Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee
Inuillu Canadami Gavamangallu Piliriaqaqatigiinninginnut Katimajiralaat
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Comité de partenariat entre les Inuit et la Couronne

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Pirutsiagutiit
NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

November 2026



Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
INUVIALUIT REGIONAL CORPORATION
NUNAVUT TUNNGAVIK
Makivvik
NUNATSIAVUT kavamanga government
Canada

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Background and Context



The Inuit Child First Initiative (CFI) was intended to serve as an Inuit-specific equivalent to Jordan's Principle by providing Inuit children with access to the health, social, and educational products, services, and supports they need, when they need them, regardless of where they live in Canada. It was established by the federal government as an interim measure to resolve the exclusion of Inuit children from Jordan's Principle. On September 10, 2018, the federal government announced that Inuit children would be included under the interim Inuit CFI while an Inuit-specific CFI Framework was being developed and finalized. This co-developed Framework, Pirutsiagutiit, serves as the foundation for a new federal program that will help fulfill this federal commitment.

For over seven years, Inuit children, families, and communities have relied on the interim Inuit CFI. It has provided essential products, supports, and services to alleviate and prevent the harms caused by gaps in government economic, social, education, mental health and health programs and services. Indigenous Services Canada's 2025 evaluation of the Initiative found it to be a critical support for meeting both urgent and immediate needs related to the well-being of Inuit children.

Purpose of the Pirutsiagutiit National Framework

This Framework provides direction to Canada, Inuit Treaty Organizations (ITOs), and their partners on how Pirutsiagutiit ("resources for growing well") will be implemented for eligible Inuit children in Canada within a shared responsibility model. It informs the criteria for program eligibility and identifies a range of categories of eligible products, services and supports for Inuit children.

Pirutsiagutiit will uphold Inuit children's human rights by facilitating access to culturally appropriate products, supports, and services that safeguard the best interests of the child. It will respect the distinct needs of Inuit children, families, and communities and be grounded in the human rights and dignity of Inuit children, the social determinants of Inuit health, and respect and support for Inuit self-determination.

As a result, Pirutsiagutiit will contribute to the implementation of Canada's national and international human rights obligations. These include obligations pursuant to the following international agreements, which have been ratified by Canada: the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1991), the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2010), and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1976), as well as the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.*

The program's shared responsibility model will respect and support Inuit rights and self-determination. Given the unique realities and needs of Inuit across Inuit Nunangat, further policy, administrative and operational detail that aligns with the Framework will be developed in the individual regional approaches to follow.

Rights and Dignity of Inuit Children

Significant inequity exists between Inuit and other children in Canada across all major socio-economic outcome areas, including poverty, housing, school attendance and completion, food security, dental, physical, mental health, and suicide. Underpinning many of these inequities are inadequate infrastructure and housing, high costs of living due to high energy costs and, as most communities are not connected by roads, expensive air shipping or seasonal sealift services. These barriers limit access for Inuit children to the necessities of life, such as clean water, nutritious and adequate amounts of food, safe housing, affordable clothing and household items, and timely health prevention and treatment services. The cumulative impact of these challenges significantly affects the well-being of Inuit children, families and communities.

Pirutsiagutiit is grounded in the rights and dignity of Inuit children and seeks to ensure that they have access to government-funded essential health, social, and education supports and services that help to remedy the discrimination and structural barriers that are the basis of these inequities. Upholding the rights and dignity of Inuit children requires ensuring timely access to culturally appropriate services that meet their needs, including adapted services or supports that address the unique realities Inuit face in Canada. At all times, the broader inequities faced by Inuit must be carefully considered when making any determinations on the provision of products or services.

Safeguarding the Best Interests of the Inuk child

Pirutsiagutiit will safeguard the best interests of the Inuk child by ensuring that all decisions, actions, and policies within its scope prioritize the overall well-being, safety, and development of Inuit children. This includes protecting their physical, emotional, mental, and cultural needs, and ensuring that they grow up in a safe, supportive, stable, and nurturing environment with healthy caregiving adults. It also includes taking proactive steps to prevent harm and promote their long-term health, dignity, and potential.

