



CAPE BRETON LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Terms of Reference

3-22-2026



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ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS

CBLIP – Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership

IAT – Immigrant Advisory Table

IRCC - Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

LIP - Local Immigration Partnership

MAC – Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee



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The work of the Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership takes place in Unama’ki - Cape Breton, the unceded, traditional territory of the Mi’kmaw people. We are grateful for the Peace and Friendship Treaties.

We Are All Treaty People.

As we support the settlement of newcomers to this land, we honour and respect those who have welcomed and taught settlers in Unama’ki for generations.

We understand our responsibility to educate ourselves and our members. As we listen and learn more, we are committed to advancing our journey toward Truth and Reconciliation and building meaningful relationships with Mi’kmaw people and organizations.



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 About the Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership

The Cape Breton Local Immigration Partnership (CBLIP) is a collaborative community initiative made up of local organizations, community groups, and individual community members dedicated to fostering welcoming and inclusive communities for newcomers to Canada living in Unama'ki - Cape Breton.

The CBLIP is one of about 100 Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) nationally. This initiative addresses the need for collaborative, community planning around immigration, settlement, and retention at the local level. The Cape Breton Partnership is the contribution agreement holder with IRCC, and as such is responsible for project coordination and reporting.

Mission:

The CBLIP identifies needs and opportunities for newcomer settlement in Unama'ki - Cape Breton and supports community partners in fostering inclusive and welcoming communities.

Vision:

All newcomers feel welcome, safe, supported, and at home in Unama'ki - Cape Breton.

1.2 Key Definitions

The terminology related to immigration and settlement will continue to evolve and is never completely neutral. To encourage clarity in communication, the CBLIP has adopted working definitions of several key terms.

The CBLIP recognizes that the terms **immigrant** and **newcomer** are both used to group together tremendously diverse populations. Experiences and reasons for coming to Canada are unique to each individual and loose demographic descriptors can struggle to adequately represent this diversity.

The CBLIP uses the term **immigrant** broadly, including anyone who was born outside Canada who is now living, working or studying on the Island (permanent residents, Canadian citizens, refugees, temporary residents, refugee claimants, and international students).

Newcomer refers to all residents of Unama'ki - Cape Breton who arrived recently, whether they arrived from another country or another part of Canada. The CBLIP has not applied a specific timeline to this definition and recognizes that the feelings of individuals about the term 'newcomer' can vary widely. Some immigrants prefer to move quickly past the label and others may never feel established enough to drop the label. Recognizing the weight that labels can carry and treating words with care is important to the work of the CBLIP.

For the purposes of the CBLIP, **settlement** refers to the process of meeting newcomers' immediate needs, such as housing, access to health care, food, education, language training and employment.

Inclusion is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are supported equitably in a culturally safe environment.



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1.3 Theory of Change

The CBLIP Theory of Change (2025-2030) is guided by our intended impact:

By 2030, CBLIP partner organizations will report stronger connections to other organizations, more robust referral pathways and clearer understanding of newcomer needs, better equipping them to help newcomers thrive in Unama'ki - Cape Breton.

Members have identified three key strategies to move the CBLIP toward this impact:

- Fostering a collaborative mindset by strengthening partnerships and referral pathways;
- Developing the knowledge base of members through research and storytelling; and
- Raising public awareness about the benefits of immigration and the needs of newcomers.

1.4 Our Shared Commitments

- **Unsettling Settlement:** In all we do, we recognize that the Mi'kmaq are the original and rightful newcomers of this land.
- **Newcomer Voices:** The lived experiences of newcomers to Canada are centered in our shared work.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility:** We work to apply intersectional lenses, deepen respectful relationships, and intentionally reflect diverse perspectives.
- **Continuous Learning:** We evaluate our collaborative work through an approach that is reflective, curious, relational, celebrating, responsive, and intentional.

