



Liard Aboriginal Women's Society - Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Together for Justice Safety Protocol

Context

Together for Justice Safety Protocol reflects a mutual desire by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Watson Lake Detachment, and Kaska Women of the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) to address violence against all women. We acknowledge that women have been responding to violence for decades, and that violence is still not adequately addressed for many reasons, including inadequate and poor responses from the public, governments and related agencies, including the justice system.

The RCMP who are responsible for 'preserving the peace, upholding the law and providing quality service in partnership with communities' wish to play their full part in an effective collaboration with LAWS, Liard First Nation Police Advisory Board and Community Agencies in the Watson Lake Detachment area.

The RCMP and LAWS want to build on their relationship through a strong foundation of trustworthy action, including open and on-going dialogue, honesty, mutual respect, cultural understanding, and shared learning. This Safety Protocol forms a basis for the continuity and consistency of local, culturally sensitive policing service delivery to address violence against women.

Purpose of Protocol

The purpose of this protocol is to create safety and justice for women through increased collaboration between the RCMP, LAWS and Community Agencies in the Watson Lake Detachment area.

Shared Vision

Our collaborative relationship is rooted deeply in dignity and respect for each other and the people we serve. Our goal of creating a safe, supportive and stable community for women is based on shared values, culture, trust, mutual understanding and dialogue. We celebrate our progress and strive to learn from our ongoing collaboration.

Guiding Principles

We agree to the following principles to guide our relationship:

1. We advocate for the safety and dignity of women in everything we do.
2. We are committed to building a shared understanding of our past, present and future.
3. We work as allies in eliminating violence against women and restoring equity and inclusion.
4. We acknowledge that women have been resisting diverse forms of violence for many years and they continue to protect themselves and their children.

5. We work collectively to promote positive social responses to those who have been harmed by violence.
6. We acknowledge the importance of using accurate language to describe violence and resistance to violence.
7. We understand the importance of documenting progress, communicating in a timely and accurate manner, and celebrating results.

Objectives of the Protocol

Our core and supporting objectives to guide us are as follows:

1. *To foster a secure, sustainable and resilient relationship, we will:*
 - *Commit to maintaining an active, relevant and culturally appropriate protocol*
 - *Enhance understanding and appreciation of our respective roles and responsibilities*
 - *Continue to share information and engage in culturally appropriate communication*
 - *Maximize collaboration and shared decision-making opportunities*
 - *Minimize disruption and impacts of RCMP staff transition and turnover*
 - *Work together to identify annual RCMP priorities*
 - *Increase RCMP participation and communication to inform the public and build trust*
 - *Inform each other of any communications, news releases or bulletins that relate to this protocol, prior to release*
2. *To increase inter-cultural awareness, understanding and respect, we will:*
 - *Incorporate culture as the foundation of our action*
 - *Involve our Elders to guide us*
 - *Invest in inter-cultural learning and training to deepen our understanding of each other*
 - *Respond to racism and violent behaviour*
3. *To respond to violence against community members, we will:*
 - *Increase our learning and capacity to respond to violence against women*
 - *Learn how women respond to and resist violence*
 - *Enable positive social response and appropriate language*
 - *Collaborate to expand culturally appropriate police servicing, policies and protocols*

Core Commitments

To inspire a commitment to action and increased accountability, our core commitments are as follows:


Commitment of LAWS

1. LAWS will identify a contact to liaise with the RCMP Detachment Commander;
2. LAWS will collaborate with the RCMP Detachment Commander and Community Agencies regularly to address violence against women;
3. LAWS will contribute if funded or invited by Liard First Nation's Justice Department to the development of appropriate Kaska cultural training for RCMP Detachment members;

4. LAWS will invite RCMP Detachment members to community events, meetings and cultural gatherings;
5. LAWS will facilitate opportunities for the RCMP Detachment Commander to engage with the Community to hear concerns and report on activities;
6. LAWS will collaborate with the RCMP Detachment Commander and provide written feedback to supplement the review of the RCMP annual performance plan;
7. LAWS will promote opportunities to communicate how safety for women is improving;
8. LAWS will collaborate with the RCMP to complete an annual review of this Protocol and revise as needed; and
9. LAWS will collaborate with the RCMP to define a conflict resolution process to mediate differences that may arise within this Protocol.

Commitment of the RCMP

1. The RCMP will ensure that this Protocol is known to all Detachment members;
2. The RCMP will collaborate with LAWS and the Community to address violence against women;
3. The RCMP will ensure that Detachment members complete Kaska cultural training that is mutually acceptable to LAWS, Liard First Nation's Police Advisory Board and the RCMP;
4. The RCMP will support LAWS and related groups as they seek funding for the design and delivery of Kaska cultural training;
5. The RCMP will create opportunities to communicate the role of the RCMP and how the justice system works;
6. The RCMP will promote opportunities to communicate how safety for women is improving;
7. The RCMP will collaborate with LAWS and seek written feedback on its annual performance plan and establish community priorities with a supporting action plan;
8. The RCMP will collaborate with LAWS to complete an annual review of this Protocol and revise as needed; and
9. The RCMP will collaborate with LAWS to define a conflict resolution process to mediate differences that may arise within this Protocol.


Sergeant Cameron Lockwood
NCO in Charge Watson Lake Detachment


Ms. Ann Maje Raider
Liard Aboriginal Women's Society

March 5, 2013

ⁱ "Together for Justice" (March 2011 to 2013) is an initiative of the Kaska women of the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) designed to develop mutual understanding between the RCMP, women and community agencies. The goal is to foster more just and effective responses to violence against women. To that end, LAWS and the RCMP organized a series of gatherings to promote dialogue, improve relationships, and review information on the nature of violence and resistance, the role of social responses, and the power of language. During and between the "Together for Justice" gatherings, participants shared new understanding, worked toward common goals, and identified specific changes in outlook and practice. One outcome of the initiative is a Safety Protocol, which reflects progress to date and fosters lasting change.