Pirutsiagutiit Program Objectives

Given the inequities, discrimination, and barriers they face, Inuit children are at greater risk than most other Canadian children for experiencing poor health, food insecurity, low educational attainment, and lifelong social and economic challenges. To help prevent and remedy these challenges, Pirutsiagutiit has the following objectives:

1. Be effective and accessible in meeting the needs of Inuit children.
2. Be responsive to identified needs for health, social and educational products, supports and services experienced by Inuit children, while being mindful of jurisdictional responsibilities.
3. Respect and support Inuit self-determination, Inuit jurisdiction, and capacity building, consistent with the Inuit Nunangat Policy and through a shared responsibility model that:

    a. Prioritizes Inuit self-determination at the regional level, with each ITO adopting its own approach to the design, administration, and implementation of the program;
    b. Establishes a coordinating governance body between the ITOs, ITK, and Canada to administer Pirutsiagutiit at the national level;
    c. Plans for each ITO to transition to this shared responsibility model at their own self-determined pace, based on capacity;
    d. Provides support to ITOs and ITK for capacity building and their roles and responsibilities in administering and implementing the program; and,
    e. Sharing responsibility for the administration of the program between Canada and ITOs.

4. Prioritize the rights of Inuit children by aligning with the Government of Canada's international human rights obligations.

Pirutsiagutiit Guiding Principles

The following principles will be reflected in the design and delivery of the program:



Support Inuit children to meet their needs with dignity and equity: Pirutsiagutiit will support the improvement of equity for Inuit children, recognizing that Inuit children may face barriers to accessing products, services and supports. Providing children with culturally-based or culturally-adapted services and supports is essential to the well-being and dignity of Inuit children.



Adopt a for-Inuit-by-Inuit approach that respects Inuit self-determination: Inuit Treaty Organizations will be at the centre of the governance, administration and implementation of Pirutsiagutiit. Pirutsiagutiit will ensure ITOs have the ability and capacity to direct and make decisions regarding the implementation of the program. That includes the flexibility to improve the effectiveness and impact of the program in their region as needs evolve or are better understood, including by providing Inuit children with culturally based and culturally adapted services and supports. At the national level, ITOs, ITK and ISC will share the responsibility for administering and coordinating the program. The transition to the shared responsibility model will occur at the pace determined by ITOs, based on capacity, with ISC supporting capacity development as and when required.



Fiscal Sustainability: ITK, ITOs and Canada will co-develop strategies to ensure ongoing financial predictability and sustainability of Pirutsiagutiit, and will continue to work collaboratively to ensure there are sufficient and predictable resources available to successfully administer and implement Pirutsiagutiit. Should additional resource requirements be identified over time, partners will use the available federal fiscal processes.



Efficiency and Coordination of Services: Pirutsiagutiit may support a range of services, including but not limited to individual requests, group requests, ITO and community-led initiatives and/or targeted initiatives. To promote streamlined submission processing and reduce administrative and operational costs, when feasible, applicable requests will be handled through group submissions or alternate stable and accessible programming. Access to products, supports and services should be holistically coordinated across Pirutsiagutiit to ensure each Inuk child's circumstances and needs, including need for culturally appropriate services and supports, are considered to optimally foster positive outcomes for Inuit children.



Accessibility: Pirutsiagutiit will be readily accessible to Inuit children across Canada in a timely way. Inuit families will be able to make requests without needing to share more personal information than what is reasonably necessary, and all requests will be reviewed through the lens of the distinct historical, cultural, social, and geographic realities that affect Inuit need for and access to products, services, and supports. Requests for supporting documentation will seek to minimize burdens or barriers to services experienced by families.

