



# Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity

Annual Report 2025–2026



## Letter from the Chair

*I am honoured to serve as the first Chair of the Minister's Advisory Council for Women and Gender Equity. This shift in legislation and scope from the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues means the territory recognizes the need for strong, informed, and community-rooted advice on gender equity and equity for individuals who may face discrimination because of their sexual orientation.*

*Our expanded scope brings both responsibility and opportunity. Council members draw on lived experience from rural and urban Yukon, First Nations communities, a variety of occupations, volunteer work and advocacy roles. Together, we are committed to bringing forward the realities, priorities, and barriers facing women and LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners.*

*This year has been about laying the groundwork. We have focused on establishing the governance structures, processes, priorities and relationships needed for a modern, balanced advisory body with long-term stability. These foundations will support not only our current work but the Councils that follow.*

*Our focus remains clear: to provide independent, practical advice to the Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate and other sitting Government of Yukon Ministers, helping advance equitable social, economic, and safety outcomes across the Yukon. We look forward to continuing this work and helping build a territory where equity is not an aspiration but a lived reality for women and LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners.*

Zara Soukoroff  
Chair, Minister's Advisory Council for Women and Gender Equity

## About the council

Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity was established under *Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity Act* in 2024. The council has the following mandate:

- At the Minister responsible's direction or request, review and advise government ministers on policies, programs and legislation related to gender equity or equity for individuals who may face discrimination because of their sexual orientation.
- At the Minister responsible's request or at the council's discretion, advise government ministers on any issue related to gender equity or equity for individuals who may face discrimination because of their sexual orientation.

### Membership criteria

- The council's membership is to be representative of diverse identity factors including gender identity, sexual orientation, Indigeneity, race, national and ethnic origin, age, place of residence and disability.
- The council's membership is to include individuals who have experience working or volunteering to advance gender equity or equity for persons who may face discrimination because of their sexual orientation.
- The council's membership is to include individuals who have worked or volunteered with individuals with diverse identities; served as directors or officers of a society or other not-for-profit organization; or provided advice to government.
- Each member must be a Yukon resident.

Prior to April 2023, this advisory body was called the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues (YACWI), with a legislated mandate centring on raising awareness and advising the Minister on policies, programs, and issues impacted women. In April 2023, the Legislative Assembly passed Bill 22, the Act to Amend the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues Act.

These legislative changes are a milestone in supporting the Government of Yukon's commitment to inclusivity for all genders and sexual orientations. Updating the previous legislation also fulfills a commitment the government made in the [2021 LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan](#) to restructure the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues to include issues related to the Yukon's Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual and other sexual identities or gender expressions (+) community (2SLGBTQIA+).

## Members for 2025-2026 period

### Zara Soukoroff

Zara is a born and raised Yukoner, currently living with her partner and two children in Whitehorse. She's worked in various marketing and communications roles for the Yukon Hospital Corporation, Yukon University, and the Government of Yukon. Her passion for women and gender equity began early in her life, which was reignited by her experiences with postpartum depression and anxiety while navigating becoming a working parent. Since then, Zara has become a collaborative advocate for parents, supporting real systems change at work and in life. One of her grassroots projects includes the Facebook page, Whitehorse Babies and Kids Social, which allows parents to easily find free activities and information to support themselves and their families. Her hobbies include fishing, gardening, and cross-country skiing.

### Veronique Maggiore

Véronique grew up on the unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin in Orléans, Ontario. She is a Franco-Ontarian of French settler background on her mother's side and a second generation Sicilian immigrant on her father's side. Véronique and her partner settled in the Yukon in 2019. Her children were born in the Yukon and she proudly calls our territory her home. Véronique is a firm believer in grassroots governance and the value of lived-experience. She has spent the past decade working in non-governmental organizations, mostly in the youth and gender equity sectors. She currently works in First Nation education governance and is a Trustee for the Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon.

### Cindy-Anne Naylor

Cindy-Anne is a lifelong Yukoner of Anishinaabe and Irish heritage, with deep personal and professional ties to the territory. She spent part of her childhood in the child welfare system in Whitehorse. It shaped her understanding of how it impacts women, Two-Spirit and gender-diverse people and families. After traumatic brain injuries from motor vehicle accidents sidelined her career for more than seven years, Cindy-Anne returned to work with a strengthened commitment to equity, accessibility and trauma-informed public policy. She holds a Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Management and has worked across the Government of Yukon in policy, justice, land claims, environment and energy roles. Her work has focused on gender-based violence, access to justice, the implementation of the Yukon First Nation Final and Self-Government Agreements, public engagement and Cabinet-level decision-making. She brings to the Committee both strong policy expertise and a lived, intersectional perspective grounded in northern realities, Indigenous identity, disability and gender equity.

