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Backgrounder

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Cultural Immersion Days Directives

Nunavut was created through the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement with a vision that governance would reflect Inuit culture in all operations, and would maintain the Inuit lifestyle across all regions of Nunavut.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) is knowledge that has been passed down inter-generationally by Inuit prior to European contact. It is applicable in current governance and can also be used in the evolution of governance in Nunavut. Inuit societal values (ISV) are principles created through this knowledge that can provide guidance. The ISV chosen for application within this directive are reflected in the Cabinet's Tamapta mandate to provide guidance in public service.

The IQ directive provides examples of how Inuit societal values can be applied in every day employment and public service applications.

- In communication: "Speak or write directly, clearly, and with sensitivity to those listening or reading."
- In leadership: "Be modest with accomplishments, allow others to feel encouraged to share their accomplishments and contribute."
- In facilitating meetings: "Make sure all participants feel welcome and included, and that their contribution is valued."
- In cross-cultural awareness: "Broaden your knowledge and understanding of cultural differences to understand the cultural needs of all employees in the workplace."
- In teamwork: "Celebrate the accomplishments of each in the workplace and have a ready willingness to provide praise, encouragement, and recognition to others."

The Cultural Immersion Days directive describes the practice that has occurred within the Government of Nunavut, since its creation, of providing an opportunity for employees to experience Inuit cultural lifestyle on the land.

The directive is designed to ensure that the traditional knowledge learned contributes in building understanding and skills that improve the employee's ability to deliver services to Nunavummiut.

Direction is given that cultural immersion days are organized with consideration to areas such as safety, weather and cross-cultural understanding. Cultural immersion days may include land survival skills, team building activities and learning through elders' teachings and stories.