

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Volunteering on a CLBC Community Council.

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Frequently Asked Questions:

Q1: What is Community Living BC (CLBC)?

CLBC is a Crown corporation of the BC government. Our mandate is to fund services and build more inclusive communities for people eligible to receive our services. People who are eligible include people living with a developmental disability that started before age 18, or people living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder or Autism Spectrum Disorder, who have significant challenges with day-to-day activities.

Q2: What is a CLBC Community Council?

A Community Council is a group of 7- 15 individuals and family members who receive supports from CLBC, and service provider staff and community members, who all work together to build and promote culturally safe, accessible, and inclusive communities.

There are 13 CLBC Community Councils across the province.

CLBC Community Councils strive to:

- **Build relationships with local community leaders working to create a more inclusive BC.**
- **Connect communities, people, and families to information, resources, and each other.**
- **Listen to the experience of people and families served by CLBC to make things better.**
- **Collaborate on actions that lead to inclusion and full citizenship for people with developmental disabilities.**

Q3: How do Community Councils fit into the way CLBC works?

Community Councils are an important way CLBC partners with the people and families we serve and the communities that support them.

Councils are an important part of the CLBC governance structure and work alongside CLBC to achieve goals related to community inclusion and full citizenship for those we support.

One member from each Council is appointed by the [CLBC Board of Directors](#) to sit on the CLBC [Provincial Advisory Committee \(PAC\)](#). The PAC is the legislated committee put in place to recommend improvements to policy and practice for Board and CLBC staff consideration to enhance the quality of life for people served by CLBC.

Q4: Who can volunteer on a Community Council?

- Anyone! As long as you are at least 19 years old, have a clear criminal record check (no cost for volunteers) and share a goal of wanting to help make the community more inclusive for people with developmental disabilities.
- A Community Council should represent the diversity of its community, with membership consisting of individuals and family members who receive support from CLBC, service providers (people who are paid by CLBC to give support), and other people from the community who care about inclusion and full citizenship for people with developmental disabilities. For example- post-secondary students, teachers, doctors, employers, seniors, community association members...
- Contact the CLBC.Connect@gov.bc.ca, and drop into an upcoming meeting to see if it might be a good fit for you. There's no obligation and no risk, and no one will ask you to sign a timeshare agreement. 😊
- However, before becoming voting members, Council volunteers are asked to sign the [Community Council Membership Agreement](#).

Q5: What Community Councils do?

Community Councils provide a regular gathering place for individuals, families, and community organizations/members to exchange information, stories and resources, host presentations, and of course make new friends.

Council volunteers work together to create an annual work plan around one or more of these four areas:

1. **Build community partnerships-** Identify and work with community organizations/municipalities on projects that will build inclusion and social connection.
2. **Education and Awareness-** Identify and collaborate on initiatives and events that build community awareness and understanding about what accessibility and inclusion means for people with diverse abilities.
3. **Individual and Family Leadership-** Provide opportunities for individuals and families to connect, share and learn together about topics that are important to them.
4. **Give information and advice to CLBC staff on what is important to people and families.** This includes helping with CLBC projects and plans.
5. **Share concerns and successes,** as well as identify province-wide barriers to inclusion and citizenship for people with developmental disabilities that require action and change. This happens through the Council nominating a Provincial Advisory Committee member.

Q6: What are some examples of work done by a Community Council?

Council volunteers work together to understand what kinds of actions would strengthen inclusion and accessibility in their community, including helping to plan local events and creating partnerships to build support for inclusion among employers and community groups. Councils also provide opportunities for individuals and families to meet and share information through workshops and open houses.

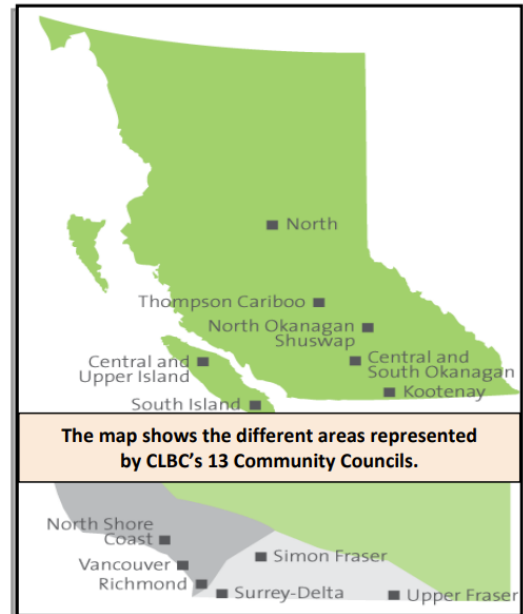
Examples of Council work include:

- Community dances and movie nights in partnership with the local theatre (The North Okanagan Shuswap Council)
- Supporting Council members with lived experience to make presentations on inclusive housing to municipal and city leaders working on housing. (Thompson Cariboo Council)
- A community inclusion festival with speaker presentations, games, prizes and even a caricature artist (Vancouver Community Council)
- A forum on aging, exploring options for both self-advocates and aging family members concerned for loved ones who receive CLBC supports (North Shore Sunshine Coast Community Council)

Q7: Where are Community Councils located?