### **Marian Horne**

Marian returned to Yukon in 1999 after being out of Yukon for many years, living in various places throughout NWT, Ottawa, Churchill, Haida Gwaii, Calgary and Bermuda. She currently resides in Teslin. Marian's experience spans across many fields, including accounting, business ownership, property management; finance, justice, and mediation. She served as an Elder on the Teslin Tlingit Council and was elected to the Yukon Legislative Assembly in 2006. As a politician, Marian held the roles of Minister of Justice; Attorney General, and Minister responsible for Women's Directorate. She was later elected President of the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council and served as the representative for the Native Women's Association of Canada. Marian is a passionate advocate for women's rights, restorative and social justice.

### **Mirabel Sirois**

Mira yearns to integrate her core values into everything she does as an Artist, Advocate, and Firebrand. She is the founder of the artist collective Milkweed Productions, and co-founder of BRICKS — the Yukon's first and only Trans Feminist organization.

# Meetings

## June 19, 2025

A staff member from the Women and Gender Equity Directorate provided an update on membership, budget and logistics. Members held a priority setting brainstorm and acknowledged gaps in membership. Minister Jeanie McLean reviewed the history and current role of the council, as well as her own role with WGED. The Minister shared strategic advice for the council, including focusing on fewer, high-impact priorities and the potential role for MACWAGE in legislative consultation.

- Discussion with Minister Jeanie McLean also included:
  - Advising on legislation and policy;
  - Thinking holistically about government initiatives (e.g., Health Authority, Putting People First, environment projects);
  - Potential gaps that the group could use to inform priorities, including concerns about lack of attention on accessibility and disability;
  - Preparation for post-election transition.

As part of the meeting members watched a presentation on gender-based violence sector program Review by Boreal Logic and discussed its findings.

## October 18, 2025

The meeting included updates on logistics, budget, membership and upcoming meetings with Government departments. A WGED Policy Analyst provided an overview of Terms of Reference that are in the final stages of completion. Members participated in a priority setting exercise to help them identify initiatives the Council should focus on. To conclude the meeting, WGED staff provided an overview of major initiatives that the department is currently working on. Those initiatives include:

- The National Action Plan to end Gender-based Violence;
- Yukon's MMIWG2S+ Strategy;
- LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan;
- Sexualized Assault Response Team (SART)
- Gender Inclusive Diversity Analysis
- Supporting Minister's Advisory Council on Women and Gender Equity

## **January 7, 2026**

Members met with the recently appointed Minister Laura Lang and her advisor, and the Deputy Minister Sierra Van Der Meer. The Minister shared a few initial priorities for the Council and WGED: focusing on men and boys as a part of gender-based violence prevention, the issue of loneliness and isolation in the Yukon, intimate partner violence, and how to best support Yukon youth. The new government mandate was not finalised yet at the time of this meeting. Attendees discussed the best format of collaboration between the Council and the Ministers for the next four years.

After the Minister's departure, members discussed recruitment of new members and reviewed draft Terms of Reference for the Council presented by a Senior Policy Advisory from WGED.

## **March 4, 2026**

Membership updates included the resignation of Cindy-Anne Naylor effective March 3, 2026, and confirmation that new member candidates are under ministerial review, with orientations planned before their first meeting. Sub-committee planning has begun and will be finalized once new members are appointed. Council discussed the Premier's mandate letter and the Minister's response. Key discussion focused on men and boys programming, data gaps affecting women and gender-diverse people, and the need for programs to reflect needs of people of all genders and sexual orientations.

The council reviewed the second draft Terms of Reference and the operating guide, focusing on definitions, sub-committees, member removal, public communication, conflicts of interest, the directorate's support role and meeting planning.

# Administration

## 2025-26 expenditures

Travel	\$ 1,571.00
Honoraria	\$ 1,531.00
Contracts	\$ 1,000.00
Catering	\$ 862.00
Venue Rental	\$ 1,491.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,455.00</b>

## Contact us

For more information, email the Women and Gender Equity Directorate at [wged@yukon.ca](mailto:wged@yukon.ca) or phone 867-667-3030, toll free in the Yukon 1-800-661-0408, extension 3030.