



First Nations Housing
Professionals Association

L'Association des professionnels de
l'habitation des Premières Nations

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Workshop



PLAR Workshop Agenda

Part 1 – FNHPA and PLAR Awareness

1. Introductions
2. About FNHPA
3. Understanding Certification and Professional Standards
4. About PLAR
5. Getting Started and Testimonials
6. Competency Self-Assessment
7. How to Build the Portfolio and Essential Content
8. Cover Letter (Introduction)
9. Completing Appendix A – Request for Portfolio Assessment (P11)



PLAR Workshop Agenda

PLAR Workshop Part 2 – Working on the PLAR Elements

1. Job Descriptions
2. List of Educational Activities
3. Resume
4. Competency Self-Assessment
5. Completing the Competency Evidence Grid (educational list, job descriptions, resume)
6. Two Sponsors
7. The Submission and Decision
8. PLAR Portfolio Building Activities
9. Discussions



About the First Nations Housing Professionals Association (FNHPA)

- **A national not-for-profit, professional association exclusively serving the needs of individuals working for or aspiring to housing management positions with First Nations organizations.**
- **Committed to expanding housing management capacity for First Nations organizations.**
- **Assisting housing managers and staff to better serve their communities and clients by developing, promoting and delivering quality standards.**
- **Responsible for providing training, certification, and professional development opportunities to share knowledge in First Nations housing management.**
- **The FNHPA offers a Canada wide certification program leading to the First Nations Housing Professional (FNHP) designation.**
- **Making ongoing professional development available to increase FNHPs knowledge and achieve their peak professional growth.**



About FNHMA - Membership

Membership Requirements

To be admitted as a candidate member of FNHPA you must:

- a) Be working in housing or aspiring to become a housing professional; and
- b) Pay the required annual membership dues.

Candidate members that have earned the FNHP designation are known as certified members.
Corporate memberships are available for suppliers and not-for-profit associations



About FNHPA –Membership Benefits

FNHPA members benefit from various programs and services in place and in development such as:

FNHP Certification

Standards of Ethical Conduct

***Standards for Professional Competencies
and Professional Development Programs***

***First Nations Housing Management News
(focusing on practices and issues)***

Annual Conference and Exhibition

Provincial/Regional Networks

***Knowledge Centre, Research, Information & Networking
(enhanced communications with technology)***

Career Support Services

Members' Directory



Understanding Certification

What is a FNHP?

- **A highly-skilled professional, committed to personal career development, standards of ethical conduct and First Nations housing management.**
- **An expert in housing management for First Nations organizations**
- **Valued for their understanding of housing management and services:**
 - ✓ **Is a source and interpreter on housing issues and housing management matters**
 - ✓ **They help improve the decision-making process**



Professional Standards

- **Competency Standards**
- **Ethical Standards**
- **Certification Standards (Professional Program, Experience, Examination and Maintenance of Certification)**



FNHMA Competency Standards

The Certification Program measures the following core competency domains:

- 1. First Nations Housing, History, Culture and Issues***
- 2. First Nations Housing Construction and Infrastructure Elements***
- 3. Housing Leadership, Plans, Policy and Accountability***
- 4. Management of Housing Programs***
- 5. Client Relations***
- 6. Housing Management Functional Supports***
- 7. Professionalism and Ethics***
- 8. Critical Skills***



Understanding Competencies

- **Knowledge, Skills and Attitude**
- **Functional**
- **Enabling**



Ethical Standards

- **Code of Ethics**
- **Standards of Ethical Conduct**
- **Administration**



Certification Standards

- **Pathways and Entrance Requirements**
- **Regular Path**
- **Prior Learning and Recognition (PLAR) Path**
- **Professional Program (Educational Course Requirements, Practical Work Experience Requirements and Professional Examination)**
- **Maintenance of Certification- completion of ongoing professional development**



Becoming A FNHP

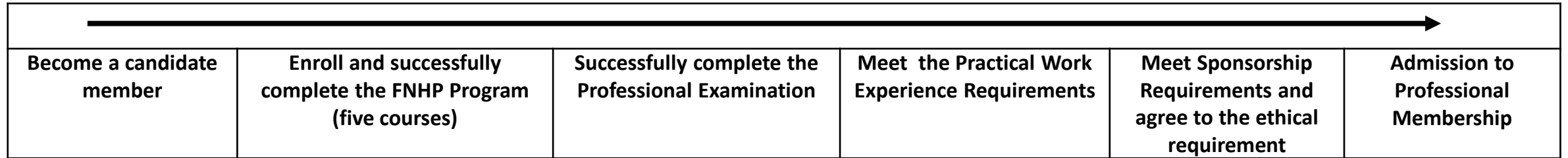
- **If you have less than seven years of experience you will be required to take the regular path to certification.**
- **The regular path involves taking or earning exemptions for courses as well as meeting the working experience requirements and successfully passing the professional examination.**



