



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES INUKTUT LANGUAGE INCENTIVE POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) ensures that the Government of Nunavut (GN) identifies and implements measures to increase the use of the Inuktitut Language as a working language of Nunavut and ensures that services are provided in the Inuktitut Language. The GN is committed to encouraging employees to use the Inuktitut Language as the working language of the public service. The Inuktitut Language Incentive Policy encourages employees to use and increase their Inuktitut language skills in the workplace and as they provide services to the public and compensates them according to language proficiency.

PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following principles:

Through the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) the GN aims to revitalize and sustain the fluent use of the Inuktitut Language within the territory.

The *Official Languages Act* (OLA) recognizes the Inuktitut Language as an official language of Nunavut and guarantees that anyone can use it, or receive services from, the head or central offices of any GN department or public body.

To deliver services in the official languages of Nunavut, the GN is providing employee incentives to strengthen their language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the Inuktitut Language.

INUIT SOCIETAL VALUES

This policy is guided by, and will be administered in a manner consistent with the following Inuit Societal Values:

Qanuqtuurniq: Being innovative and resourceful – This policy supports and incentivizes GN employees to increase their Inuktitut language skills. Fluency in the Inuktitut Language will ensure the most culturally relevant services are provided to Nunavummiut.

Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq: Working together for a common cause – This policy allows the GN and its employees to work together to increase Inuktitut Language skills and to improve the service provided to the public.

Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq: Development of skill through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort – This policy allows employees to access language resources and training to develop their Inuktitut Language skills and to practice the language in the workplace with peers.

Pijittsirniq: *Serving and providing for family and/or community* – This policy promotes and incentivizes employees to communicate more effectively in the Inuktitut Language with all Nunavummiut to whom we provide services.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees of the GN and its public bodies, including casual and relief employees.

This policy does not apply to employees of the Qulliq Energy Corporation (QEC) who have a different collective agreement.

This policy does not apply to employees of the Nunavut Teachers' Association (NTA) who have a similar three-tiered Inuktitut Allowance.

This policy does not apply to persons hired as professional interpreters and/or translators for the GN who are already compensated based on their ability to speak Inuktitut, as part of their job function.

DEFINITIONS

Assessor: Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit (IUT) or their designate. IUT will undertake the assessment of GN employees wishing to apply for the Inuktitut Language Incentive. IUT will assess employee Inuktitut language proficiency level and provide guidance on how to further develop their language skills.

Language Proficiency: skill level assigned to an employee through an authorized language test.

Inuktitut Language (as defined in ILPA): means,

- (a) in or near Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Bathurst Inlet and Umingmaktuq, Inuinnaqtun;
- (b) in or near other municipalities, Inuktitut; and
- (c) both Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut as the Commissioner in Executive Council may, by regulation, require or authorize.

Official Languages (as defined in the *Official Languages Act*): the Inuktitut Language, English and French are recognized as Nunavut's official languages.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit (IUT)

- IUT will act as the assessor to determine the Inuktitut Language proficiency of GN employees. This includes setting the proficiency levels and performing or overseeing the design and administration of the proficiency tests, in accordance with IUT's mandate under ILPA. The assessment is available in five dialects (South Baffin, North Baffin, Kivalliq, Inuinnaqtun and Nattilingmiutut).
- IUT will be responsible for developing standardized terminology or expressions in the Inuktitut language, as well as competency levels/standards of Inuktitut language use or correctness; including as it relates to any dialect of the Inuktitut language in local use;
- IUT will develop, review, recommend and administer tests that evaluate Inuktitut Language proficiency for purposes such as this incentive program to certify an individual's competency level in the Inuktitut Language.

Department of Human Resources

- Will develop and update this policy and associated guidelines and procedures as required;
- Will be responsible for communicating the policy and monitoring its application; and
- Will provide an application process for the incentive program.

Department of Finance

- Will process the Inuktitut language incentive payment for all successful candidates.

Department of Culture and Heritage

- Will provide Inuktitut Language resources and training that support employees to develop and increase their Inuktitut Language capacity.

Employees:

- Employees who wish to access the Inuktitut language incentive program will initiate and complete the application package, including requesting Inuktitut language testing for certification of proficiency.

PROVISIONS

Based on the GN's goal of making the Inuktitut Language the working language of the public service, employees who demonstrate proficiency in and use the Inuktitut Language in the workplace will be paid an allowance based on their assessed proficiency level.

The allowance is paid according to language proficiency on three levels:

1. Fluency – ability to speak and understand the Inuktitut Language which enables the employee to function in their job – \$1,500/year;
2. Fluency, Reading and Writing – includes level one (1) plus the ability to write and read the Inuktitut Language – \$2,400/year;
3. Language Expert – includes level one (1) and two (2) plus an expert level of skill in the Inuktitut Language and full professional working ability in advancing the status of the Inuktitut Language as the working language of the public service – \$5,000/year.

The language proficiency of GN employees will be assessed through an Inuktitut Language test.

Inuktitut Language proficiency assessment results will be required as proof of language proficiency. All official tests shall be administered by IUT or their designate.

Employees who are assessed through the Inuktitut Language test will be provided language training guidelines to improve and expand their language skills.

Employees who were enrolled in the Bilingual Bonus Program (Inuktitut) were grandfathered into the Inuktitut Language Incentive Program at level one (1) as a baseline.

ASSESSMENT FORMAT

The assessment will include:

- A verbal component in which the employee answers questions and engages in conversation with the assessor;
- A reading comprehension component in which the employee will read a text and respond to related questions;
- A writing and multiple-choice component in which the employee writes original content related to a topic as well as answering multiple choice questions.

PLACEMENT/ADVANCEMENT

Employees may request an assessment to determine their proficiency level. This could be for initial placement at level one (1) of the program or to advance to a higher-level following training and development to improve language skills. The scheduling of the assessment will be dependent upon the availability of assessors. An employee can request an assessment to progress to the next level after a minimum of one (1) year at their current level.

ASSESSMENT APPEAL PROCESS

Employees may appeal the results of an assessment and the resulting proficiency placement within the incentive program by submitting a formal request. Employees may appeal on a one time basis to retake or have their test results re-evaluated by another

assessor. Appeals must be submitted to IUT within 30 days of receiving the results of the assessment.

CONDITIONS

Employees receiving the Inuktitut Language Incentive allowance may be eligible to receive French bilingual bonus and employees receiving French bilingual bonus may also be eligible to receive Inuktitut Language Incentive allowance.

An employee will be paid an incentive amount, upon their successful placement at one of the three (3) proficiency levels. Payment will be retroactive to the date the employee formally requested an assessment unless a delay in testing was due to employee availability.

Upon a successful appeal of the assessment results, the incentive will be paid retroactive to the application date of the appealed assessment.

No other payment will be made retroactively under the Inuktitut Language Incentive Program.

RELATED LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Nunavut Agreement, Article 23

Inuit Language Protection Act

Official Languages Act

Collective Agreement – Nunavut Employees Union

HRM Directive 1505: Bilingual Bonus

PREROGATIVE OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Nothing in this policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of Executive Council to make decisions or take action respecting the use of the Inuktitut Language outside the provisions of this policy.

SUNSET CLAUSE

This policy will be reviewed within five (5) years of the date of approval.