

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### Chief Administrative Officer

#### SUMMARY:

*In the backdrop of a mandated comprehensive external review, currently underway that is analyzing corporate structure of NAN and developing recommendations for implementation this role and corresponding job description is subject to change. The successful candidate is expected to not only implement any recommendations brought forward for action, but to be open to working collaboratively internally and externally to create an environment that realizes the full potential of the review in a supportive way in the best interests of the organization.*

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the senior operational leader at Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN). This role acts as the bridge between the Executive Council, as Board of Directors, and staff, to implement strategic vision and planning, and to discharge the mandates of the organization given to it by NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly. The CAO manages the daily administrative operations of NAN, oversees human resources and financial and budgetary administration, and ensures adherence to all regulatory, legal, and safety standards.

In a fast-paced and ever-changing political environment, the CAO is expected to act as the liaison to the Executive Council, providing regular updates on organizational performance and mandate fulfillment for accountability to NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly, while optimizing organizational resources through budgetary and expenditure efficiencies.

The CAO also acts as the non-voting Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee (a Chief's advisory committee to the Executive Council) with a main function to ensure that the traditions, standards and culture of NAN communities are protected in the development of NAN policy and procedures, and to provide advice to the Executive Council.

In the best interests of the NAN and its member First Nations, trust, respect and transparency underpin the relationship that the CAO has with the organization, and these values serve as the foundation of this role.

#### DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

##### Administration

- To oversee implementation of, and reporting on, the Resolutions passed by NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly. This includes but is not limited to: ensuring, developing and/or implementing appropriate staffing resources, budgets, policies, and technical processes that allow for any work mandated to NAN by Resolution to be done and reported on in a timely and accountable manner.

- To facilitate Executive Council relationships by offering high-quality advice, guidance and direction for the development of Executive Council decision-making and policies based on organizational and operational realities. This may include providing verbal and written briefings, regular meetings with Executive Council, and other communications as required and directed.
- To appropriately represent and characterize Executive Council direction and strategy and guide the direction of mandated work to senior staff in support of this direction. The CAO shall: ensure that departments are supported in work operations, work to eliminate barriers between departments, create processes that minimize or prevent competing direction, and facilitate internal problem-solving among staff.
- To ensure that there are processes in place that facilitate the respectful flow of ideas, information and understanding between staff and the Executive Council in a way that recognizes lines of authority and communication and demonstrates respect for each other and advocacy matters and risks relevant to NAN.
- To anticipate the potential impacts of any decision made at the First Nation, Executive Council, federal or provincial governmental level on the current mandates and work and to assess and pivot work as necessary or desirable.
- To connect organizational and operational decisions with the strategic direction given by mandate and the Executive Council and the long-term sustainability and continuous improvement of the organization which includes looking for solutions that supports a philosophy of 'community-first' results.
- To demonstrate a meaningful commitment to the maintenance of positive internal relationships, including with the Executive Council, and to ensure that policies and procedures for any employee hiring, promotion, performance appraisal and discipline are equitable, legal, current, comply with organizational values and governance requirements, and carried out transparently and in a culturally safe way. This includes appropriate oversight of the NAN Human Resources Department.
- To maintain a consistently high level of quality in organizational work across all NAN departments, which includes ensuring that there is no duplication of effort between departments, mandates are organized and adequately resourced, and collaborative effort between NAN and related organizations such as Tribal Councils, Health Authorities and other service delivery agencies is prioritized to ensure that redundancies are managed and accounted for.

- To establish departmental performance tracking mechanisms that are aligned with mandates and strategic direction for regular reporting to Executive Council.
- To maintain responsibility for attracting, retaining and developing a staff that is reflective of the First Nations served by NAN, while understanding and valuing differences amongst individuals and fostering these values throughout the organization.
- To be responsible for the development and oversight of a formalized process for all meetings at NAN, including Chiefs-in-Assembly meetings, gatherings, forums etc. and to ensure that there is a coordinated calendar that is communicated to the Executive Council and externally regarding all events taking place at NAN.
- To develop any procedures and policies that may assist in positioning NAN to fulfil its mandates and obligations to the First Nations that it serves.

**Finance**

- To prepare and manage a budget to provide appropriate advocacy-level service that NAN should be delivering as directed by mandate, and to promote fiscal discipline and accountability to staff ensuring that the operations of the organization are efficient in the short term, effective in the long-term, and take into consideration the broader goals of supporting NAN First Nations.
- To establish and manage appropriate reporting processes on program budgets as aligned with Resolutions and mandates along with applicable performance measures;
- To prepare regular reporting packages and give advice and direction on organizational financial information to the Executive Council, and NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly, as required;
- To establish and oversee any reporting required to funding agencies;
- To make informed decisions about when NAN should access funding and where NAN may be better situated to support funding direct to community.
- To identify when to engage external advisors for specialized needs, and to develop an organizational process to track advice.
- To liaise with the NAN Finance Committee and Governance Committee, and other Councils and Committees as appropriate and required to support their work.

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- Any other task related to the fiscal management of NAN as directed or required including authorizing expenditures, developing and implementing financial management policies and advice on finance-related issues.

**COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS:****Candidate must possess the following skills and attributes:****Education/Experience**

- Post-Secondary Education in Public Administration, Law, Business Administration, First Nation Governance, Public Policy, Finance, or a related field, or an equivalent combination of education, proven professional experience, and First Nation-organization experience.
- Demonstrated 10+ years in senior leadership experience in a complex First Nations organization, government, or comparable corporate entity, with management responsibility for organizational systems, governance and operational oversight in a senior role.
- Demonstrated understanding of First Nation governance systems, First Nation values and principles, and community-based accountability gained through formal learning, leadership roles, or lived experience with an understanding of NAN First Nations and related organizations.
- Experience developing governance structures, policies, and frameworks in organizations undergoing growth, transition, or institutional improvement.
- Strong knowledge of Canadian corporate governance principles and legal compliance requirements applicable to not-for-profit entities.
- Experience working with politically elected leadership, including translating collective direction into operational systems while respecting role definition.
- Demonstrated experience with budgeting, reporting, and providing strategic advice and recommendations related to resource allocation and risk.
- Experience engaging with governments, funding entities, and partners in complex accountability environments is considered an asset.
- Understanding of modern office technologies including word processing software, and basic spreadsheet development.
- Fluency in NAN Dialect (Ojibway, Anishininimowin, Cree) is an asset.

**Working Conditions:**

- Mainly working in an office setting.
- Working within communities, away from home from time to time.
- Travel in both commercial and smaller aircraft.
- Highway driving may also be required.
- Working with the public
- Working in various meeting locations as required.

## Financial Authority

This position has the authority to approve up to \$125,000.00

## **ACCOUNTABILITY:**

In addition to regular check-ins throughout the year (at least quarterly), in order to ensure accountability, trust and transparency in the CAO role, the CAO will be required to undergo a formal performance review, on an annual basis which may include but is not limited to:

- Formally discuss the working relationship between the CAO and the Executive Council;
- Relate performance metrics to role, responsibilities, authority and duties as defined by policies, job description and mandates;
- Set objectives and criteria for future performance review;
- Recognize strengths and weakness, and provide opportunities to reward or correct them as required; and
- Serve as a formal basis for salary adjustment, if appropriate.

Further information related to the review is more particularly set out in organization policy.

## **PORTFOLIO: ADMINISTRATION**

**CREATED /LAST UPDATED:** March 2026.