Shared Responsibility Model



As agreed to by Canada and Inuit Leadership, the program will be administered through a shared responsibility model. ITK, the ITOs, and Canada will coordinate Pirutsiagutiit at the national level. Regionally, ITOs will determine their own regional approaches, including how their funding allocations will be administered and the rate of transition to assumption of greater administrative responsibilities. The assumption of responsibilities will take place at the pace determined by the ITO, be carefully planned to ensure resources are in place and capacity is built in each region for the successful implementation of Pirutsiagutiit. ITK, ITOs and Canada acknowledge the National Framework establishes overarching principles of the new program and is not intended to unduly constrain the operational application of those principles through regionally based approaches, having regard to regional circumstances, Inuit priorities, operational realities and the objectives of Pirutsiagutiit.

A governance structure will provide coordination at the national level, with membership by ITOs, ITK, and Canada, and will ensure that the objectives of both Inuit partners and Canada are met while respecting cultural and regional differences. The ITOs, ITK, and Canada will meet at least annually to assess the progress made nationally in meeting the objectives of the Framework, review roles and outcomes, monitor trends, program efficacy, identify and discuss concerns (if any), and identify best practices. As part of the long-term approach, ITOs, ITK, and Canada will discuss co-developing a new governing body specifically for Pirutsiagutiit. Existing structures for co-development, coordination, and the administration of services and supports will remain in place until the long-term approach is fully implemented.

Canada and ITOs will jointly ensure accountability and transparency through financial reporting, audits, and data collection in accordance with bilateral funding agreements. Data will support service delivery, administrative improvements, financial management, performance measurement, and reporting, enabling ITOs, ITK and Canada to assess progress against key performance indicators outlined in a data management plan.

The goal is to transition to Pirutsiagutiit, based on the readiness of individual ITOs. The intention is to transition from the current interim approach and introduce modifications through the regional approaches as they are ready to be implemented. Canada, ITOs and ITK will continue to work together to facilitate continuous improvements to the operationalization of the shared responsibility model at both the national and regional levels.

Inuit Self-Determination in the Regional Administration of Pirutsiagutiit



Each ITO will co-develop a regional approach with Canada that is reflective of their regional needs and service delivery contexts. Regional approaches will, at minimum, outline coverage, eligibility of individuals, eligible services and supports, approval processes, administrative funding standards, and mechanisms to ensure compliance through governance, data, and reporting. Administration and delivery will be based on ITO readiness, in discussion with Canada, and grounded in Inuit self-determination, with interim approaches supporting implementation during the transition period.

Eligibility



Every Inuk child, no matter where they live in Canada, who is recognized by one of the four ITOs (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Makivvik, and Nunatsiavut Government), and who is under the age of majority in the province or territory in which they live is eligible to access the program and shall not be denied access to time-limited services under the program, or be considered to have "aged out" of the program, if time-limited treatment is ongoing when they turn 19.

Eligibility will be verified by each of the ITOs according to their own membership criteria.

Eligible Products and Services

Pirutsiagutiit funding will not be used to replicate or replace existing federal, provincial, territorial or ITO services, programs, or funding available within each region. It may be used to address service gaps where services, programs, or funding do not adequately meet the identified needs of an Inuk child, including where additional culturally appropriate supports are required or where necessary to safeguard the best interests of the child. The program will include enhanced service coordination to navigate children and/or their families to the most appropriate existing service available at either the federal, provincial, territorial, or ITO level. Pirutsiagutiit supports a broad range of products, services, and supports aimed at meeting the diverse needs of Inuit children, including the need for culturally based or culturally adapted services and supports. Funding provided to ITOs under the Shared Responsibility Model may be used across the following key areas:

1. **Service Navigation:** Service coordination resources, also known as navigation services, provided by ITOs or their designates to help families navigate and access the most appropriate existing supports available through provincial and territorial systems, federal programs, and programs and services offered by ITOs. Navigation services will also be available to support families and children to access services and supports eligible through Pirutsiagutiit.
2. **Specialized Health Services and Medical Needs:** Preventive and treatment services, including but not limited to, assessments, screenings, and supports provided by allied health professionals, related travel costs and fees, prescribed treatments, equipment, supplies, and medications, such as mobility aids and oral and vision care.
3. **Mental Health and Wellness:** A range of services and supports including assessments, therapies, treatment services, programs, and respite care.
4. **Education Supports:** Educational screening, diagnostic and assessment services; as well as assistive devices, adaptive technologies, and other child-specific supports such as tutoring and individualized student support in exceptional circumstances, particularly in contexts requiring enhanced or flexible service delivery.

