



TUNGASUVVINGAT INUIT PLEASSED WITH VERDICT OF MARK JEFFREY INQUEST

December 8, 2021

OTTAWA, ON – Twenty out of the twenty-four recommendations presented to the jury by [Tungasuvvingat Inuit \(TI\)](#), [Aboriginal Legal Services \(ALS\)](#), Coroner’s Council and Correctional Services Canada were accepted by the jury in the inquest into the death of Inuk inmate Mark Jeffrey. Mark Jeffrey died on June 29th, 2015, while in custody at Beaver Creek Medium Security Institution in Gravenhurst, Ontario. TI is pleased with the acceptance of recommendations after the Jury delivered their verdict on December 1st following eight days of testimony and closing statements made by TI.

Indigenous adults are overrepresented in the Canadian Criminal Justice System and the [rate continues to escalate](#). Amanda Kilabuk, Executive Director of TI participated in the inquest stated, “It was difficult to hear the details of Mr. Jeffrey’s experience while in custody at Beaver Creek Institution. He was placed in segregation for 74 days and did not have acceptable access to culture supports. His experience as an Indigenous adult in the criminal justice system is not unique and it is our hope, this inquiry and the recommendations will be used to initiate improvements while in the system, and outcomes for those that successfully complete their terms. As Beaver Brook is deemed an Inuit Centre of Excellence (ICE), there are higher expectations for the institution to provide Inuit-specific programming for Inuit in custody.

Some of the key recommendations included:

- To recognize that Inuit in minimum security custody require Inuit-specific services, employment of Inuit staff at Inuit Centres of Excellence (as outlined in Anijaarniq) should be increased to meet the needs of Inuit in custody.
- The Anijaarniq: A Holistic Inuit Strategy must be co-developed, co-implemented and comanaged by Correctional Services of Canada and Inuit governments, Inuit land claim organizations and Inuit communities. This will include:
 - a. creating a collaborative working group that includes stakeholders from Inuit land claims, Inuit governments and Inuit organizations to develop a better understanding of the distinct needs of Inuit in federal custody and developing a strategic implementation plan on how to address these needs;
 - b. the development of a mutually agreed upon implementation plan, accountability framework and shared responsibilities that will identify contributions and advancements by all parties engaged in the working group; and
 - c. Inuit Centres of Excellence producing an annual report on the results of the

Anijaarniq strategy for the Inuit governments, Inuit land claim organizations and Inuit organizations.

- Correctional Services of Canada explore ways in which to better understand and meaningfully address the relevant barriers to recruiting Inuit Elders, Inuit Liaison Officers and
- Inuit staff for Inuit Centres of Excellence, such as the possibility of Correctional Services of Canada providing the following employment supports for its Inuit staff, including Inuit contractors:
 - a. Relocation supports;
 - b. Accommodation supports;
 - c. Counselling supports;
 - d. Transportation supports;
 - e. Seniority incentives;
 - f. Multi-year contracts; and
 - g. Offer services virtually where applicable (Elders can work from home)
- Correctional Services of Canada should conduct a feasibility study about:
 - a. moving the Inuit Centre of Excellence from Gravenhurst to an institution closer to Ottawa, Ontario; and
 - b. increasing capacity for Inuit serving their federal sentence to serve their sentence in an existing Institution in Inuit Nunangat.

Kilabuk added, “We are pleased that many of the recommendations were accepted, and it was apparent that the Inuit voice and perspective was required in this process. As for Implementation of the recommendations, it is incumbent on [Correctional Services Canada \(CSC\)](#) to address these recommendations. Because of this inquiry for Mr. Jeffrey, it is well-documented for CSC to improve their practices and policies, training, and include the full weight of their Inuit Liaison Officers and Elders when it comes to dealing with Inuit in the criminal justice system.”

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