



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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MKO Recognizes Chief David Monias of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation for Assisting with Unplanned Home Birth

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. is issuing this statement to recognize Chief David Monias of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation for his role in assisting with an unplanned home birth in his home community earlier today.

“Being a leader of a First Nation is no easy task. As a former Chief, I know that it’s a role where you are expected to be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The pandemic has amplified the demand that is put upon our Chiefs and I commend all of them for the hard work they have done in responding to the challenges brought upon our communities due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” shared **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**.

“This morning Chief Monias received a phone call to attend an emergency. He was told there was someone giving birth in a washroom. He rushed to get ready and head over to the home where the birth was about to take place,” said Grand Chief Settee. “Chief Monias assisted by making calls for help to ambulances and the nursing station. His hands-on assistance was not needed at the birth as a grandmother was on hand to catch the baby as it made its entrance into the world.”

“I receive many calls for help,” stated **Chief David Monias**. “I am often asked to support families when people are preparing to make their journey onto the spirit world. This is the first time I have been called on to assist with a birth in my community. I am very pleased to share that a healthy baby was born at 10:21 am. This was the best call I have ever received in my role as Chief and I thank the family for reaching out to me in their time of need.”

Women in MKO First Nations do not currently have access to home births and are required to leave their home communities to give birth. While this story has a healthy outcome for the baby and the mother, this is a good reminder that First Nations in Northern Manitoba do not have the same access to birthing facilities or home births as women living in urban communities. MKO is looking at solutions around ensuring that culturally relevant doula services are available for MKO First Nations families to improve the health and safety of pregnant women in MKO First Nations.

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Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba’s North since 1981. The MKO represents more than 72,000 First Nations people.