

**New Democratic Party  
Aboriginal Commission**

**Constitution**

**Ratified 15/03/2007**

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## **Article I: Name**

1. The name of this organization shall be the New Democratic Party Aboriginal Commission (hereinafter to be referred to as the NDPAC).

## **Article II: Interpretation and Definitions**

1. This Constitution shall be interpreted by the presiding Co-Chairs; s/he may be overruled by a majority vote of the Executive, or by a majority vote of delegates present and voting at NDPAC Convention or Council.
2. This Constitution shall not be interpreted in any way that conflicts with the Constitution of the New Democratic Party of Canada (hereinafter to be referred to as the NDP).
3. Gender Parity shall be understood to mean at least fifty percent persons who identify as women.
4. Aboriginal shall be understood to mean all persons who self identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis, regardless of status or place of residence.

## **Article III: Mandate**

1. The NDPAC is an autonomous organization that shall serve to further the purpose and objectives of the NDPAC, which are:
  - a. To develop, determine and actively advocate and promote the policy positions of the NDPAC
  - b. To promote the election of New Democratic Party candidates, and in particular, to promote the nomination and election of Aboriginal candidates
  - c. To provide support and assistance to provincial sections in their efforts to organize Aboriginal New Democrats at a local and provincial level
  - d. To promote the New Democratic Party among Aboriginal peoples
  - e. To promote greater awareness among Canadians of the contributions of Aboriginal people to Canada and of issues of concern to Aboriginal people
  - f. To assist the New Democratic Party in developing policies and procedures to create a welcoming environment for the participation of Aboriginal peoples in the operations of the Party; and
  - g. To pursue structural change within the New Democratic Party to allow for increased aboriginal input and authority in the policy process.

## **Article IV: Languages**

1. The official languages of the NDPAC shall include French and English and the Aboriginal languages of its members.
2. All official publications and documents of the NDPAC shall be available in both French and English at least.
3. Any member may address meetings of the organization in French, English or an Aboriginal language.
4. The Constitution is to be available in French and English, and both versions shall be equally binding.
5. Efforts will be made to facilitate the use of Aboriginal languages in meetings and publications where capacity and resources allow.

## **Article V: Membership**

1. Membership in the NDPAC shall be open to all members in good standing of the New Democratic Party of Canada who self identify as Aboriginal.
2. Affiliated membership in the NDPAC shall be open to all members of the NDP and to people who self-identify as Aboriginal but may not be members of the NDP.

## **Article VI: Executive**

1. At the biennial Convention of the NDPAC, members shall elect the following ten (10) Executive members, who shall be members in good standing of the NDPAC, as described in article V, Section 1 or 3:
  - a) **Two Co-Chairs**, at least one of whom shall identify as a woman, shall share leadership of the NDPAC and the NDPAC Executive, including:
    - i. Chairing meetings of the NDPAC Executive
    - ii. Promoting the interests and positions of the NDPAC within the Federal Party
    - iii. Representing the NDPAC on the Federal Executive and Council
    - iv. Reporting to the NDPAC on the Federal Executive and Council
    - v. Serving as spokesperson for the NDPAC.
  - b) **The Métis director shall:**
    - i. Represent and voice the concerns of the Métis with regards to NDPAC policy and functions
    - ii. Be responsible for outreach to Métis peoples
    - iii. Liaise with other Metis peoples and activists to encourage their participation in the NDPAC
    - iv. Liaise and work with the organization function of the NDP in order to identify and support Métis candidates for election to Parliament.
  - c) **The Inuit Director shall:**
    - i. Represent and voice the concerns of Inuit with regards to NDPAC policy and functions
    - ii. Be responsible for outreach to Inuit

- iii. Liaise with other Inuit and activists to encourage their participation in the NDPAC
  - iv. Liaise and work with the organization function of the NDP in order to identify and support Inuk candidates for election to Parliament.
- d) **The First Nations Director shall:**
- i. Represent and voice the concerns of the First Nations with regards to NDPAC policy and functions
  - ii. Be responsible for outreach to First Nations peoples
  - iii. Liaise with other First Nations peoples and activists to encourage their participation in the NDPAC
  - iv. Liaise and work with the organization function of the NDP in order to identify and support First Nations candidates for election to Parliament.
- e) **The Secretary shall:**
- i. Maintain the minutes and ensure the security and storage of all documents of administrative and historical importance to the NDPAC
  - ii. Assist Co-Chairs with the facilitation and planning of Executive meetings
  - iii. Be responsible for internal correspondence with and between members of the NDPAC
  - iv. Be responsible for the NDPAC Executive and general membership list servers.
- f) **The Treasurer shall:**
- i. Coordinate fundraising proposals and projects
  - ii. Work with Federal Office to maintain the financial records
  - iii. Prepare an annual budget
  - iv. Provide quarterly financial updates
  - v. In consultation with the NDPAC Executive and Federal Office, disburse travel pool for NDPAC Council and Convention
  - vi. Work with Federal Office to handle disbursements and receipts.
- g) **The Policy and Communications Director shall:**
- i. Draft policy initiated by the NDPAC Executive
  - ii. Maintain the policy manual of the NDPAC
  - iii. Liaise with the Federal Policy Committee
  - iv. Liaise with provincial sections on policy initiatives of the NDPAC
  - v. Request articles for NDPAC publications
  - vi. In conjunction with Federal Office, develop and coordinate the production of external communication tools
- h) **Two Outreach Directors**, at least one of whom shall identify as a woman, shall:
- i. Liaise and build communications and relationships with other organizations of the NDP, particularly the New Democratic Youth of Canada Commission (NDYC), the Participation of Women Committee (POW) and the other equity-seeking committees of the NDP