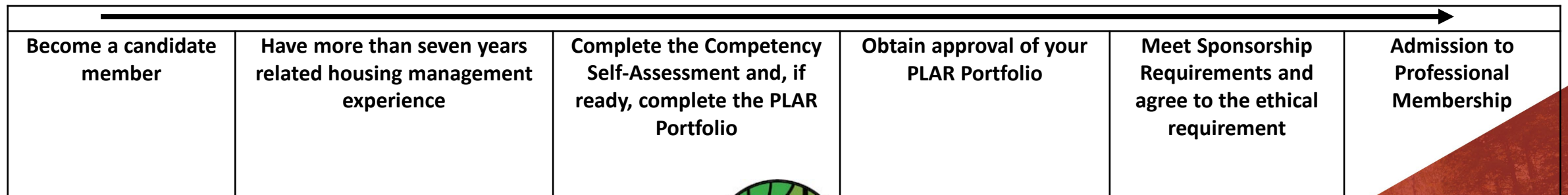
First Nations Housing Professional (FNHP)

Becoming a FNHP can be achieved through two different paths:

1. Regular path to certification:



2. Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) path to certification:



Becoming a FNHP – PLAR Path

- **If you have been working as a First Nation Housing Manager for more than seven years and have supervisory experience complete the competency self-assessment tool. If you have more than 80 percent of the competencies indicated, you may wish to take the PLAR path (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) The PLAR pathway requires completion of a portfolio and other information and is outlined in the PLAR policy.**



Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)_{xt}



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What is PLAR?

History

- **A small amount of adult learning is recognized in society even though most learning, skills, attitudes and experiences come in forms not captured easily by a education transcript, where it is more difficult to identify, assess and recognize these assets.**
- **Little is known about the nature of informal learning and its relationship to formal learning.**
- **PLAR is one successful tool that helps increase recognition of informal learning**
- **Much of the evidence of PLAR's efficacy is based on anecdotal accounts of the experiences of individuals and specific projects.**



What is PLAR?

- **Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is the formal evaluation and credit-granting process that individuals may obtain for prior learning.**
- **Prior learning includes the experience, professional development, education and skills that individuals have been acquired formally and/or informally.**
- **The certification standards provide for a PLAR process as an alternative path towards certification as a housing professional.**



What is PLAR?

- **Individuals have their knowledge and skills evaluated against the First Nations Housing Professionals Association's Competency Standards**
- **Candidates with seven or more years of practical housing experience gained in an First Nations environment may take the PLAR path to professional certification.**
- **The PLAR path requires completion of a portfolio which will be reviewed by assessors.**





Applicants for PLAR must:

- 1. Review requirements for the PLAR Program - Guide;**
- 2. Complete the Competency Self Assessment to assess readiness for PLAR;**
- 3. Provide evidence of seven years of practical housing experience gained in an First Nations environment (Resume, Job Descriptions, Education Activities);**
- 4. Develop and a submit a PLAR Portfolio based on the information provided in the PLAR Portfolio Development Guide; and**
- 5. Be aware that there is no guarantee that your portfolio will be approved.**



How to Build the Portfolio and Essential Content_t



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Practical steps for getting your stuff together

- **Do the self-assessment**
- **Update Job descriptions**
- **List of educational activities**
- **Update your resume**
- **Do the self-assessment again**
- **Prove it with an evidence grid**
- **Two support letters**
- **Cover letter**
- **Appendix A**





FNHMA Competency Self-Assessment Tool

Objectives of the FNHPA Competency Self-Assessment tool:

- **To provide an opportunity to assess one's current knowledge and skills;**
- **To determine one's professional development needs; and**
- **To measure progress towards becoming a professional First Nations housing professional.**



FNHPA Competency Self-Assessment Tool

RATING SYSTEM:

- **Excellent:** You are performing in this area at a consistently superior level. This is one of your major strengths.
- **Satisfactory:** Your performance is effective and occasionally you perform at a superior level.
- **Needs Improvement:** You sometimes perform well and on occasion fall below the standards expected. You require some development and change in order to improve performance to a consistent effective level.
- **Unacceptable:** You require substantial development and change for this item in order to function effectively.
- **Unable to Rate:** You have not engaged in this activity.





