational performance. Its objective is to provide fair and equitable compensation while supporting organizational well-being through a welcoming workplace, flexible schedules, and an engaging team environment.

Here are additional benefits you will receive with us:

- Paid annual vacation
- Cultural leave
- Health and dental benefits
- Health care spending account
- RRSP/TFSA matching
- Phone allowance
- Opportunities for professional development

The hiring salary range for this position is $203,000 to $243,000 per year, with placement determined based on the selected candidate's experience, knowledge, leadership contributions, and demonstrated ability to fulfil the responsibilities of the role.

The full salary range provides room for progression over time, reflecting the continued growth of responsibilities, contributions, and service within the role. The BC First Nations Justice Council is committed to fair and equitable compensation that reflects the scope and importance of this position, while recognizing the value of lived experience, cultural knowledge, and service to Indigenous communities .

Position Summary

Reporting to the Justice Council, the Chief Operating Officer serves as a steward of the Council's operations, organizational capacity, and implementation responsibilities. Guided by the direction of Council and grounded in Indigenous laws, legal traditions, and ways of knowing, the COO advances the Council's mandate by ensuring its priorities, commitments, and decisions are translated into meaningful action.

Through the stewardship of people, programs, systems, resources, and organizational performance, the COO strengthens the Council's capacity to support healing, self-determination, and the diverse priorities, governance systems, and cultures of First Nations across British Columbia.

This is a highly relational leadership role. Working alongside First Nations leaders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community partners, staff, and justice-system stakeholders, the COO helps build an organization that is responsive, accountable, and capable of delivering on its commitments. By fostering collaboration, organizational alignment, and a culture grounded in service, shared responsibility, and continuous learning, the COO helps create the conditions for successful implementation of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy.

Working closely with the Council and the CEO, the COO helps ensure organizational operations reflect community priorities, cultural teachings, and Indigenous governance principles. The role provides leadership across operations, people, programs, and resources, ensuring the systems and structures required to support the Council's mandate remain strong, sustainable, and responsive. Through operational oversight, financial stewardship, risk management, and continuous improvement, the COO helps ensure services are delivered effectively, resources are managed responsibly, and organizational priorities are advanced with accountability and care.

The COO works in partnership with the Chief Executive Officer as part of a complementary leadership model accountable to the Justice Council. While the CEO provides leadership in governance, advocacy, strategic relationships, and external engagement, the COO leads organizational implementation, operational excellence, service delivery, people leadership, and performance. Together, they steward the Council's mandate and support the long-term success of the organization, ensuring accountability to communities, partners, funders, and Council while remaining responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges.

The ideal candidate is a values-driven leader who brings wisdom, humility, sound judgment, and a deep understanding of the responsibilities that accompany service to Indigenous communities. They are a collaborative team builder who leads with integrity and accountability, balancing strategic thinking with practical leadership. They possess the courage to make difficult decisions, the openness to learn from others, and the adaptability required to lead in a complex and evolving environment.

Candidates will bring significant senior leadership experience in a complex organization with responsibility for operations, service delivery, financial stewardship, organizational performance, and people leadership. Experience leading growth, implementing strategic priorities, managing resources responsibly, and building high-performing teams is essential. A strong understanding of First Nations governments and communities, together with experience working with Indigenous-led organizations or governance bodies, is required. Knowledge of Canada's justice system and its relationship with Indigenous peoples and legal traditions is a strong asset.

As an Indigenous organization, the BC First Nations Justice Council seeks a leader who brings lived Indigenous experience, strong community connections, and the ability to build trusted relationships while working closely with Council. Strong preference will be given to First Nations candidates who bring deep cultural knowledge, relational accountability, and a commitment to supporting the wellbeing of current and future generations.

Join Us

Living in Kelowna

The preferred location for this role is the Kelowna region in the beautiful Okanagan, with flexibility to be based elsewhere in British Columbia, including the Lower Mainland or southern Vancouver Island. Primary criteria require the COO to be located near an IJC with nearby access to a full-service airport for business travel.

Living in Kelowna is a place where, as locals say, you can live where you vacation. Situated in the heart of the Okanagan Valley on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the syilx/Okanagan people, Kelowna sits on the shoreline of Okanagan Lake and is the largest city in the Central Okanagan, the fastest-growing metropolitan area in Canada. The region is home to more than 222,000 residents across seven distinct but closely related communities, including the City of Kelowna and Westbank First Nation, where BCFNJC's head office is located directly across the lake from the city core.

Kelowna offers big-city amenities paired with a relaxed, lakeside character. The city's compact size means almost everything is within a short twenty-minute drive, including downtown, beaches, golf courses, wineries, restaurants, and shops, all set against a backdrop of mountains, orchards, and vineyards. The community puts people first and welcomes residents from all backgrounds, supported by strong education, healthcare, and cultural services, and the region's syilx/Okanagan heritage remains a living, celebrated presence throughout the valley. Newcomers can quickly find their footing through organizations such as the Kelowna Newcomers Club, Kelowna Community Resources, and the Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society.

The Okanagan's climate is one of its greatest draws, with warm, low-humidity summers averaging around 28 degrees Celsius and mild winters, creating an environment built for year-round outdoor living. The appeal of Okanagan Lake, the natural beauty of the surrounding hillsides, and the fragrant orchards and vineyards continue to draw people to the valley. Residents enjoy lake days and beaches, boating, hiking and biking trails, golf, and nearby skiing, along with a celebrated food and wine scene that makes vineyards and farm-to-table dining part of everyday life.

Beyond its scenery, Kelowna offers a genuine sense of community and belonging. As one of the most desirable places to live in Canada, it combines vibrant, entrepreneurial energy with a welcoming, people-first culture where friendships and professional networks are easy to build. For a leader relocating to the Okanagan, Kelowna offers a rare combination of cultural depth and connection to place, where career aspirations and quality of life come together, and where the head office of BCFNJC and its Westbank First Nation setting are close at hand.

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