

INFO BULLETIN

INFORMATION FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

National

Issue 153

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[2026 National First Nations Water Leadership Award recipients honoured on National Indigenous Water Operator Day](#)

On March 21, 2026, the Government of Canada, recognized the 2026 recipients of the [National First Nations Water Leadership Award](#) in both the individual and team categories. The National First Nations Water Leadership Award recognizes individuals and teams who demonstrate exceptional [leadership in advancing safe drinking water and water stewardship in First Nations communities](#).

This year's awards are especially meaningful as they coincide with [National Indigenous Water Operator Day](#), which recognizes the essential role Indigenous water operators play in protecting community health and providing safe and reliable drinking [water systems in First Nations communities](#). The day also highlights the importance of the profession and the leadership that water operators demonstrate in supporting strong and resilient communities.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).

[Government of Canada announces federal funding to boost Indigenous tourism](#)

On March 17, 2026, the Government of Canada announced \$6 million in funding to support the scale-up of significant, export-ready, market-sustainable and community-supported [Indigenous experiences and tourism destinations](#). Partnering to grow [Indigenous tourism](#) is essential to position Canada as a top global destination and enable Canada to realize the full potential of the visitor economy.

Across Canada, Indigenous communities are offering domestic and international visitors authentic and meaningful tourism experiences. These experiences also provide unique opportunities to learn about traditional Indigenous knowledge and the histories and cultural practices of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Indigenous tourism not only deepens understanding and connection but also drives economic growth, supporting Indigenous entrepreneurs and advancing economic reconciliation and self-determination.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).

[Government of Canada improves access to sexual and reproductive health services](#)

On March 9, 2026, the Government of Canada announced an investment of almost \$600,000 to support the delivery of inclusive, culturally sensitive sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and resources to the communities across the country that need them. Canadians deserve better access to [sexual and reproductive health](#) services as well as resources that are safe, accurate, and stigma-free.

Members of marginalized groups and newcomers to Canada often experience barriers to care. This is why the Government of Canada is providing culturally safe and relevant care to underserved populations, including members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities, Indigenous and racialized people, women, and youth. These projects are funded through the [Sexual and Reproductive Health Fund](#) which supports community-based organizations that make SRH services more accessible for Canadians.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).

**HELP IS AVAILABLE
WHENEVER YOU
NEED IT.**

**Immediate support is available 24/7
for all Indigenous people in Canada.**

Hope for Wellness Help Line and Chat
1-855-242-3310 or www.hopeforwellness.ca

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line
1-866-925-4419

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
and Girls Support Line
1-844-413-6649

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The Government of Canada has launched the 2026-2027 call for proposals for the [Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund \(SAR NIF\)](#), which supports projects that strengthen search and rescue capacity across the country.

Applications must be submitted by May 15, 2026, at 12:00 pm Pacific time.

This builds on a separate [\\$2.86M investment through SAR NIF to support seven organizations](#) promoting search and rescue capacity through training, volunteer recruitment, and coordination.

[Government of Canada invests to support Indigenous stories through broadcasting](#)

On March 20, 2026, the Government of Canada announced \$17.2 million over two years for the production and broadcasting of Indigenous audio and video content. The Government of Canada is providing this support through the [Northern Aboriginal Broadcasting component of the Indigenous Languages Program](#).

Indigenous Peoples are the guardians of their stories. Support for Indigenous broadcasting in the North is an essential tool for empowering them to tell these stories, preserve their cultures and identities, and advance reconciliation.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).

[CRTC making it easier to connect Indigenous communities to high-speed Internet and cellphone services](#)

On March 18, 2026, the Government of Canada announced that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is making it easier for Indigenous communities to get connected to high-speed Internet and cellphone services through its [Broadband Fund](#). Through the Broadband Fund, the CRTC contributes to a broad effort by federal, provincial, and territorial governments to connect underserved rural, remote and [Indigenous communities](#) across Canada.