There are 13 CLBC Community Councils around the province. Each Councils works within a specific geographic area. These include:

1. Central and South Okanagan Community Council
2. Central Island Community Council
3. Kootenay Community Council
4. North Community Council
5. North Okanagan / Shuswap Community Council
6. North Shore Sunshine Coast Community Council
7. Richmond Community Council
8. Simon Fraser Community Council
9. South Island Community Council
10. Surrey / Delta / White Rock Community Council
11. Thompson Cariboo Community Council
12. Upper Fraser Community Council
13. Vancouver Community Council



Q8: How often do CLBC Community Councils meet?

Council meetings are typically once a month for approximately 1.5-2 hours with most Councils taking a break in the summer. Additional meetings may be scheduled when members are planning and coordinating an event or project.

Q9: Where do Community Councils meet?

Council members decide as a group where and how meetings will take place.

Meetings can be held at a local CLBC office or in a community room at a local library or community center. Councils try to ensure meetings are accessible for anyone who wants to participate.

Councils that represent smaller areas, for example the Vancouver and Richmond Councils, will meet in person and often share a meal together before the meeting.

Councils that cover larger areas, for example, the North and Kootenay Councils, will meet by conference call or virtually using Microsoft Teams. In addition, they will often use some of their Council budget to pay for travel costs to bring members together for events or strategic planning meetings.

Many Councils are now using a hybrid model of meetings where some people will come together in-person and others will join online.

Q10: Do I need experience to volunteer on a Council?

Nope! No experience is needed to be a volunteer on a Community Council. Councils are a great place to gain experience and skills working with a group of people who share a common goal. Council members work together to identify and build on each other's strengths. We welcome people from a diverse range of backgrounds!

Q11: What are the expectations of a volunteer?

Community Council volunteers care about building inclusive communities and want to work with CLBC staff and other Council volunteers on this goal.

Volunteers are expected to attend meetings regularly, participate in decision-making, contribute ideas, and help put those ideas into action. For example, helping to organize and get the word out about Councils events, reaching out to

potential community partners to share the work of Councils, hosting open houses and presentations for self-advocates and families, and any other work or goals the local Council determines they want to work on.

Q12: What is the time commitment to volunteer on a CLBC Council?

The minimum time commitment is about 2 hours per month for Council meetings. However, each Council will create a work plan with other activities that will need the help and participation of Council volunteers. Members volunteer for what they feel they can commit to, in addition to the monthly meetings.

Q13: Does CLBC cover my costs for volunteering?

Yes, CLBC covers reasonable costs. From time-to-time Council members incur expenses to participate in their Community Council and these are covered by CLBC. This includes:

- Travel to attend Council meetings and events
- Childcare
- Respite

Reimbursement of expenses must be consistent with CLBC's [Travel Policy for Volunteer Committee and Community Council Members](#).

Q14: Who at CLBC is directly involved with Community Councils?

Each Council is supported locally by a CLBC manager and administrative staff who attend and participate at each meeting. In addition, Councils receive support centrally from the CLBC Community Engagement team, as well as other CLBC project and team members who may be working on things of interest to Councils and their individual work plans.

Q15: Do Community Councils have a budget?

Yes, each Council has a small budget to help support work plan activities. Councils that represent larger geographical areas have a bigger budget than those in smaller areas. For example, the North Council has a larger budget than the Richmond Council. This is to support travel costs for members to come together a couple of times throughout the year.

Q16: I want to volunteer. Where do I start?

Great! Have a look [at the information on our CLBC website here](#) for more details and examples of Council work. You can also contact the CLBC Community Engagement team at CLBC.Connect@gov.bc.ca. We will offer to meet with you to answer questions and connect you directly with the CLBC Manager and Council Chair in your area.

You will be invited to attend Council meetings as a guest to make sure there is a mutual fit and/or until you feel ready to become an official voting member.