

Aboriginal Affairs

Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

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Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

The Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat was formed in 1999 to improve the provincial government's capacity to address the increasing number of complex matters in Aboriginal affairs and to devote greater attention to Aboriginal issues. In November 2003, a Deputy Minister was appointed exclusively for Aboriginal Affairs. Aboriginal affairs involve complex social, economic, and legal issues. In New Brunswick, there are 15 First Nations communities, 6 Maliseet (or Wolastoqiyik) communities along the Saint John River and 9 Mi'kmaq communities along the eastern and northern coasts, as well as Aboriginal organizations. Due to the wide range of issues and topics, the Secretariat deals with many parties, including various federal and provincial departments, First Nations communities, and Aboriginal organizations. Aboriginal Affairs is the gateway for contact between the province and First Nations. The secretariat plays a lead role within the provincial government in addressing Aboriginal issues. The Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat works closely with all provincial departments on issues related to environment, education, health, housing, family and community services, sport and culture, natural resource management, economic development, and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal people. The Secretariat also acts as the liaison with the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet communities and Aboriginal organizations to ensure the development of long-term positive relationships with the Aboriginal leaders within the province. In addition, Aboriginal Affairs ensures that the public service is educated and aware of Aboriginal issues and cultural differences, as well as stimulates awareness of the Aboriginal culture at a provincial level.

Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat (Secretariat)

To provide information and advice to the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and to departments on planning, policy development, communications, interdepartmental co-ordination and intergovernmental relations pertaining to Aboriginal matters; to act as a liaison with Mi'kmaq and Maliseet communities and Aboriginal organizations; and to further cultural awareness in relation to Aboriginal people within the public service and with the general public.