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ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

Huu-ay-aht Tribunal Project



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Our Constitution: Our Values

Reverence for the Creator (Naas), the spirit world,
and the spiritual basis of life

Respect and honor for ancestors, elders, children,
families, kinship, and future generations

Recognition of internal governance through ḥawiiḥ
and ḥaḥuuḥi

Pride in identity, language, and vibrant culture
including myths, stories, ceremonies, and traditions

Commitment to nature, lands, waters, all living
beings, and a shared economic foundation



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Three Sacred Principles:

ʔiisaak

Greater Respect

ʔuuʔaʔuk

Taking care of

hišuk ma cáwak

Everything is
connected





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Support is Available:



Clinical counsellors aim to provide support for those facing difficult circumstances by providing a safe, confidential space to talk about emotions and challenges. They provide support and teach strategies for regulating emotions.



Cultural support is provided through cedar brushings, eagle fans, language, songs, and other nuučaañuł knowledges used by our people.



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Engagement Session Guidelines:

Be Open

- Come with an open heart and mind. These sessions are opportunities to listen, learn, and contribute to community-led research and conversation.

Take Care of Yourself

- Participation is voluntary. You may step out at any time if you need a break. Clinical and cultural supports are available, please reach out at any time.

Respect All Voices

- Every participant brings valuable experience and knowledge. Actively listen and let others speak without interruption

Speak from Your Experience

- Share your own story and insights without speaking for others or making assumptions

Kindness and Curiosity

- Approach all conversations with compassion. This is a space for support and understanding, rather than criticism or blame.

Engage Thoughtfully

- Ask questions, share ideas, and offer feedback on how the research can be done. This is your opportunity to help shape the future of the Tribunal process.

Confidentiality is Sacred

- Respect others' privacy and the sensitivity of personal stories.



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Today's Engagement Session

Review the origins of the Tribunal and its Jurisdiction

Describe and provide rationale for new Tribunal Project

Seek your input today and over the next four years



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Foundations of the Tribunal:

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is one of five First Nations who signed the Maa-nulth Treaty that came into effect on April 1st, 2011.

Re-establishing self-governance through the Treaty, the **Huu-ay-aht Constitution Act** was created. Within the Constitution, Chapter 7 on Dispute Resolution required the establishment of a dispute resolution act – ***The Tribunal Act***.

The Tribunal Act establishes the ***Huu-ay-aht Tribunal*** with members appointed by Executive Council, ḥawiiḥ Council, and the People's Assembly.



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The Tribunal Act is...



A formal process ensure government decision-making is lawful and in the best interests of Huu-ay-aht, and provide for the just, timely, cost-effective, and final resolution of Huu-ay-aht disputes.