FNHPA Self-Assessment Tool - Example

E = Excellent S = Satisfactory NI = Needs Improvement U = Unacceptable UR = Unable to Rate

| | E | S | NI | U | UR |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|---|----|
| Domain 4: Management of Housing Programs | | | | | |
| <i>4.3 Funding, Proposals and Agreements</i> | | √ | | | |
| 4.3.1 Be able to identify potential sources of revenue for program development, both governmental and non-governmental. | | √ | | | |
| 4.3.2 Understand how to access those sources of revenue through partnerships, sponsorships and other forms of relationships. | | √ | | | |
| 4.3.3 Understand how to access those sources of revenue through partnerships, sponsorships and other forms of relationships. | √ | | | | |
| 4.3.4 Be able to demonstrate an understanding of funding arrangements and categories. | | √ | | | |
| 4.3.5 Be able to develop proposals to support program development. | √ | | | | |
| 4.3.6 Be able to negotiate and manage funding arrangements with a financial partner. | | | | | √ |
| | | | | | √ |



FNHPA Self-Assessment Tool - Example

Your Score Card:

| Domain | <u>E</u> | <u>S</u> | <u>NI</u> | <u>U</u> | <u>UR</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Domain 1: First Nations Housing History, Culture and Issues | | | | | |
| Domain 2: First Nations Housing Construction and Infrastructure Elements | | | | | |
| Domain 3: Housing Leadership, Plans, Policy and Accountability | | | | | |
| Domain 4: Management Housing Programs | | | | | |
| Domain 5: Client Relations | | | | | |
| Domain 6: Housing Management Functional Supports | | | | | |
| Domain 7: Professionalism and Ethics | | | | | |
| Domain 8: Critical Skills | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | |



FNHPA Self-Assessment Tool - Example

My Competency Development Action Plan (CDAP).

| Indicators Requiring Improvement | What needs to occur? | When does this occur? | What resources are required? | How will I measure success? |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

I will hold myself accountable by:

I am committed to making this plan work

Signature

Date



FNHPA Competency Self-Assessment Tool

How the FNHPA Competency Self-Assessment Tool works:

- For each of the items listed, put an [v] in the column that corresponds the most to your knowledge and abilities as a housing manager.
- Note the items with a [v] in the Needs Improvement or Unacceptable column and record them in the area titled *“My Competency Development Action Plan”* (CDAP).
- For each item listed in the CDAP, complete the required documentation. This information will help you take the results from your self-assessment and focus on your future development needs.
- Individuals with only a few ‘Needs Improvement’ or ‘Unacceptable’ ratings should consider using the PLAR process for certification.



What is a Portfolio?

- **A portfolio is a record of your learning from educational, work and personal experience.**
- **It is developed by you to support your claim of competence and credit toward being accepted as a certified member.**



What should my portfolio contain?

Some items your portfolio should contain:

1. Table of contents
2. Cover letter of introduction, etc.
3. Request for a PLAR review (Appendix A)
4. Two sponsor letters
5. Resume demonstrating the seven years work experience requirement
6. Job descriptions supporting the seven years noted in the resume
7. List of educational activities
8. Completed Self-assessment
9. Completed Evidence Grid linking the competencies to experiences and education



Cover Letter

This one or two page letter basically:

- **Introduces yourself**
- **Indicates a summary of your involvement in housing**
- **States your commitment to First Nations housing**
- **Indicates your appreciation of FNHPA and the professional designation**
- **explains why your submitting your Portfolio**
- **Any other relevant information you wish to share**



Appendix A – Request for Portfolio Assessment

- This document is noted on page 11 of the FNHPA's Information Guide for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition. Also available in Word on the Website.
- There are currently about 40 PLAR fees remaining and where the fee is referenced in the credit card area state the PLAR fee is "Covered by CMHC".



Two Sponsor Letters

- **Depending on whom your sponsors are, they may not be all that familiar with you or FNHPA and the FNHP professional designation. As a result, you may be interested in arranging for them to visit the Information Guide on the Site or other PLAR content, and providing your resume or more if asked.**
- **Having this information will allow them to create the sponsor letter, please note a sponsor may be willing to sponsor you but may ask you to provide them with a basic draft.**
- **A sponsor letter will often indicate: that they are familiar with the FNHPA, the PLAR process, and the professional designation; indicate how they know you; and comment on your capabilities; and suitability in terms of being awarded the professional designation.**



Job Descriptions

- **As you need more than seven years of housing management experience in a First Nations environment it is critical that this experience be referenced in job descriptions that apply.**
- **Review these job descriptions and if you did more than what is included, add it.**
- **If for some reason you did not have a job description, then do the following: identify the position, roles and responsibilities (bullet form) and position qualifications.**
- **When reviewing this information, if you recall any significant accomplishments note them down and be prepared to put them in your resume.**



List of Educational Activities

- This list will include any regular educational or professional development activities you have engaged in.
- The list can show the activities by number and the supportive attachment can follow. For example the list may show; 1. Housing Accounting Course at the local College, the reference attachment for number 1 could be a transcript, certificate and/or a write up on the course and learning objectives. Another example could be 2. Tenant Relations Workshop, the reference attachment could be a certificate received.
- If for some reason you do not have certificates, just put on the list the name of the activity, with who and note the certificate is not available.
- The list can be used to put information into your resume. If for some reason your continuing professional development workshops are numerous, rather than list them all the following type of wording could be used: I engage in professional development workshops on a regular basis and have participated in X in the last seven years.