1.5 Role of CBLIP Staff

The administration of the CBLIP is overseen by staff employed by the Cape Breton Partnership. CBLIP staff:

- Support CBLIP groups in arranging meetings, planning activities, and implementing projects;
- Work with group Chairs to ensure the ongoing participation and engagement of all members;
- Act as liaisons between other community initiatives and the CBLIP to enhance synergies and collaboration;
- Manage and support CBLIP events;
- Support the development of resources and training opportunities for CBLIP members;
- Lead CBLIP research and community consultation efforts;
- Work with an IRCC Program Officer and the Cape Breton Partnership to ensure that the CBLIP is achieving the activities, outputs, and outcomes as laid out in its Contribution Agreement (2025-2028);
- Manage the CBLIP program budget and ensure all reporting requirements set by IRCC are met;
- Conduct regular evaluation of the CBLIP and its activities; and
- Work closely with other Cape Breton Partnership staff to ensure coordinated progress on shared objectives.

2.0 Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee

2.1 Purpose and Composition

The Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee (MAC) centers Mi'kmaw leadership in the CBLIP, based in the recognition that Mi'kmaw People are the original and rightful welcoming to Unama'ki. The MAC are advisors to CBLIP staff, Immigrant Advisory Table, Council and working groups.

The MAC guides the work of the CBLIP by:

- supporting activities that help to create a stronger sense of connection between newcomers and Mi'kmaw people;
- applying the lens of Truth and Reconciliation to the CBLIP and ensuring that the work is grounded in the Peace and Friendship Treaties; and
- Guiding long-term strategies to center Mi'kmaw people in the local immigration system.

The MAC includes one representative from each community of: Membertou, Potlotek, We'koqm'aq, Wagmatcook, and Eskasoni.

3.0 Immigrant Advisory Table

3.1 Mandate

The CBLIP Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT) works alongside the CBLIP Council and working groups to ensure that CBLIP decisions are grounded in the lived experience of immigrants. IAT members also act as CBLIP liaisons in the community and help to identify newcomer settlement challenges and opportunities.

3.2 Member Roles & Responsibilities

IAT members will provide direction to the CBLIP by:

- Participating in regular meetings of the IAT;
- Reviewing documents and completing assigned tasks between meetings;
- Advising on the activities of the CBLIP from the perspective of newcomers – including the development of strategic plans, action plans and projects;
- Sharing information between the CBLIP and their networks;
- Collaborating on the development of an annual IAT action plan that will serve to achieve desired outcomes for the IAT (to be submitted by March 31st each year);
- Planning and implementing the projects identified in the annual action plan.
- Consulting for groups or organizations seeking to adapt programming and activities to better meet newcomer needs;
- Promoting the work and values of the CBLIP through friends, community channels and networks; and
- Acting as champions of welcoming and inclusive communities.

3.3 Membership

3.3.1 Composition

The IAT will comprise a maximum of 20 members, representing a diverse range of voices, backgrounds and experiences.



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IAT members will be enthusiastic volunteers who:

- Were born outside of Canada;
- Arrived in Canada within the five years before submitting their IAT application*;
- Are now living in Unama'ki - Cape Breton;
- Believe that a diverse and inclusive community is a healthy community;
- Are eager to find ways to improve the newcomer experience in Unama'ki - Cape Breton; and
- Feel comfortable communicating in English in a supportive and friendly environment.

*In some cases, individuals who have been in Canada more than five may also be considered based on their background, experience and their ability to bring diverse perspectives to the IAT.

3.3.2 Appointment Method

New members will be recruited via public announcements that communicate the benefits of participation. Current IAT members will assist in recruitment through their personal and professional networks. Interested applicants may apply by completing a brief application form. Application forms will be reviewed quarterly by the IAT Co-Chairs.

3.3.3 Terms

IAT members will serve two-year terms. Memberships may be renewed for one additional two-year term, by the decision of the member, which will result in four years of membership in total.

3.3.4 IAT Alumni

IAT members completing their terms will have the option to join the IAT Alumni.