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- ii. Represent and voice the concerns of youth, women and other equity-seeking groups with regards to NDPAC policy and functions
  - iii. Be responsible for outreach to youth, women and other equity-seeking groups.
2. Gender parity shall apply to all NDPAC Executive elections.
3. Vacancies on the NDPAC Executive shall be filled by the Executive. The NDPAC Executive shall give notice of vacancy to all provincial/territorial sections within seven (7) days of resignation. All provincial and territorial sections must receive at least twenty-one (21) days notice of the by-election.
4. The Executive shall meet a minimum of four (4) times per year, in addition to meeting at all NDP Federal Council meetings. Additional meetings may be called by the Co-Chairs. Special meetings will be called by the Co-Chairs at the request of a majority of the members of the Executive.
5. At least seven (7) days notice must be given for an NDPAC Executive meeting. In cases of emergency, a meeting may be called within three (3) days.
6. The Co-chairs shall be authorized to make any decisions of an urgent nature, subject to later ratification by the Executive.
7. Quorum at Executive meetings shall be the majority of the Executive.
8. Executive members shall be elected by consensus if the membership at Convention can agree on a process for reaching consensus. Such a process must be agreed upon before any candidates are nominated. Members will be provided thirty minutes at the outset of the election to determine and agree on such a process. If a process for consensus can not be reached, Executive members shall be elected by a majority vote of members at Convention. Executive members may be removed from office after a show of cause hearing, by a two-thirds vote of the Executive.
9. NDPAC Executive members are required to submit a report for approval by Convention at the conclusion of their term. NDPAC Executive members shall provide verbal reports of their activities at each Executive meeting, as well as submit a written report of their activities to the Executive once a year. The written report shall be made available to the membership upon request.

### **Article VII: Convention**

1. The NDPAC biennial Convention shall be the supreme governing body of the NDPAC and shall have final authority over all decisions of the NDPAC and all matters of Constitution and policy.
2. The NDPAC Convention shall be held immediately prior to and in conjunction with the Convention of the New Democratic Party.
3. All members in good standing of the NDPAC shall be entitled to delegate status at the NDPAC Convention.
4. NDPAC Affiliate members may attend Convention as observers.
5. At least three months notice of the date and location of the NDPAC Convention shall be given to each provincial/territorial section.
6. A meeting of the NDPAC will be held at least 90 days prior to the NDPAC Convention. All resolutions for discussion at the NDPAC Convention must be

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- received prior to that meeting of the NDPAC. Resolutions may only be submitted by:
- a) The NDPAC Executive
  - b) Members of the NDPAC
  - c) NDP Riding Associations where a member of the NDPAC has agreed to move the resolution at Convention on behalf of that Riding Association.
7. Emergency resolutions at Convention may be submitted by the above bodies, or by any registered delegate with the written support of three additional delegates. Such resolutions will be submitted to a resolutions body composed of the two Co-Chairs of the NDPAC, plus two other Executive members. The Commission will accept or reject the resolution based on their classification as an emergency (i.e., the substance of the motion must relate to something which could not have been submitted prior to the resolutions deadline), and will present the plenary with a prioritized list of emergency resolutions for discussion in the appropriate period.
8. The biennial Convention of the NDPAC shall:
- a) Elect members of the NDPAC Executive
  - b) Receive and consider the reports of the NDPAC
  - c) Consider:
    - i. The policies of the NDPAC
    - ii. Proposed amendments to the NDPAC Constitution
    - iii. Strategies for promoting resolutions that have been sent to the NDP Federal Convention or Federal Council. Resolutions to be forwarded by the NDPAC to NDP Federal Convention or Federal Council shall be adopted by the NDPAC at a meeting of the NDPAC held for this purpose preceding such NDP Federal Convention or Council
    - iv. Any other business deemed necessary.
9. Quorum at Convention shall be one-half of NDPAC members in attendance. A special convention must be called when half of the Executive positions are vacant for a period of 60 days, or when requested by three-quarters of the Executive.
10. At least 90 days notice of the time and location of an NDPAC Special Conventions shall be given to each provincial or territorial section.

### **Article VIII: Council**

1. The NDPAC Council shall meet in alternate years to the biennial Convention.
2. Special meetings of the NDPAC Council may be called by a three-quarters majority vote of the NDPAC Executive.
3. The Council shall be the supreme governing body between conventions and shall have authority over all decisions of the NDPAC in matters of policy and the NDPAC Constitution.
4. All NDPAC members may attend Council.
5. NDPAC Affiliate members may attend Council as observers.

### **Article IX: Discipline of Members**

1. Discipline of NDPAC members shall be governed by Article VII of the Constitution of the New Democratic Party of Canada.

### **Article X: Rules of Order**

1. All proceedings of the NDPAC shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition. Where conflict exists between Robert's Rules of Order and the NDPAC Constitution, the latter shall prevail.

### **Article XI: Amendment**

1. All Constitutional amendments require the approval of two-thirds of the delegates present and voting at NDPAC Convention or at NDPAC Council.

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