5. **Family Supports:** Short-term products, services and supports to address the immediate identified needs of a child where the family faces a precarious or insecure situation deemed critical by the ITO, with the objective of transitioning to appropriate longer-term services, supports, or funding where available. These supports may include food-related needs for Inuit children.
6. **ITO-Delivered Supports:** Health, social, education and family related services and supports that are child specific and delivered by the ITO either as an exercise of the jurisdiction affirmed in a land claim or self-government agreements.
7. **Community-Based Initiatives:** Prevention and healthy child development programs, and other culturally appropriate health and family related services tailored to Inuit children that are provided by ITOs or community organization. These may include, but are not limited, to initiatives focused on mental, oral, and vision health.
8. **Capacity Building, Administration & Coordination:** Pirutsiagutiit will support ITOs to build capacity, administer and implement the program, and deliver services. In addition, any funding provided though Pirutsiagutiit may be used by ITK and ITOs to support their roles with respect to the national level coordination and governance of the program, including data collection and coordination, and participation in the governance body.

These categories are flexible, not exhaustive and may evolve over time. Exceptional circumstances may be considered where an Inuk child experiences discriminatory exclusion, denial or inequitable access to an existing program, service or benefit that would ordinarily be available to other children in similar circumstances. Funding decisions are guided by the individual needs of each child, with further details on eligible and ineligible expenses defined by ITOs through their regional approaches.

Every Inuk child, family, community, and region is unique, and so are their needs and governance structures. As such, each ITO shall be responsible for developing specific criteria for eligibility and eligible services and supports based on the guidance above and their own regional models developed with Canada and will determine the specific products, supports and services that will be eligible for funding through the program. This will reflect the specific priorities of each ITO and respect their ability to self-determine how Inuit-specific funding should be administered within the parameters of Pirutsiagutiit.

Given the shared jurisdiction in health, social, and education services, engagement with provincial and territorial governments will be needed in order to improve access to a coordinated continuum of services for Inuit children, identify unmet needs, and determine systematic strategies and plans for meeting them. In areas of shared jurisdiction, provincial and territorial governments are encouraged to collaborate with ITOs.

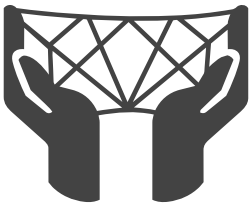
Monitoring

Pirutsiagutiit will include clear standards for gathering of data that confirm supports have been secured and/or delivered as intended. Engagement between ISC, ITK, and ITOs will be critical to support development and refinement of a comprehensive performance measurement and results framework, including indicators, methodologies and data collection approaches that support meaningful assessment of outcomes, service access, operational performance, and long-term program sustainability



Implementation

Canada and ITOs will collaborate to transition to the new model based on both ITO readiness and an agreed upon timeframe. Implementation will be supported by a co-developed plan outlining policy and operational parameters, funding, service coordination measures, engagement with provinces and territories, and data, reporting, and audit requirements. When in place, the National Framework will replace the current operational model.



Ongoing Co-Development



Canada, ITK, and ITOs will continue to work together to operationalize the shared responsibility model at both the national and regional levels. This will include the development of four regional approaches including implementation plans. The assumption of responsibilities by ITOs will be carefully planned to ensure resources are in place and capacity is built for the successful implementation of Pirutsiagutiit.

To identify and address gaps in federal, provincial and territorial, and ITO programming, as per the Government of Canada's Inuit Nunangat Policy, Canada and Inuit partners will seek to engage the relevant provincial and territorial governments through new or existing mechanisms.

The Pirutsiagutiit National Framework reflects the shared commitment by Canada, ITOs, and ITK to creating an initiative that implements Canada's human rights obligations, respects Inuit governance, and aligns with Inuit self-determination.

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