The IAT Alumni helps to maintain connections to current IAT members and supports CBLIP work without the need to attend quarterly meetings. Alumni members will retain their Basecamp access and can still post, reply, share relevant information to the CBLIP Council members. IAT Alumni will also stay connected via communication from the CBLIP regarding events, surveys, and other opportunities for participation and connection. IAT Alumni may also choose to stay involved via CBLIP working groups and/or sub-committees.

3.3.5 Resignation/Termination

A person will cease to be a member of the IAT:

- By providing written notice to the IAT Co-Chairs;
- At the end of their membership term (unless membership is renewed);
- Following an absence from two consecutive meetings in a calendar year;
- If they move away from Unama'ki - Cape Breton; or
- If deemed necessary by a decision of the CBLIP Council Co-Chairs and IAT Co-Chairs.

3.4 Co-Chairs

In addition to the above responsibilities of all IAT members, two Co-Chairs will be elected to provide leadership to the IAT. Co-Chairs will be individuals who are able to inspire fellow IAT members and maintain focus on the mandate of the IAT. The Co-Chairs will be selected by IAT members by nomination and election by majority vote.



3.4.1 Key Roles

The IAT Co-Chairs will be responsible for:

- Planning and distributing meeting agendas, with support from CBLIP staff as needed;
- Chairing IAT meetings (alternates between Co-Chairs);
- Attending biannual CBLIP Leadership Gatherings;
- Leading and fostering a collaborative and cooperative discourse;
- Maintaining strong member engagement;
- Ensuring follow up on action items between meetings;
- Overseeing the development and implementation of the IAT's annual action plan and ensuring that it is finalized by March 31st each year;
- Acting as liaisons to the CBLIP Council (Co-Chairs should each attend two CBLIP Council meetings per year)

3.4.2 Term

IAT Co-Chairs will serve two-year terms with the option to hold one additional two-year extension of this term, if re-elected through majority vote. The terms of the Co-Chairs will be staggered, ensuring strong continuity in leadership.

3.5 Meetings

The IAT will meet a minimum of four times per year or at the call of the IAT Co-Chairs or CBLIP staff.

Members are asked to respond promptly to meeting requests, regularly attend and actively participate in meetings, review background documents shared in advance of meetings, and provide advance notice when unable to attend.

CBLIP staff will attend all IAT meetings to ensure strong communication and alignment. The Program Coordinator, or a designate, will take meeting notes and share them with IAT members following the meeting.

IAT meetings will be held virtually or at a location agreed upon by the membership. In the event of an in-person meeting, a remote connection option will also be offered in order to ensure accessibility for all members.

4.0 Council

4.1 Mandate

Drawing on the experience and expertise of its member organizations, the CBLIP Council provides leadership, advocacy, and governance for the CBLIP.

The roles and responsibilities of CBLIP Council members include:

- Championing the CBLIP vision in the community and in their sector specifically;
- Serving as a liaison between the CBLIP and their sector;
- Participating in CBLIP meetings (a minimum of four per year);
- Aiding in the development of the CBLIP Strategic Plan and corresponding action plans;
- Evaluating the implementation of the Strategic Plan and addressing key challenges;

- Ensuring that the guidance of the Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee (MAC) and Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT) are reflected in Council decisions;
- Identifying data that would be most beneficial in order to discover and address community assets and gaps in newcomer settlement; and
- Facilitating strategic relationships among existing and new partners to further the objectives of the CBLIP.

4.2 Membership

4.2.1 Composition

CBLIP Council members are individuals who represent organizations with a role in supporting newcomers as they settle in Unama'ki - Cape Breton.

The CBLIP Council will strive to include representatives from organizations such as: Mi'kmaw organizations, municipalities, regional centres for education, post-secondary institutions, the health sector, police services, settlement agencies, Francophone organizations, adult learning and literacy organizations, libraries, employers, Chambers of Commerce, faith communities, and other organizations with an interest in advancing the CBLIP Theory of Change.

Non-voting members will include CBLIP staff and representatives from the Cape Breton Partnership, IRCC, LSI, ACOA, and other provincial and federal government bodies as needed.

