

Cultural Safety: Becoming a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) First Nations Co-facilitator

Any person serving First Nations communities must understand the past, have a clear sense of present realities, and know about future possibilities (Mussell, 2006).

To do this, as a Co-facilitator you need to understand and ensure cultural safety when you offer a MHFA First Nations course. Attention to protocol is an important way to create cultural safety. It is important to ask for and follow protocol guidelines from contacts within the community where you are having the course. Understand that some parts of the course are standard and must be delivered. And other parts are open to change; which means that some sections may be customized based on community needs. It is important to learn and understand the culture of the community where you plan to facilitate the course!

As a certified co-facilitator you will be expected to:

- Work in teams of at least two co-facilitators at all times to deliver the course
- Deliver the 20 hour course at least two times per year
- Deliver the course in a First Nations community setting
- Connect with and engage leaders in the community where you are having the course
- Respect the local community protocols, traditions and ceremonies
- Organize and coordinate the course agenda, date, time, location, room setup, mental health supports for the duration of the course
- Order participant materials from MHFA Canada in advance of the course
- Provide course supplies, meals, & refreshments where required
- Maintain general liability insurance of \$2 million or more (or work for an organization that maintains it)
- Meet other ongoing certification requirements as identified by MHFA Canada
- Notify MHFA Canada for leave of absence requests
- Adhere to the policies and expectations described in the co-facilitator agreement and policy manual as indicated on the MHFA Canada website

Time and Cost Considerations

The MHFA First Nations Course Co-facilitator Training is conducted over five (5) consecutive days (see schedule on website). The training fee includes training, facilitator guides and catering during the course hours. It does not cover travel or accommodation. Payment for the course will be requested once application is approved. Course fee must be paid to complete the registration.

Application Form

**Mental Health First Aid First Nations
Co-facilitator Training Course**

PART ONE: YOUR INFORMATION

Applicant's name: (first, middle, last)	
Applicant Type:	☐ I am applying to be an independent co-facilitator ☐ I am applying to be a co-facilitator employed by my organization
Organization Name: <i>(if applicable)</i>	
FN Band or Treaty	
Title:	
Preferred Email:	
Preferred Phone Number:	
Secondary Phone Number:	
Preferred Mailing Address:	
Desired Training Date and Location:	
CO-FACILITATOR EXPERIENCE AND AVAILABILITY	
Please check all MHFA courses that you have taken: ☐ Basic/Standard ☐ Adults Who Interact with Youth ☐ Northern Peoples ☐ First Nations ☐ None	If you are an active facilitator in other versions of MHFA, please indicate: ☐ Basic/Standard ☐ Adults Who Interact with Youth ☐ Northern Peoples ☐ None

Are you willing to co-facilitate a MHFA First Nations course outside your home vicinity? Yes No	List other courses that you are certified to facilitate/instruct: e.g. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
How did you hear about the MHFA First Nations course: Newspaper or Magazine (If so, which one?) Course brochure mailed to me Course brochure given to me by an acquaintance Recommended by a friend Website Other (please specify:)	
Course Dates/Locations are available here: https://openingminds.org/courses/	
Cancellation Policy: You acknowledge and agree that any amounts paid by you are non-refundable if cancellation occurs less than 30 days prior to the registered course. Otherwise, a full refund, less a 25% administration fee, will be provided for cancellations received in writing. Registration is non-transferable.	

In order to select applicants with the appropriate skills and experiences to organize and facilitate the 20-hour MHFA First Nations course, please provide answers to the questions below to demonstrate that you meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 2 yrs. experience working a frontline position within an Indigenous Mental Health Organization. Examples of frontline include but are not limited to: Case Manager, Crisis Worker, Counsellor/Therapist, Social Worker, Peer Support worker, Harm Reduction Worker, Outreach Worker, etc.
- Good knowledge of mental disorders and their treatment as applicable to First Nations people
- Extensive experience working or living in a First Nations community
- Experience delivering community workshops or training adults
- Experience in networking with community partners
- Knowledge of the range of mental health services
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Enthusiasm to reduce stigma/discrimination associated with mental illness
- Good computer skills with working knowledge of Microsoft PowerPoint

The 20-hour Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) First Nations course is designed for and delivered to adults: community members, health care workers, parents, teachers, police etc. Co-facilitators work in teams of two at all times to deliver the course.

