



**National Aboriginal Woman Summit: *Strong Women, Strong Communities*
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Issue Paper: Law and Justice

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), as the national organization representing Inuit in Canada, regards Inuit corrections, justice and the safety of Inuit communities as a priority. Towards this work, a continued partnership between ITK and Correctional Services Canada (CSC) will improve the effectiveness of corrections as it relates to the treatment and successful reintegration of Inuit offenders. ITK has identified priority areas in Inuit corrections and recommends a number of efforts be made towards improving the coordination, communications and delivery of Inuit corrections. Efforts to stem the tide of violent crime in Inuit communities rely on a coordinated approach between all stakeholders and jurisdictions, with extensive involvement from Inuit communities in each of the four Inuit Regions (Nunavut, Nunavik, Inuvialuit and Nunatsiavut).

Inuit Perspective:

Adequate funding to improve consultation, coordination, information-sharing and networking between CSC and the Inuit community is required. A national Inuit corrections plan must be developed in consultation with all stakeholders and in coordination with efforts being taken by CSC, in Inuit regions, by territorial and provincial governments and by the Inuit communities.

No discussion of Inuit corrections can fail to identify the tragically high rates of federal Inuit offenders at high-risk to re-offend and at high-need for programming in comparison to other non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal offender populations. For this reason, as well as for the undeniable need for Inuit-specific cultural and linguistic programming and services; unique interventions, programs and services must be developed and delivered, including Inuit community release options in Inuit communities. Secure funding for Inuit-specific programming and services must be established, preferably based on a national Inuit corrections plan that guides priorities, procedures and services to Inuit offenders and involves the Inuit community through meaningful consultation is required.

ITK recommends that CSC establish a national Inuit corrections coordinator in order to facilitate improved communications and coordination of Inuit corrections in CSC and between the Inuit community. As well, coordination of Inuit corrections must be seen, not as a north-south initiative between CSC's regional headquarters and the Inuit community but as a process that involves Inuit regions and communities, one that shares services and knowledge between jurisdictions in order to restore peace, wellness and safety to Inuit communities.

What is ITK doing about it?

ITK through the Inuit Action Plan is advocating for improved consultation, coordination, information sharing, and networking between the Government of Canada and Inuit Nunat to start to develop a strategy on ways and means of address law and justice in and for Inuit communities. Further, sharing of services and knowledge across jurisdictions to meet the needs and rights of Inuit offenders in federal/provincial/territorial penitentiaries is required; and development of a National Inuit Prevention/Progressive Plan with Inuit specific programs and services with ties to education and social service institutions with implementation approaches for the regions and communities.

Recommendations:

- Due to the high-risk and high-need profile of the majority of federal Inuit offenders, ITK recommends the development of effective Inuit-specific interventions towards treatment and healing at the institutional level and at the Inuit community level in order to increase the chances of successful reintegration.
- ITK recommends the piloting of an ***Inuit Community Residential Facility*** for healing and treatment of Inuit offenders on conditional release. This is a priority as currently there are no Inuit-specific options for conditional release in an Inuit community.
- The Tupiq Program should be a nationally recognized and nationally coordinated intervention for Inuit offenders who require sex offender treatment. Core funding should be provided to deliver the program on a regular basis and fulltime Inuit program positions should be established in order to build capacity and provide a continuum of Inuit professionalism in the corrections field.
- ITK recommends the continued development, coordinated at the national level, of Inuit-specific programming targeting the cultural, linguistic and correctional needs of Inuit offenders. Priority should be the development and delivery of an ***Inuit Community Maintenance Program*** and an ***Inuit Substance Abuse Prevention Program*** at the institution and community levels.
- ITK recommends national Inuit guidelines and standardized policies for the development and delivery of Inuit-specific services including:
 - Interpreting-Translating
 - Family Contact
 - Inuit Country Food
 - Inuit Healing
- ITK recommends coordination of Inuit corrections programming at the national level, not at the institutional level as is done currently, in order to ensure national standards for Inuit programming and access to Inuit-specific programming for all Canadian Inuit offenders.

- ITK recommends coordination and networking between Inuit programs federally, regionally, and across provincial and territorial jurisdictions in order to share information and resources aimed at improving the effectiveness of Inuit-specific interventions.
- ITK recommends that a **National Inuit Corrections Strategy or Plan** be developed. The Plan would be a continuation of the work begun with the **Kajusiniq Action Plan** currently under review but would involve greater consultation and coordination with other partners and stakeholders in the Inuit community. The Plan would establish guiding policy and principles for Inuit involvement and Inuit-specific intervention development, improved coordination and guidance on Inuit-specific programming and services at the institutional and community levels including incarceration placement and development of Inuit specific alternatives to incarceration and early release.
- ITK recommends the continued development of a **National Inuit Corrections Network** in order to bring together stakeholders with a common interest in reducing recidivism and improve reintegration of Inuit offenders at the federal and provincial-territorial levels. The Network would be an initiative that begins with consultation and information sharing through **forums** or conferences.