4.2.2 Appointment Method

New member organizations may be added to the CBLIP Council from time to time as the Council evolves and the need for additional community perspectives arises. New CBLIP Council members may be appointed through nomination and majority vote at a regular Council meeting.

In the event that an existing CBLIP Council member organization appoints a new representative from within that organization, that individual will be appointed as a CBLIP Council member without a vote of the CBLIP Council membership being required. That organization must, however, indicate the change in representation in writing to the CBLIP Program Manager.

The CBLIP Program Manager and CBLIP Council Co-Chairs will be responsible for onboarding new members.

The question of CBLIP Council membership and composition will be reviewed by the CBLIP Council on an ongoing basis.

4.2.3 Terms

CBLIP Council members will serve until such time as the organization they represent initiates a change in representation for the CBLIP Council, or if consistent attendance is not achieved as determined by the representative or by the CBLIP Council.

4.2.4 Resignation

Any resignation of a Council member should be tendered in writing to the CBLIP Program Manager. Outgoing members are asked to work with their organization to ensure its ongoing representation on the CBLIP Council.

4.3 Co-Chairs

The CBLIP Council Co-Chairs will provide strategic leadership to the Council. Co-Chairs will be individuals who are able to inspire colleagues and maintain focus on the expected results of the CBLIP and their contributions to settlement outcomes. The Co-Chairs will be selected by the CBLIP Council by nomination and election by majority vote.

4.3.1 Key Roles

- Develop meeting agendas;
- Chair Council meetings (alternates between Co-Chairs);
- Attend biannual CBLIP Leadership Gatherings;
- Lead and foster a collaborative and cooperative discourse;
- Ensure that Mi'kmaw Advisory Committee (MAC) and Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT) guidance is meaningfully reflected in the work of the Council; and
- Act as community liaisons representing the CBLIP Council as requested, to existing and potential partners and the general public.

4.3.2 Term

Co-Chairs will serve two-year terms with the option to hold an additional two-year extension of this term, if re-elected through majority vote. The terms of the Co-Chairs will be staggered, ensuring strong continuity in leadership.

4.4 Procedures

4.4.1 Meetings

The CBLIP Council will meet a minimum of four times per year or at the call of the Co-Chairs or the CBLIP Program Manager. Meetings will take place in-person with a virtual option, unless otherwise advised, and meeting locations will rotate to different regions of the Island each quarter.

Members are asked to respond promptly to meeting requests, actively participate in meetings, review background documents shared in advance of meetings, and provide advance notice if unable to attend.

4.4.2 Agendas and Meeting Summaries

Agendas will be developed by the Council Co-Chairs with the support of the CBLIP Program Manager. Additional agenda items, as proposed by other Council members, can be sent directly to the Council Co-Chairs or Program Manager prior to the meeting, or added during the meeting. The Program Manager will send the agenda and any relevant supporting documents to the CBLIP Council, on behalf of the Co-Chairs, at least one week prior to the meeting, with an additional meeting reminder sent in the days prior.

Meeting notes and their distribution will be the responsibility of CBLIP staff. Meeting summaries will highlight action items and the person(s) responsible for each item.

4.4.3 Attendance

Consistent representation must be maintained to ensure effective, clear communication. CBLIP Council members are expected to attend all Council meetings. While the physical presence of members at Council meetings is preferred, a remote connection to all meetings will be provided. Members are asked to notify the Program Manager in advance if they will be joining a meeting remotely.

In the event that a member is absent from two consecutive meetings, the Co-Chairs will reach out to the individual in order to understand the reasons for their absences and to gauge their level of ongoing engagement and commitment to the CBLIP. If the Co-Chairs determine that the levels of engagement and commitment from the member are insufficient, the issue will be brought before the CBLIP Council. The CBLIP Council will discuss the matter and may ask the member to resign if this is deemed necessary.

4.4.4 Decision Making

Key decisions will be made by the CBLIP Council through discussion and a majority vote of 50% plus one member of the total number of Council members.