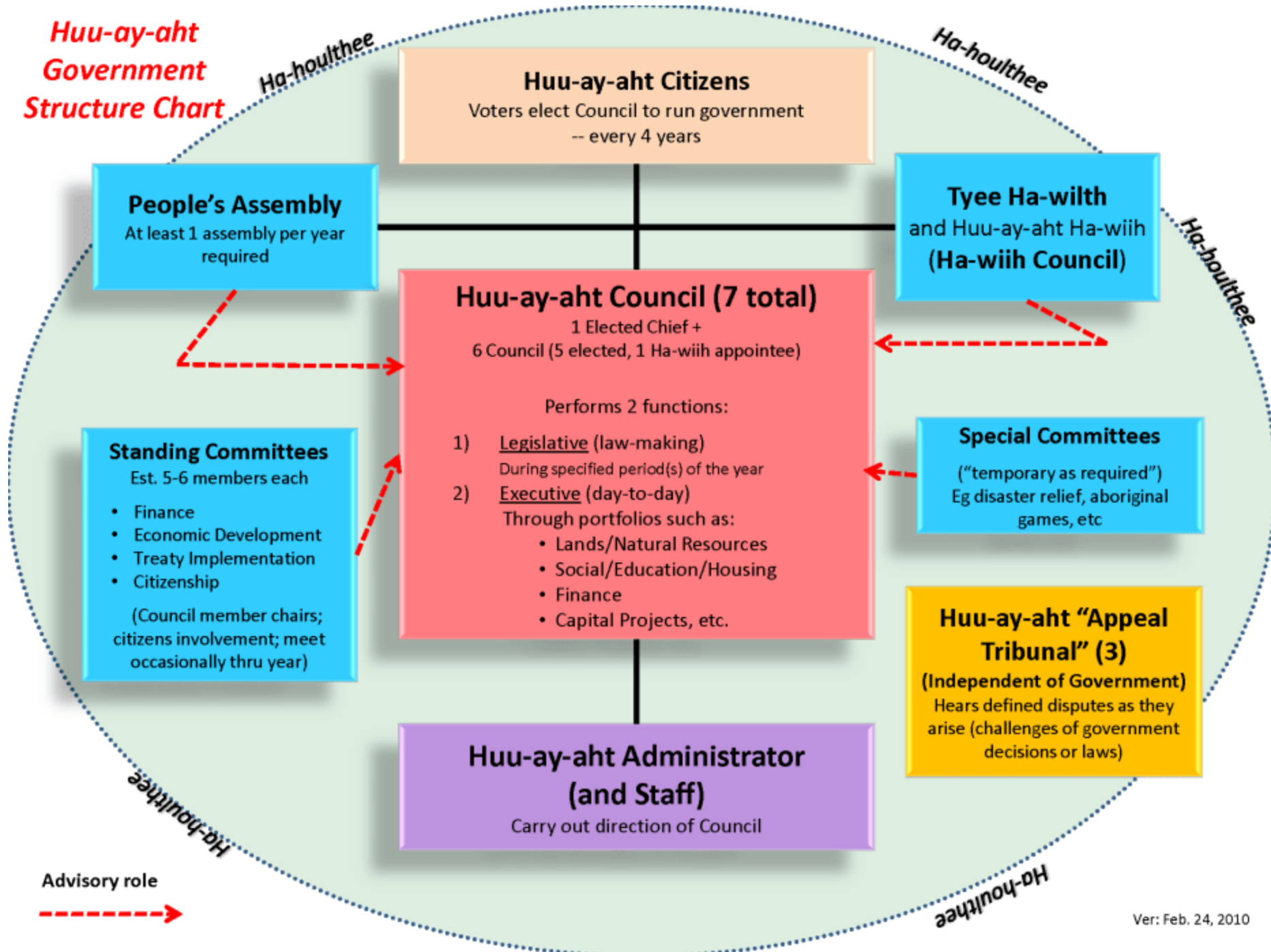


Operates independently from the Huu-ay-aht Government. Tribunal members must have demonstrated ability to impartially decide matters of fact and law and be able to provide well-defined reasons for their decisions.



Decisions are binding and enforceable under BC Administrative Tribunal standards.

Huu-ay-aht Government Structure Chart





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Tribunal Jurisdiction and Practise:

Hear and decide appeals and challenges *Tribunal has dealt with these to date

- Appeals from administrative decisions made under Huu-ay-aht law
- Challenges to the validity of and references regarding Huu-ay-aht law

Conduct investigations, hearings, determinations *Tribunal has dealt with these to date

- Investigations, hearings, and make determinations as provided for under Huu-ay-aht law

Perform other duties *Tribunal has dealt with these to date.

- Other duties or exercise other powers assigned to the tribunal by Executive Council or by Huu-ay-aht law

Resolve disputes on HFN Land *Tribunal has not dealt with these to date

- Disputes involving Huu-ay-aht citizens, or arising upon Huu-ay-aht Lands, if requested to do so by the parties to the dispute

Lay information *Tribunal has not dealt with these to date

- An information (file a formal written statement) under the Offence Act (British Columbia) for an offence under Huu-ay-aht law, and

Provide information to courts *Tribunal has not dealt with these to date.

- Relevant information to courts on sentencing, including recommendations, in accordance with Huu-ay-aht law



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The Tribunal consists of the following Members:

The chair is appointed by the elected members of Executive Council. Act states: must have 10 years of experience as a practicing lawyer or judge.

The vice-chair is appointed by the elected members of Executive Council, after consultation with the chair. Act states: must have 10 years experience as a practicing lawyer or judge.

Two members are appointed by the ʻāwāhi Council, after consultation with the chair.

One member is appointed by the People's Assembly



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Why did HFN apply for funding from the Law Foundation of BC?



Identified need to revitalize the Tribunal Act to reflect Huu-ay-aht laws, values, and principles



Recommendation from the **Panel of Inquiry Report** were made to make changes to the Tribunal's *Rules of Practice and Procedure* among others



Opportunity for \$1,000,000 in funding to do research, provide education, propose potential reform, and transform our process



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Tribunal Project Focus:



Making the Tribunal process reflective of Huu-ay-aht values



Honouring Huu-ay-aht laws and teachings



Ensuring fairness and respect for all citizens



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The Tribunal Project - People:

Advisory Circle:

- Stephen Rayner
- Tommy Happynook
- Andrea Pettigrew
- Angela Wesley
- Jack Cook
- Kiana Mio

Project Team:

- Karen Haugen
- Heather Castleden
- Jordan Young
- Kiana Mio (Summer 2025 Intern)