Many Indigenous communities continue to face a gap in access to high-quality Internet and cellphone services. To help close this gap, the CRTC is gathering views on how to better support [Indigenous applicants](#) to the fund. The CRTC is also looking at how to reduce administrative burden through simplifying the amount of information it requires after a project has been selected for funding. **The CRTC is accepting comments until September 18, 2026.**

For more information, please visit the [backgrounder](#) and [news release](#).

An advertisement for safe cannabis storage. It features a black, rectangular, lockable container with a green cannabis leaf logo on the front. To the right of the container, the text reads 'STORE YOUR CANNABIS SAFELY' in large, bold, purple letters. Below this, two bullet points with checkmarks indicate 'Out of reach' and 'Locked away'. The background is white with purple geometric shapes in the corners.

Regional

[Manitoba government announces Budget 2026](#)

On March 24, 2026, the Province of Manitoba announced that [Budget 2026](#) makes responsible investments that align with Manitobans' priorities while making progress on the path to balance the budget within four years. This budget is about building a healthier, more affordable Manitoba for families.

Budget 2026 reflects the values of everyday Manitobans who want to see everyone succeed with progressive policies that give families with the lowest incomes the most help. This includes a change to the Homeowners Affordability Tax credit to help Manitobans with the most give back to those with the least, new investments in free child care for low-income families, and a \$2.5 million investment in adult literacy programs to help more Manitobans graduate and find a good job.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#) and [Budget 2026](#).

[Indigenous Mothering Centre to keep mothers and babies together](#)

On March 12, 2026, the Manitoba government announced that they're providing \$2.5 million to [Blue Thunderbird Family Care Inc.](#) to purchase and renovate a property for the future [Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag Mothering Centre](#) in Winnipeg. The Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag Mothering Centre will provide a safe, culturally grounded space where mothers can nurture their babies while accessing supports rooted in traditional knowledge and practices. By investing in culturally specific care and programming, we are helping to strengthen the bonds between mothers and children while ensuring families can thrive together in a place that feels like home.

The investment also supports the goals of [Pathways Forward: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), which prioritizes groups at vulnerable transition points, including babies and children zero to five years old, beginning in the prenatal period. The new mothering centre is expected to open this summer.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).

[\\$3.4 million investment for First Nation-owned Minago mine](#)

On March 2, 2026, the Province of Manitoba announced it is investing \$3.4 million to accelerate [new mining projects](#) and strengthen Manitoba's role in Canada's critical minerals supply chain. The first phase of development is expected to create more than 20 permanent jobs, provide training for over 50 First Nation participants and strengthen Manitoba's domestic processing capacity in a mineral essential to clean technology and advanced manufacturing.

This announcement builds on Manitoba's recent agreement with [Vale Base Metals](#) securing up to \$200 million US in new investment in the Thompson Nickel Belt to protect jobs and secure the future of nickel mining in northern Manitoba, as well as the signing of a [Western Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy](#) memorandum of understanding with British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, positioning Manitoba as a key player in a co-ordinated national approach to critical mineral development.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).

[Manitoba government enacts legislation to protect against intimate partner violence](#)

On March 2, 2026, the Province of Manitoba has proclaimed [Clare's Law](#), the *Disclosure to Protect Against Intimate Partner Violence Act*, effective March 1, giving Manitobans a way to access an intimate partner's documented history of violence. Clare's Law is named after Clare Wood, who was murdered by her former partner in England in 2009. Her family campaigned to create a legal process that allows police to warn potential victims of intimate partner violence, or their families, about a partner's documented history of violence.

The Manitoba government has collaborated with Indigenous organizations, community partners and law enforcement to design a provincial disclosure protocol. Manitoba Justice's Family Resolution Service and Women and Gender Equity Manitoba are leading the development of the Clare's Law Program. Community organizations, including shelters, staff and law enforcement officers will receive training to help people apply for the program and navigate their safety concerns.

For more information, please visit the [news release](#).