Where a decision needs to be made between meetings to ensure that work progresses, decisions may be made without a meeting via electronic communication.

The Council will speak with one voice. Once a Council decision has been made, if a member has a dissenting opinion, the member should state the Council's position on the issue and redirect inquiries to the Co-Chairs or CBLIP Program Manager.

As the signatory to the contribution agreement with IRCC, the Cape Breton Partnership will have final accountability to IRCC for all finances and deliverables, and will be considered the final decision-making authority for the project on all matters related to the contract. The Cape Breton Partnership may only veto a decision made by the CBLIP Council if the action of the CBLIP Council would violate the contractual agreement between the Cape Breton Partnership and IRCC. If the Cape Breton Partnership were to exercise a veto, this would need to be clearly communicated to the CBLIP Council prior to the veto.

4.4.5 Quorum

The quorum of CBLIP Council meetings is 50% plus one individual of the total number of Council members. Attendance by non-voting members will not be counted in the determination of quorum. Members participating remotely will be counted towards quorum provided all attendees can be heard.

5.0 Working Groups

5.1 Mandate

CBLIP Working Groups are responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of action plans tied to priority areas identified by CBLIP members.

5.2 Establishment & Dissolution

New working groups may form when the following conditions are present:

- An area of need related to newcomer settlement in Unama'ki - Cape Breton is identified and, where possible, described using local data and stories;
- There is an anticipated benefit for multi-sectoral collaboration in helping to address the identified need;
- There is an individual (or individuals) prepared to take on a leadership role in chairing (or co-chairing) a new group
- There is anticipated energy and interest from CBLIP membership to form a group; and

- The proposed working group is presented to the CBLIP staff and Council for support and receives approval for establishment.

Working groups may dissolve when:

- The area of need no longer exists;
- There is no longer adequate member energy or interest in continuing the work together; and
- CBLIP staff and Council recommend dissolving the group.

5.2 Member Roles & Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of CBLIP Working Group members include:

- Sharing relevant information on the theme of their Working Group with fellow members, including:
 - Emerging needs and trends;
 - Sectoral and/or organizational updates; and
 - Promising practices, research, news, funding opportunities, etc.
- Collaborating on the development of annual action plans that will serve to achieve desired outcomes for the Working Group (to be submitted by March 31st each year);
- Planning and implementing the projects identified in the annual action plan.

5.3 Membership

5.3.1 Composition

CBLIP Working Groups will be composed of individuals and organizational representatives whose work and interests relate to the theme of the Working Group. Members may be drawn from the CBLIP Council, IAT, or the community at large.

5.3.2 Appointment Method

New members may be recruited by CBLIP staff, member networks, and/or by public announcement. Interested individuals are asked to submit an Expression of Interest form. Expressions of Interest will be reviewed by Working Group chairs as they are received, with support from CBLIP staff.

Working Groups will strive to represent the diversity of Unama'ki- Cape Breton in their membership.

Total membership of each Working Group will not exceed 15.

5.3.3 Terms

CBLIP Working Group members will serve one-year terms, running from April 1 to March 31. Memberships may be renewed for additional terms indefinitely. In the case that a member joins partway through the year, their term will be considered to run until the next March 31.

5.3.4 Resignation/Termination

A person will cease to be a member of a CBLIP Working Group:

- By providing written notice to the Working Group Chair;
- At the end of their membership term (unless membership is renewed);
- Following an absence from two consecutive meetings in a calendar year; or
- If deemed necessary by a decision of the CBLIP Council Co-Chairs and Working Group Chair.

Where possible, outgoing members are encouraged to consider potential new members, from their organization or otherwise, who may be a good fit for the group and to support outreach and recruitment.

5.4 Working Group Chairs and Co-Chairs

In addition to the above responsibilities of Working Group members, one Chair or two Co-Chairs will be selected by members to lead each Working Group and act as their liaison(s) to the CBLIP Council.

