



Maw-lukutijik **Saqmaq**  
Assembly of Nova Scotia  
**Mi'kmaq Chiefs**

# SOCIAL UPDATE

## FALL 2020

October 23, 2020

## MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD CHIEF



Once again, I am pleased to update you on the progress, we are making on the Mi'kmaq Social Governance Initiative.

These are unprecedented times for our Nation. The right to fish for a moderate livelihood coupled with the covid-19 pandemic bring attention to the importance of food security for our people and why we want to control and manage a new social assistance programs created by us for us. We have waited twenty- one years for an agreement on a moderate livelihood fishery. For social, we have been under the Federal Government's control since 1964. Fifty-six years is long enough.

The new Mi'kmaq focused approach is being called "enhanced social" which basically brings together four components to support our social clients. These components include basic social with modern rates, health, housing, and training opportunities leading to employment. Our new Mi'kmaq focused program means change and should improve the health and wellbeing of our people.

On September 25, 2020, the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs authorized the creation of a new Mi'kmaq public institution that will enable us to govern and manage our new Mi'kmaq enhanced social program. Right now, we are looking for a name and planning the corporate structure to be in place by February 1, 2021. More information will follow on this important step to support self-government.

Finally, I want to thank our Social Development Administrators and the project team who continue to meet monthly to complete the transition work necessary to support our new approach to social.

Saqmaq Leroy Denny  
Lead of Social  
Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs

## COMMON POLICY UPDATE

Social Development Administrators (SDAs) are reviewing changes to the new policy and a final copy should be available for legal review by mid-November 2020. The policy will be shared with Chiefs and Council's, and senior management staff for further discussion and input. This is an important step since it helps define the way we will help the unique needs of social clients living in our communities. The policy will also inform the final design and development of our new client information system.



## MI'KMAQ CLIENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

Membertou Geomatics Solutions has been working closely with our project team and all social development administrators to create a new client information system. This is a case management system designed to serve the unique needs of any client and to streamline financial allocations and reporting. The system is tied directly to the new common policy for all communities and will effectively ensure our administrative system is equal to other governments.

The new Mi'kmaq common social policy and client information system are key foundations for Mi'kmaq self-government. And we can be proud we created them!



## MEETINGS WITH CHIEFS AND COUNCILS

The Social Project Team continues to arrange meetings in community with Chiefs and Council's to discuss the social governance initiative, provide financial review results and to seek advice and input on next steps. Covid-19 precautions and scheduling challenges have delayed some meeting's, but the project team expects to have the second round of collaboration with Council's completed by early December. These sessions are providing incredibly good feedback and unique community perspectives on how social assistance can be reformed.



## TRANSITION TO SELF-GOVERNMENT

In the Social Update Summer Edition, I noted that formal negotiations for fiscal arrangements have not started, our new target date for full implementation is April 1, 2022. However, as an interim measure we are planning to implement the new policy and case management system in at least four Bands starting April 1, 2021 assuming we have support from Bands and the Federal government. This will give us a chance to test and modify the new system while negotiations proceed.



*For additional information please contact:*

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