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ńaańaačtuqḥsi (to guide) Advisory Circle:



Will guide the Project Team and ensure **Huu-ay-aht** protocols, principles, and values are respected



Trained to apply sacred principles while practicing confidentiality protocols



Review the project team's research findings and **Support** the creation of educational materials



Make any Tribunal reform recommendations to the Law and Policy Development Committee



Help shape any proposed changes to the Tribunal Act based on research, for review by ḥawíiḥ and Executive Councils



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Tribunal Project: Role of the Project Team



Community engagement sessions three times a year over the four-year project



We are asking for your feedback in-person, by phone, email, or online



Provide opportunities for confidential (private) conversations



Analyze what we hear, synthesize our findings, share updates, develop educational materials, and make recommendations to the Advisory Circle

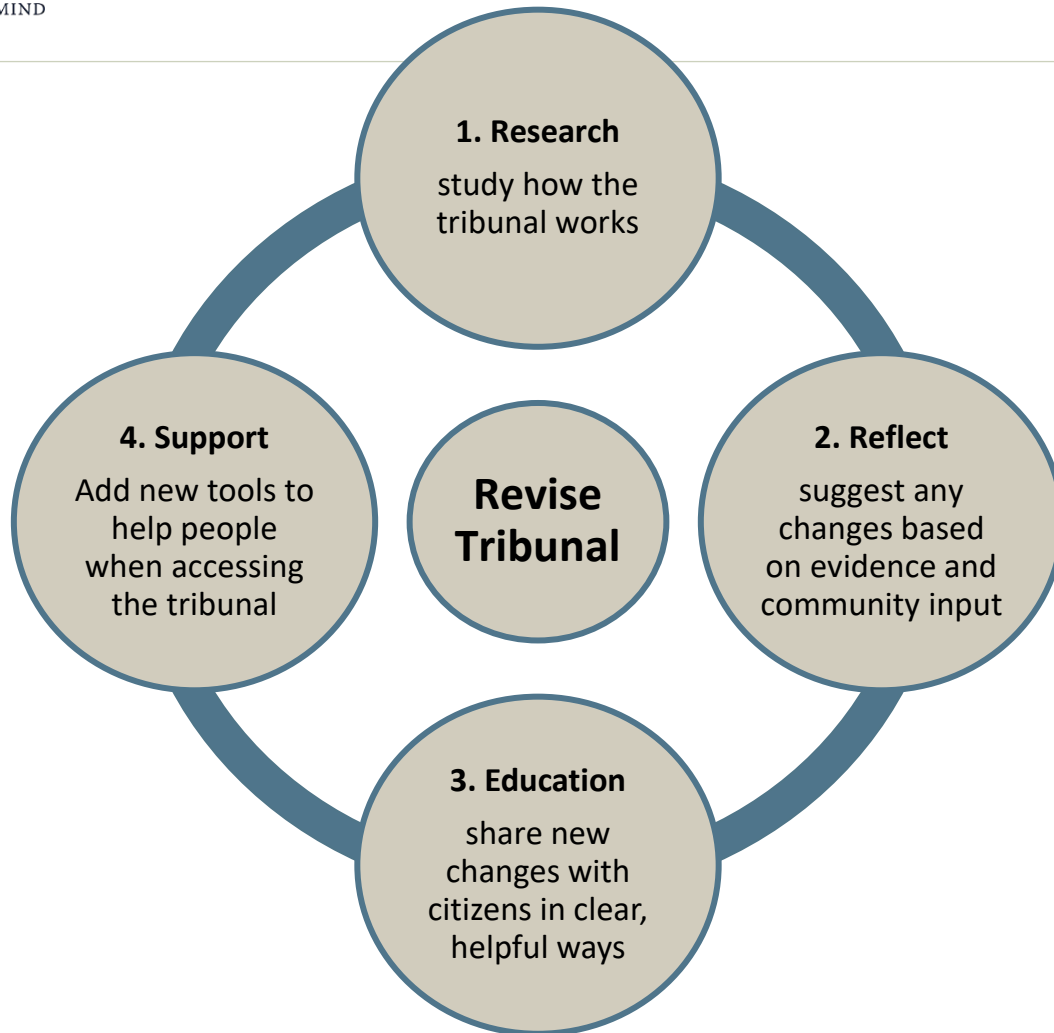


Engaging with Citizens to discuss any changes to the Tribunal Act that might be recommended



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Four Stages:





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Stage 1: Preparing Ourselves for the Project