Working Group Chairs/Co-Chairs may be members of the CBLIP Council or IAT, staff of partner organizations, or interested community members with a demonstrated commitment to the objectives of the Working Group.

5.4.1 Key Roles

- Planning and distributing meeting agendas, with support from CBLIP staff as needed;
- Chairing all Working Group meetings;
- Attending biannual CBLIP Leadership Gatherings;
- Leading and fostering a collaborative and cooperative discourse;
- Ensuring that notes are taken at each meeting, distributed to members, and saved in a common location;
- Maintaining a current list of working group members;
- Maintaining strong member engagement;
- Providing onboarding and orientation to new members, with staff support;
- Ensuring follow up on action items between meetings;
- Overseeing the development and implementation of their Working Group's annual action plans and ensuring that plans are finalized by March 31st each year;
- Guiding the evaluation of working group activities;
- Updating the CBLIP Council at quarterly Council meetings with updates on all Working Group activities, by:
 - Participating in the Council meeting, or
 - Ensuring that a designated member is informed and able to provide an update on behalf of the Working Group.
- Considering succession in the Working Group Chair role by supporting and engaging other members expressing an interest in the role.

5.4.2 Term

Working Group Chairs will serve two-year terms with the option to hold additional two-year extensions of this term, if re-elected by the group through majority vote. The years of Chair terms will correspond with the CBLIP fiscal year of April 1 to March 31.

In the instance that a new working group forms or an existing working group dissolves, the Chair or Co-Chairs will be actively involved in developing plans for the establishment or wrap up of the group.

5.5 Meetings

CBLIP Working Groups will meet a minimum of four times per year or at the call of the Chair or CBLIP staff.

Meeting notes will be taken by members or by CBLIP staff and shared with Working Group members shortly following each meeting. Notes should also be saved in the designated folder on Basecamp, for future reference.

Members are asked to respond promptly to meeting requests and actively participate in meetings, review background documents shared in advance of meetings and provide notice if unable to attend a meeting.

6.0 Sub Committees

6.1 Purpose and Composition

CBLIP Sub Committees may form, as needed, to further specific projects of the CBLIP Council, MAC, IAT, or Working Groups. Sub Committees are distinct from Working Groups in that they form to address a more specific topic (often a project or event) over a shorter-term period. Sub Committees allow for focused conversations and actions to be taken outside of regular group meetings.

CBLIP Sub Committees will:

- Be supported by CBLIP staff;
- Include leadership and representation drawn from current CBLIP members
- Bring in additional members as needed;
- Report back to the group(s) they emerge from;
- Provide their members with clarity on the commitment and period of engagement required.

7.0 Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest arises when any CBLIP member (MAC, Council, IAT or Working Group), or those in close relation to the member, stands to benefit personally or professionally from the outcome of a CBLIP recommendation or decision. Members of the CBLIP are obligated to act in the best interest of all partners and not represent personal or business interests. Members will not engage in any behaviour that may be seen or perceived to be in conflict with the spirit and intent of the CBLIP.

CBLIP members shall declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest and shall identify and excuse themselves from deliberations and voting related to any matter that gives rise to a conflict of interest. In the event that there is a failure to comply with the conflict of interest guidelines, the CBLIP Program Manager will discuss the issue with the member and recommend a suitable course of action.

8.0 Confidentiality

Documents and correspondence are confidential if marked as such by the author.

9.0 Media and Communications

To ensure consistency of messaging, media inquiries should be directed to the Director of Communication for the Cape Breton Partnership.

All advertising and promotional materials must be approved by the Cape Breton Partnership and IRCC prior to publication.



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10.0 Contractual Relationship with IRCC

As signatory to the contribution agreement with IRCC, the Cape Breton Partnership and the CBLIP Program Manager will be responsible for all reporting to IRCC.

11.0 Amendments

The CBLIP Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by CBLIP MAC, IAT, Council and Working Group members. The CBLIP Terms of Reference is a dynamic document and may be amended as needed, with the oversight of these groups.



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