We are interested in your experiences and skills that make you suitable to co-facilitate this course in a First Nations community setting. To complete Part Two, please answer questions 1 to 11 below and on the following pages.

PART TWO: YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES

CULTURE AND WELLNESS

1. Briefly describe your experience working and/or living in a First Nations community.
2. Briefly describe your understanding of cultural influences on wellness in a First Nations community.
3. Provide examples of ceremonies or teachings you would follow to ensure cultural safety when facilitating the course in a First Nations community.

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

7. What are your personal and professional experiences and qualifications related to mental health disorders? Please include how you have supported individuals in each of these topics. Your answer needs to demonstrate that you have good knowledge of mental disorders, their treatments, and mental health and community services as it relates to First Nations people.
8. Part of the aim of the MHFA Canada First Nations course is to reduce the stigma towards people with mental health problems. Can you tell us what factors you think contribute to the stigma some people have towards mental health problems?

JOURNEY TO WELLNESS

9. There are many people or groups in communities who can help someone facing a mental health challenge. As a MHFA First Nations Co-facilitator, you must be informed on the different community supports and resources available in First Nations communities. These supports and resources will become the tools that communities will use to access the help they need when in mental distress. List and describe different mental health supports that exist on different levels within First Nations communities.

CO-FACILITATOR SKILLS AND INTEREST

10. What are at least three reasons why you want to be a MHFA First Nations Co-facilitator?

11. Are you attached to an organization that will support you in some ongoing way as an MHFA First Nations Course Co-facilitator?

If yes, briefly explain the support this organization will provide. Be sure to identify how you will meet the requirement to have a co-facilitator deliver the course with you. Note: Your organization must have a minimum of \$2 million general liability insurance that covers your activities while delivering an MHFA First Nations course.

If no, then you are applying as an independent co-facilitator. Co-facilitators are required to deliver a minimum of two (2) workshops per year with a co-facilitator. Independent co-facilitators are required to have a minimum of \$2 million in General Liability insurance.

Please explain how you plan to meet these requirements.

Also explain the steps you would take to organize a course as well as any source of financial support and/or sponsorship which may include:

Funding: what aspects of a course cost money? How will you ensure these costs are covered?

Do you need to enter into contracts with anyone to deliver a course? To be signed by who?

Will you get any in-kind use of venues, materials, or equipment?

These questions are important to help you clearly understand the requirements to deliver a course and it allows MHFA Canada to ensure you have considered your business plan.

PART THREE: CURRENT RESUME

To complete Part Three, you must attach a copy of your current resume.

PART FOUR: SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

To complete Part Four:

EMPLOYMENT SPONSORED applicants only Must attach a Letter of Support from Organization <i>See Appendix A - Instructions for Letter of Support from Organization</i>	INDEPENDENT CO-FACILITATOR applicants only Must attach two (2) Letters of Reference <i>See Appendix B - Instructions for Letter of Reference</i>
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All Applicants must attach a letter of support from an Elder or Knowledge Keeper that can speak to your experience working within a First Nations Community/Organization, and local community protocols, traditions, and ceremonies.

Signature

To the best of my knowledge the information provided on this application is true and accurate. I authorize the Mental Health Commission of Canada to verify the information provided on this application and I grant permission to contact references including current and past employers for the purpose of verifying experience and suitability.

Please type your name in the space provided as a signature of your acceptance.

Signature of Applicant:	Date:
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Question?

E-mail to: mhfaapplicants@openingminds.org

Remember that payment for the course will be requested once application is approved. Course fee must be paid to complete the registration.

If you have any questions, you can contact the MHFA Canada office at 1-866-989-3985. The MHFA First Nations Course Co-facilitator Training is conducted over five (5) consecutive days (see schedule on website). The cost covers training and catering during the course hours. It does not cover travel or accommodation. Payment for the course will be requested once application is approved. Course fee must be paid to complete the registration.