Resume

- **The resume will provide a summary of your Educational, Work Experiences and Other significant activities.**
- **From the job descriptions you can develop the Work Experiences section. Identify the positions, timing and develop an executive summary for the roles and responsibilities. If there are accomplishments, they should also be noted for each job.**
- **The list of educational activities will allow you to complete the Educational section.**
- **Abilities such as (technology, etc.) and involvement (community, etc.) could also be noted in the Other section.**





Competency Self-Assessment

- **Based on discoveries from the educational list, job descriptions and your updated resume update your self-assessment and prepare for the evidence grid.**



Prove it with Completing the Evidence Grid

- As you visit each competency or competency section, ask, how can I prove I have done this or can do this.
- The type of evidence required may be in your job description, educational list or resume or some of your other way such as publications and or verification letters.
- For example: Sub competency 2.3 Housing Maintenance lists nine items. If your self-assessment says your understanding of these areas is satisfactory or better, perhaps you can prove this by putting in the evidence area the following type of information if it is applicable:
 - See my current job description in paragraph three it indicates that I am responsible for all housing maintenance matters for my community.
 - See the Educational list item two, X's College Housing Maintenance Plans course; item seven Capital Replacement Planning workshop with x.
 - See my resume position X accomplishments by serving on a regional housing maintenance services group.
- After completing the grid you may have discovered other aspects that you may have forgotten over time. Where necessary go back and update your job descriptions, educational list and resume.



What should my competency evidence grid contain?

| KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE | PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE | EVIDENCE OF PRIOR LEARNING |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Gathered from any or all of the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- tests, reports, documents- designs- products- projects or assignments- testimonials from employers /teachers | <p>Gathered from any or all of the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- observation in workplace- workplace examples- simulations- skill tests- job descriptions- performance appraisal- testimonials | <p>Gathered from any or all of the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- certificates, diplomas- transcripts- course outlines and descriptions related to housing management- workshops and conferences outlines or descriptions |



Portfolio Evidence Grid (Example)

| Competency | Evidence |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>8.3 Working with Change:</p> <p>8.3.1 Understand the stages of change and ways to guide and manage change, consistent with the vision and values of the organization.</p> <p>8.3.2 Be able to use change management processes to benefit the housing program, involve key stakeholders and sustain positive changes.</p> | <p><u>Educational:</u> Successful completed the U of M course, Working with Change 205. See Appendix one for the course description and transcript.</p> <p><u>Professional Experience:</u> I have put in place a new updated housing program and phased out one. Using managing change techniques, disruptions were limited and an orderly transition occurred.</p> <p><u>Projects and Reports:</u> See an outline of my report on</p> |



Who assesses my portfolio?

- **Assessors are experienced professionals with a sound awareness of the competency standards and training in the assessment of portfolios.**
- **The assessors follow a guide and evaluate each submission according to the FNHPA competency standards.**
- **Assessors will look for evidence that the candidate is competent in at least 80% of the FNHPA competencies.**



Portfolio Decisions

After the PLAR Portfolio Assessment review:

- **Where requirements have not been met, candidates may be required to upgrade by taking courses, getting more experience, or by taking the professional examination, as required, and resubmitting.**
- **Where requirements have been met and eligibility for certification has been approved, you will be required sign an agreement to abide by the Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical Conduct. Upon receipt of this information, your name will be forwarded to the board for approval.**



PLAR Pathway

After your PLAR Portfolio is reviewed you may be faced with one of the following options:

- **Your name will be presented to the board for approval**
- **You will be required to write the professional exam**
- **You will be required to write the professional exam and/or complete specific courses**



Please remember...

- **Before December 31, 2022, a candidate who's portfolio evidence is approved will be exempt from the Professional Examination.**
- **After this date, all successful PLAR Candidates will be required to write the National Professional Examination.**



Maintenance of Certification (MOC)

- **To maintain your FNHP designation, you need to:**
 - **be a member in good standing with the FNHPA; and**
 - **meet the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirement.**
- **The MOC requirement requires all FNHPs to engage in 20 hours of continuing professional development each year which must be relevant to First Nations housing management.**
- **This ensures that FNHPs are up-to-date on the most current First Nations housing management issues and practices.**



Questions

- **FNHPA**
- **FNHP Certification**
- **PLAR Policy and Process**
- **Maintenance of Certification**
- **Becoming a Member**
- **Additional Support**





Get certified, become a First Nations
Housing Professional (FNHP)

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