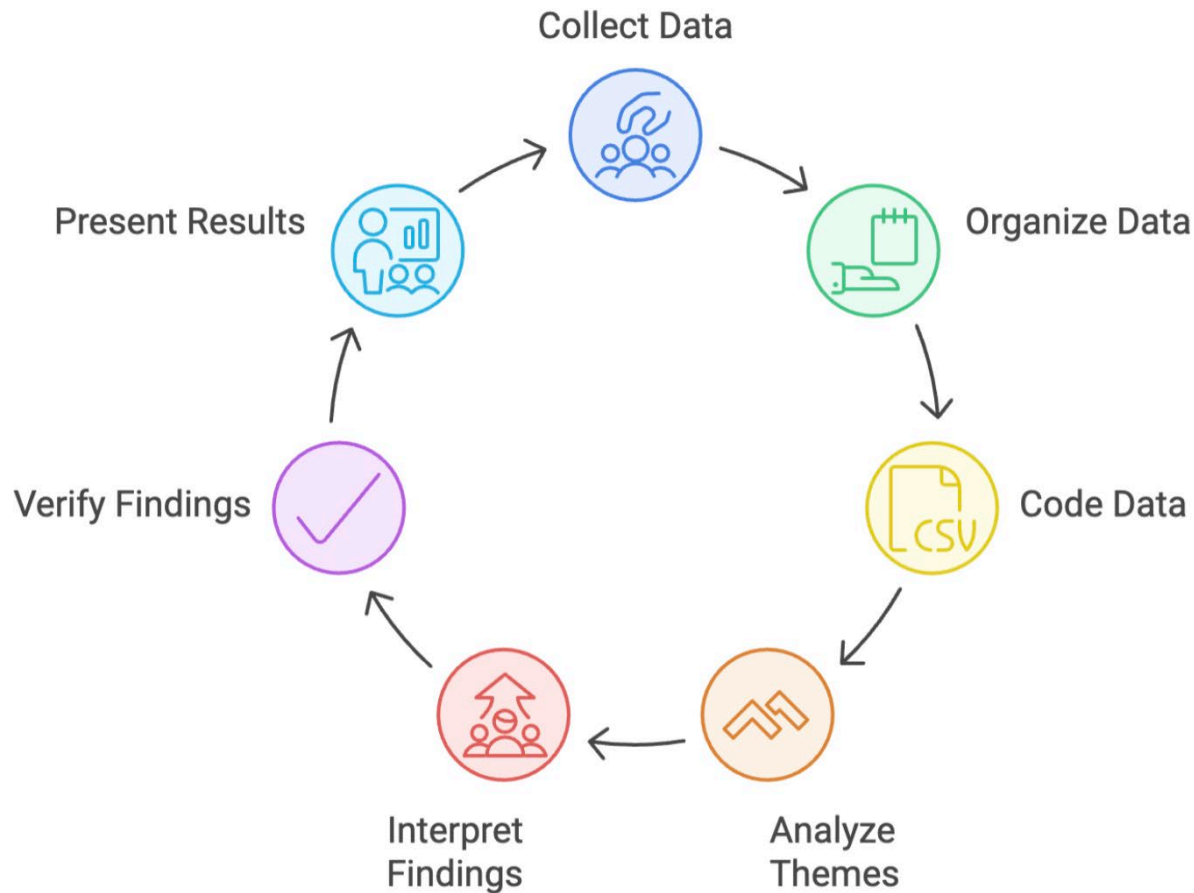
- Team and Advisory Circle Recruitment
- Establish Responsibilities Agreement
- Team:
 - Completed Tri-Council Policy on Research Ethics training
 - Achieved: Certification
 - Completed Trauma-Informed Practice and Interview Techniques Training
 - Achieved: Certification x 2
- Advisory Circle and Team:
 - Completed Nuu-cha-nulth Concepts and Practices in Communication, with Marcey Louie, Ahousaht Counselling Psychologist with Indigenous Specialization
 - Completed Q and A with Tribunal Chair, John Rich



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Stage 1: Data Collection and Analysis





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From your Perspective:



Is there anything that you would like to share with us today about the Tribunal Project plan?



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Future Community Engagement Sessions

We Want to Hear from You!

- This initial round is to introduce ourselves and the project
- Invite you to share your experience and knowledge in safe and respectful spaces
- Help us to imagine a better Tribunal process
- Suggest ways to make positive change
- Contribute to meaningful, community-led research

These Engagement Sessions will:

- Provide updates on the Tribunal project
- Invite feedback on how you think the research is going
- Invite you to connect with the Project Team to schedule a confidential conversation with one of us
- Offer Clinical and Cultural support for citizens



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Thank you!

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If you have questions please reach out to:

Heather Castleden heather.c@huuayaht.org

