



# Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

**Head Office**  
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation  
Nelson House, Manitoba  
R0B 1A0  
[www.mkonation.com](http://www.mkonation.com)

**Thompson Sub-Office**  
206-55 Selkirk Avenue  
Thompson, Manitoba  
R8N 0M5

**Winnipeg Sub-Office**  
Suite 1601-275 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3B 2B3

Office of Grand Chief Garrison Settee

June 29, 2020

The Honourable Marc Miller  
Minister of Indigenous Services Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

## Re: Funding required to assist off-reserve First Nations citizens during COVID-19 pandemic

Dear Minister Miller,

As the Grand Chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc., representing First Nations in Northern Manitoba, I am writing to you to follow up on earlier queries I raised regarding funding for off-reserve First Nations citizens in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm attaching the letter I had sent to Stephen Traynor on April 27, 2020, which outlines my questions on this issue.

Many Chiefs have faced criticisms as many MKO First Nations have not been able to provide financial or other assistance to off-reserve members. As you are surely aware, the First Nations have not received funding to assist their off-reserve citizens. Many of them receive requests for assistance but they are not in a position to help.

Both MKO and the Chiefs remain unclear on which urban Indigenous organizations have received federal funding set aside to assist people who live off reserve. We continue to be concerned that First Nations citizens living off reserve, but in rural areas, have not been able to access any assistance. Some Chiefs would have preferred to have received funding for their entire First Nation Band membership rather than just on-reserve citizens. We learned earlier this year that nine organizations in Manitoba received just less than \$1 million. We still have not received any information on how these organizations will or are assisting people living off reserve in Northern Manitoba.

MKO had submitted a proposal for \$5 million in funding, which would have enabled us to assist MKO citizens living off reserve. To date, we have not received any response to this proposal. I am requesting that your office consider funding our proposal. I also am urging your office to commit to transparent communication by sharing a list of the organizations that have received funding to assist people living off reserve. We would like to share this information with MKO citizens so they can reach out to the organizations for assistance.

If you have any questions or to follow up, please contact my assistant Clyde Flett by phone at (204) 390-2702 or by email at [clyde.flett@mkonorth.com](mailto:clyde.flett@mkonorth.com).

Sincerely,

Grand Chief Garrison Settee  
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

Encl: Letter to Stephen Traynor dated April 27, 2020, regarding lack of funding to assist off-reserve citizens in Manitoba

cc. MKO First Nations  
The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Canada