



## **OVERVIEW**

On November 1, 1995, the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) established the Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Trust (GHAT) to finance the Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Program ("GHAP" or "the Program"). The GHAT expired in Spring 2017 and a new trust has been set up for the same purposes. The GTC Board of Directors appoints the Trustee of the new trust, which may be comprised of members of the GTC Board of Directors itself.

Program Administration is assigned by the Trustee and assigned to the Designated Gwich'in Organizations ("DGOs" or "Gwich'in Councils") or the Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs). The Trustees:

1. Develop and maintain the Program in conjunction with the Procedure;
2. Establishes administrative agreements with the Program Administrator; and,
3. Monitors the Program.

The Program Administrator(s) report to the Trustee. Under this arrangement, the Gwich'in Councils and/or RRCs act as Program Administrator(s), such that a portion of interest accrued from the GHAT continue to flow directly to Participants of the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* (also known as "Beneficiaries").

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the GHAT is *"to provide financial assistance and training to Beneficiaries to engage in traditional and emerging renewable resource activities."*

The premise of the GHAT is that harvesting wildlife has always been and continues to be an important part of Gwich'in sustenance, economy and way of life, and that Gwich'in harvesters may from time to time require assistance and support to continue with traditional harvesting activities.

The GHAT specifically provides that it will fund the GHAP. Funds provided are to be used for financial assistance to approved Gwich'in Participants for items such as:

- equipment repair;
- maintenance and replacement;
- fuel costs to access harvesting areas and training in traditional and emerging harvesting activities; and,
- approved Community training programs and initiatives to support harvesting.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Funds received under an administrative agreement may be directed to operating costs and purchasing goods associated with harvesting, provided that:

- i. Applicants are enrolled Participants/Beneficiaries under the GCLCA and are at least sixteen (16) years of age;
- ii. Applicants are either resident within the Gwich'in Settlement Area; or, in certain cases, not resident within the Gwich'in Settlement Area but have been deemed by a Program Administrator to be eligible for funds;
- iii. One applicant per household may be funded; and,
- iv. Applicants applying for funding related to cabins (including new cabins), must register said cabin with the GTC.

**POLICY**  
**Harvesters Assistance**



**BENEFIT**

Eligible applicants and apply for up to \$2,500 per fiscal year (\$1,250 per season) provided that the applicant can contribute a minimum of 25% of the total cost of the Eligible Expenses below and/or proof of approved financing once confirmation is received of a 25% deposit. Applicants over the age of sixty (60) years are not required to contribute a minimum amount for this assistance.

**ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

This program is intended to provide harvesters with financial assistance and is not intended to be used as a full cost coverage for items.

The following are eligible expenses to any applicant under the Policy:

Building materials	All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)	Snowmobiles	Outboard Motors
Boats	Gas and/or Oil	Tents	Sewing Machines
Marine Equipment	Bush radios	Wood stoves/pipes	Chainsaws
Tools (including nets, firearms, traps, etc.)	Sleds/Boggans/Trailers	Generators or alternate energy sources	Sled (working) dogs
Miscellaneous Harvesting equipment	Food Items (including but not limited to groceries such as flour, sugar, lard, milk, butter, rice, oats, salt, tea, coffee, baking powder)		

Applicants are encouraged to purchase new equipment whenever possible. Any items purchased using GHAP funds cannot be resold within a three (3) year period.

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

The GHAP will be offered at the community level starting April 1<sup>st</sup> and no later than May 31<sup>st</sup> for the Spring allocation and starting September 1<sup>st</sup> and no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> for the Fall allocation in each calendar year respectively.

**ADMINISTRATION**

The Program Administrator will notify their respective communities when applications are available. Individuals may be assigned by the Program Administrator to assist applicants with completion and submission of applications. The Program Administrator will review applications and notify all applicants of decisions. In assessing applications, the Program Administrator may, at their sole discretion, make decisions as to how to distribute available funds across different types of applicants and activities in accordance with the Eligible Expenses outlined above.



### **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

The Trustee is committed to ensuring an environment that promotes efficiency and effectiveness for Program Administrators administering the GHAP. The achievement of such success is dependent on an environment free of behaviors which can undermine the important objectives of this Program.

The Trustee has a 'zero tolerance' policy to address any issues of violence, aggression or unacceptable behavior directed towards any Program Administrator or its employees or designates. Any violence and aggression towards the Program Administrator(s) or their employees or designates is unacceptable. Any such act or behavior will result in automatic denial of funding and restriction from applying to the GHAP for up to two (2) years.

### **PURCHASE PERIOD**

All approved GHAP applications must be purchased in a period no longer than four (4) months from the time of approval. Special consideration will be given for approved applications that are affected by supply restraints (i.e. snowmobiles ordered in the spring not available until the fall).

### **PAYMENT**

All GHAP funds will be paid directly to providers of goods and services upon verification of the minimum 25% contribution (unless exempt) by the applicant. Sales receipts and invoices are required in each and every instance.

### **APPEALS**

Applicants shall have access to an appeal process to decisions made under this Policy. If an applicant wishes to appeal the decisions made by the Program Administrator, he or she must submit a written appeal within ten (10) business days of receiving the decision. The written appeal must set out in detail, the basis of the appeal.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

Each applicant is responsible for the following:

- Complete the GHAP application honestly in good faith, and in a manner that provides complete information on the nature of the request and appropriate detail on required items;
- Provide vendor information for allocation of funds in the manner set out in the GHAP application and in accordance with any other applicable terms and conditions;
- Provide documentation and information as may be required by the Program Administrator for the effective administration of the Program and associated reporting;
- Respect decisions made in accordance with this Policy; and,
- Adherence of the zero tolerance policy.

**POLICY**  
**Harvesters Assistance**



**AMENDMENT**

This Policy will be reviewed as necessary and at least once every three (3) years.

**POLICY OWNER**

For any questions or required clarifications, please contact the *Manager, Gwich'in Services* or their designate.