***ALL FOUR PARTS MUST BE COMPLETE BEFORE THE APPLICATION CAN BE REVIEWED AND
THE COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST BE RECEIVED AT LEAST FIVE WEEKS
BEFORE THE START OF THE COURSE***

Letter of Support from Organization

Co-Facilitator Training Course

Mental Health First Aid First Nations

About the Mental Health First Aid First Nations course

Mental Health First Aid First Nations is a spark that awakens the courage to have open and honest conversations about mental health with family, friends, and others. It is part of the ongoing journey that helps strengthen the connections within communities.

MHFA First Nations is a co-facilitated 20 hour course that aims to:

- Increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of the most common mental health problems
- Increase awareness of the pathways to recovery
- Increase confidence and skills to help those developing a mental health problem or those in mental health crisis
- Decrease stigma about mental illness

Facilitated from a First Nations Perspective where:

- Sharing is an important part of learning
- Community strengths guide the journey
- Journey to balance the 'Walk in Two Worlds'
- Each First Nations community is unique
- Supports can be different in each community
- Communities explore First Nations and western practices in the pathways to recovery

Topics covered:

- Culture and Wellness
- Historical Loss and Trauma
- Circles of Support
- Journey to wellness: Restoring balance and practicing self-care
- Mood related disorders
- Substance related disorders
- Self-harm
- Anxiety and trauma related disorders
- Psychotic disorders

Crisis first aid skills learned:

- Overdose
- Acute stress reactions
- Panic attacks
- Suicidal behavior
- Self-harm
- Psychotic episode

This evidence-based course is for adults and is best experienced in a First Nations community setting. It is designed to speak to participants about mental health; where participants reflect on their life experiences and acknowledge the historical context of that experience then move forward to explore ways to restore balance on their journeys to wellness.

MHFA First Nations course training is primarily concerned with raising awareness of mental health, promoting recovery of those who might be experiencing mental health problems, and reducing the stigma associated with mental health problems. The MHFA Canada program does not train a person to be a therapist or to provide a diagnosis.

Letter of Support from Organization – Instructions

You have been asked to provide a letter of support for an applicant to the 5-day **Mental Health First Aid First Nations Co-Facilitator Training Course**. If this applicant is successful, they will be providing the Mental Health First Aid First Nations course to a variety of groups.

Applicants are required to:

- co-facilitate the MHFA First Nations course at least twice per year to groups of 8-25 participants
- hold general liability insurance of \$2 million or more or be employed by an organization that holds it.

In your letter of reference, we ask that you please make specific reference to how your organization will support the applicant including but not limited to:

- Providing time to prepare and deliver at least two MHFA FN courses per year to maintain certified status
- Providing space and workshop supplies (flipcharts, pens, participant manuals) to hold MHFA FN courses

Please comment on how the applicant fits the criteria to become a MHFA FN Course Co-Facilitator:

- Minimum of two years of experience working in a front line position supporting individuals living with mental health problems. Examples of front line workers may be as follows:
 - Crisis Worker
 - Counsellor
 - NNADAP worker
 - Case Manager
 - Social Worker
 - Psychiatric Nurse
 - Psychologist
 - Peer Support Worker
- Good knowledge of mental health disorders and their treatment as applicable to First Nations people
- Experience delivering community workshops or training adults
- Experience in networking with community partners
- Knowledge of the range of mental health services
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Enthusiasm to reduce stigma/discrimination associated with mental illness

As these cannot be taught in a week-long course, MHFA Canada expects applicants to arrive at the course with good knowledge of:

- First Nations cultural context,
- Mental health as it relates to First Nations,
- Mental illness, their treatments,
- Computer skills, and
- Effective facilitation skills.

Your Letter of Support from Organization is required for the application to be processed. Please return it to the applicant, who will submit to MHFA Canada as Part Four of their application package.

If you have any questions regarding this form, please email mhfafirstnations@openingminds.org

Letter of Reference

Co-Facilitator Training Course

Mental Health First Aid First Nations

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In your letter of reference, we ask that you please make specific reference to:

- How you know the applicant
- How long you've known the applicant
- Your knowledge of the applicant's business plan to ensure sustainability as a MHFA FN Course Co-Facilitator.
 - The applicant must co-facilitate the MHFA First Nations course at least twice per year to groups of 8-25 participants

Please comment on how the applicant fits the criteria to become a MHFA FN Course Co-Facilitator:

- Minimum of two years of experience working in a front line position supporting individuals living with mental health problems. Examples of front line workers may be as follows:
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