AFOA
BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Annual Governance Health Checklist:

A Tool for BC's Indigenous Community Leadership

Building a strong Nation starts with a healthy Council table.

This checklist is your "safety net." Use it once a year to ensure your leadership team is protected, informed, and aligned with the community's laws and values.

⬚ *"We are the land. We are the river. We are the mountain. We are the forest. The land is us."*

Chief Dan George (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)

The Four Pillars of Governance Health

This annual checklist is organized around four core pillars, each designed to strengthen a different dimension of your Nation's leadership. Together, they form a complete framework for healthy, accountable, and community-centered governance.

Pillar 1

The "Governance Suitcase"
Onboarding & Knowledge

Pillar 2

The Safety Shield
Risk & Regulation

Pillar 3

The Steering Wheel
Operations vs. Governance

Pillar 4

The Community Connection
Transparency & Feedback

After working through all four pillars, complete the **"3-2-1" Action Plan** to identify strengths, risks, and your next 90-day commitment.

Pillar 1: The "Governance Suitcase" - Onboarding & Knowledge

New leaders shouldn't have to guess. Ensure every Council member has the following "live" resources!

📋 The Big Three

Does every member have a current copy of the Nation's **Constitution**, the **Land Code**, and the **Finance Administration Law (FAL)**?

💻 The Digital Library

Is there a secure, centralized **Intranet or digital folder** where Council can access past Meeting Minutes, BCRs, and Audit reports **24/7**?

🗺️ Strategic Roadmap

Does everyone have the current **5-year Strategic Plan** and this year's **Annual Operating Plan**?

🎁 The Welcome Kit

Is there a **formal orientation for new members within 30 days** of election?

Pillar 2: The Safety Shield - Risk & Regulation

Protecting the Nation's assets by following the law and seeking wisdom.

⚖️ Jurisdiction Check

Before any major vote this year, did we confirm the decision aligns with our **unique laws and jurisdictional boundaries**?

🔍 Expert Due Diligence

Do we have a list of **pre-approved legal and financial advisors** to call before signing major contracts?

🌿 The Elder's Council

Have we established a **formal way to seek the guidance of our Elders** on decisions involving land, culture, and traditional law?

📊 Fiduciary Training

Has the entire Council completed a basic **"Financial Literacy for Leaders" session** this year?

Pillar 3: The Steering Wheel - Operations vs. Governance

Ensuring Council stays at the "Big Picture" level.

1 Role Clarity

Are we spending at least **80% of our meeting time on Policy and Strategy,** rather than daily staff tasks?

2 The "Lane" Check

Can we point to a specific moment where we **redirected an operational issue back to the Band Manager/CEO** instead of fixing it ourselves?

3 Agenda Discipline

Do our meeting agendas **reflect our Strategic Plan goals,** or are they just a list of "emergencies"?

Pillar 4: The Community Connection - Transparency & Feedback

The Information Vehicle

Is our permanent communication tool (**Newsletter, Web Portal, or Radio**) sending out updates **at least once a month**?

Data Capture

Are we using a **"Live Database"** to track member needs and demographics, rather than relying on guesswork?

The Pulse Check

Have we conducted a **member satisfaction survey or a community town hall** in the last 12 months to gauge our performance?

Conflict Resolution

Do we have a signed **"Council Covenant" or Code of Conduct** that outlines how we handle disagreements with **lateral kindness**?

Building the trust that sustains your authority.

Annual Checklist Summary: All Pillars

Use this table as a quick-reference scorecard when completing your annual governance review. Mark each item as complete, in progress, or not yet started.

Pillar	Key Checklist Item	Status
1 – Governance Suitcase	Constitution, Land Code & FAL distributed to all members	
1 – Governance Suitcase	Secure Digital Library (Intranet) accessible 24/7	
1 – Governance Suitcase	5-Year Strategic Plan & Annual Operating Plan shared	
1 – Governance Suitcase	Formal orientation for new members within 30 days	
2 – Safety Shield	Jurisdiction confirmed before major votes	
2 – Safety Shield	Pre-approved legal & financial advisor list in place	
2 – Safety Shield	Formal Elder guidance process established	
2 – Safety Shield	Financial Literacy for Leaders training completed	
3 – Steering Wheel	80%+ meeting time on Policy & Strategy	
3 – Steering Wheel	Operational issues redirected to Band Manager/CEO	
3 – Steering Wheel	Agendas reflect Strategic Plan goals	
4 – Community Connection	Monthly communication tool active (Newsletter/Portal/Radio)	
4 – Community Connection	Live Database tracking member needs & demographics	
4 – Community Connection	Member satisfaction survey or town hall in last 12 months	
4 – Community Connection	Signed Council Covenant / Code of Conduct in place	

The "3-2-1" Action Plan

After completing this checklist, identify the following:

3 Three Things

Three things we are doing exceptionally well.

2 Two Areas

Two areas where we are at risk (legal / financial / relational).

1 One Commitment

One training or system update (like an Intranet or FAL update) we will complete in the **next 90 days**.

The "3-2-1" Action Plan is not just a reflection exercise — it is a **commitment to your community**. Document your answers, share them with Council, and revisit them at your next annual review.

Building a Strong Nation, One Year at a Time

> "Building a strong Nation starts with a healthy Council table."

This checklist is your "safety net." Use it once a year to ensure your leadership team is **protected, informed, and aligned** with the community's laws and values.

01

Complete the Checklist

Work through all four pillars annually with your full Council.

02

Complete the "3-2-1" Action Plan

Identify strengths, risks, and your one 90-day commitment.

03

Document & Share

Record your findings and communicate outcomes to your community.

04

Revisit Next Year

Return to this checklist annually to track progress and growth.