

 <p>Algoma Family Services SERVICES AUX FAMILLES D'ALGOMA</p>	Job Description	8211
	Date Issued	December 2025
	Date Reviewed	
Job Description <u>Indigenous Elder</u>	Approval by Chief Executive Officer  C.E.O. Signature	

POSITION TITLE:

Indigenous Elder

REPORTING TO:

Clinical Manager

WORKPLACE:

205 McNabb St., Sault Ste. Marie

WORKTYPE:

In-person / Community-based

JOB SUMMARY

Reporting to the Clinical Manager, the Indigenous Elder provides cultural leadership grounded in Anishinaabe knowledge, values, and traditions. The Elder advances Algoma Family Services' commitments to Truth and Reconciliation by imparting Indigenous wisdom, challenging preconceptions, and supporting improvements to services, frameworks, and policies to create culturally safe environments across AFS programs. This role includes culturally informed guidance to case practice; individual and group support; ceremony, teachings, land-based learning, and protocol advice; mentorship of staff; attendance at program events; and co-development of cultural programming for children and youth. The Elder collaborates closely with the Indigenous Outreach Worker and program teams, including the Live-in Treatment Program, to integrate traditional Indigenous approaches to well-being with evidence-informed practices.

MINIMUM EDUCATION

- Social Service Worker Diploma with an Indigenous Specialization. A University degree in Indigenous Studies or BSW is preferred.

MINIMUM EXPERIENCE

- A minimum of three (3) years' experience working with Indigenous children, youth, and families in a cultural context within a multi-disciplinary, team-based environment.
- Candidates with **extensive practical experience** (10 years or more) will be considered on par with formal educational credentials.

INDIGENOUS-SPECIFIC PREFERENCE

- Preference will be given to candidates who are First Nations, Inuit, or Métis, and who are recognized by their community as an Elder/Knowledge Keeper.
- To support respectful hiring practices, candidates may be asked to provide community-based references or letters (e.g., from rights-bearing Indigenous communities/organizations) that confirm community recognition.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Recognition as an Elder/Knowledge Keeper by your community, with demonstrated experience providing teachings, ceremony, and cultural support.
- Deep knowledge of Anishinaabe culture; Anishinaabemowin language is an asset; strong understanding of traditional values, seasonal cycles, and local community protocols.
- Demonstrated ability to lead ceremonies, teachings, land-based learning, and provide protocol guidance in program settings.
- Experience working with children, youth, families, and staff in Indigenous service settings (child & family services, child welfare, education, health, youth justice, and/or community programs).
- Ability to travel within the Agency's service area and work some evenings/weekends aligned to community schedules and ceremonies.
- Strong relationship-building, listening, and facilitation skills; ability to work across diverse cultural and spiritual practices with respect.
- Understanding of cultural safety, trauma-informed practice, and the impacts of colonialism, residential schools, and intergenerational trauma on families and communities.
- Valid driver's license and access to reliable transportation.
Criminal Record Check with Broad Sector Check (and any additional checks as required).
- First Aid/CPR, CPI, and ASIST training is an asset
- Full immunization, including the COVID vaccines.

Duties & Responsibilities

Program / Service Delivery

1. Maintain confidentiality/privacy at all times in accordance with agency policy and legislation; obtain informed consent for the collection, use, and disclosure of personal health information and report breaches immediately.
2. Develop welcoming, inclusive, and culturally safe programs that blend traditional Indigenous approaches to wellness with western treatment approaches; incorporate knowledge of culture, family, traditions, and community.
3. Provide culturally informed guidance to assessments, care planning, and service delivery across programs; document observations and recommendations in accordance with privacy and agency standards.
4. Offer strengths-based, trauma-informed, client-centred supports for children, youth, and families, integrating traditional teachings and healing practices.
5. Support transitions and reduce barriers to service (e.g., transportation, food security, essential items) in collaboration with program teams.
6. Report suspected abuse or neglect per legislation and agency procedures.

Cultural Connection & Ceremony

7. Lead and/or facilitate ceremonies, teachings, and land-based learning (e.g., smudging, medicines, seasonal activities) and ensure cultural protocols, safety, and consent are respected.
8. Provide protocol advice, guidance on sacred items and spaces, and support culturally appropriate integration of ceremony within program environments.

Client, Family & Community Support

9. Engage families and natural supports to strengthen circles of care and community connection.
10. Collaborate with clinicians and teams to coordinate culturally appropriate services and complete warm referrals to Indigenous-led organizations as appropriate.

Community Engagement & Partnership Building

11. Build and maintain relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities and service providers across the region; liaise to promote cultural resources.
12. Represent AFS on relevant committees/initiatives; coordinate and provide advice/assistance to Elders' Councils/Committees as appropriate.
13. Collaborate with internal and external agencies to provide unified, culturally appropriate programs/services.

Staff, Leadership, & Board Education & Organizational Capacity

14. Develop and deliver teachings to staff on cultural practices, ceremonies, and traditions; contribute to orientation and ongoing education.
15. Advise leaders on culturally safe practices; assess organizational needs and recommend strategies to improve responsiveness to Indigenous clients and communities.
16. Ensure agency meetings and gatherings reflect cultural practices to guide discussions and decisions.

Truth & Reconciliation / Policy Development

17. Provide guidance on implementing TRC Calls to Action relevant to mental health and youth/family services.
18. Contribute to the development and maintenance of culturally informed policies, procedures, and training materials.
19. Advance AFS' commitments to reconciliation, cultural safety, and equity across programs.

Administration

20. Complete timely, accurate documentation in agency systems; safeguard records in line with privacy and security standards.
21. Prepare and submit required reports/statistics; maintain monthly attendance records and travel expense claims.
22. Follow human resources, finance, and other agency policies and procedures; attend staff/team meetings.

Health & Safety

23. Promote a culture of safety; comply with health and safety policies and relevant legislation (e.g., OHSA).
24. Identify hazards and facility issues; adhere to PPE and safety protocols during ceremonies and land-based activities.

Performance & Professional Development

25. Participate in supervision (at least monthly), meet performance benchmarks, and maintain current training/certifications (e.g., First Aid/CPR, ASIST, CPI).
26. Pursue a professional development plan aligned to role responsibilities and community expectations.

Other

27. Perform other related duties as assigned by the Manager/Supervisor to support program and organizational goals.
28. Participate on at least one agency committee and in agency events to support organizational goals, collaboration, and community engagement.

FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY

Physical: Occasional lifting (up to 50 lbs) and movement of supplies; reaching, bending, kneeling; outdoor activities in varying weather; assisting during escalations within the scope of training.

Mental: Exposure to distressed or acting-out behaviour; periods of focused concentration; multi-tasking and prioritization; sustained attention to detail.

Exposure to Hazardous Materials: Possible exposure to cleaning chemicals/biohazards; adherence to PPE and safety protocols. Smoke from smudging or ceremonial scents.

Acknowledgement

I have read and understood the responsibilities and requirements of the Indigenous Elder position.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____