



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

For immediate release
August 24, 2020

MKO Encourages Fishers to Apply for Fish Harvester Benefit and Grant Program

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. is encouraging fishers from the MKO region to apply for the Government of Canada's Fish Harvester Benefit and Fisher Harvester Grant.

“Since the pandemic began, MKO has been hearing from the leaders and fishers in MKO First Nations about their concerns regarding a loss of income,” shared **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**. “After months of waiting for this type of program, fishers can now apply online for the Fish Harvester Benefit and Fish Harvester Grant.”

The online application for these two programs went live today. Fishers have until September 21, 2020, to apply. Fishers can find the online application here: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/initiatives/fhgbp-ppsp/index-eng.html>

The Fish Harvester Benefit offers income support to self-employed fish harvesters and sharepersons. The benefit covers up to 75 per cent of income losses beyond a 25 per cent threshold for the 2020 tax year when compared to 2018 or 2019. The maximum benefit is \$10,164.

The following **are** eligible for the Fish Harvester Benefit:

- Self-employed commercial fish harvesters (e.g. “owner-operators”, enterprise heads, inshore, licence holders, or hold limited entry commercial licence eligibility (Pacific))
- Self-employed freshwater fish harvesters
- Indigenous harvesters who are designated by their community under a communal commercial fishing licence
- Sharepersons crew

The Fish Harvester Grant is a non-repayable grant to self-employed fish harvesters with a valid commercial fishing licence in 2020. The grant provides a maximum non-repayable support of up to \$10,000, dependent on the level of the fish harvesters' historic fishing revenue in 2018 or 2019. Fishers may receive a lesser grant amount on a sliding scale relative to revenue or actual expenses, with payments under the grant not to exceed actual expenses.

Individuals applying for these programs should work to ensure that they have the following information available:

- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Full name
- Amount of their reported self-employed fishing income for the 2018 or 2019 tax year
- Income Tax Program Account Number if income is reported under a corporation
- Projected estimate of 2020 business expenses related to fishing
- Applicant's full home address

- Phone number
- Email
- Bank details for payments (including branch transit number, institution number, and account number)
- Unique Identifier or Fisher Identification Number (FIN) (this is needed for the harvester grant only)

“It is my hope that these two programs will help the fishers of MKO territory make it through the pandemic with at least some form of financial support,” said Grand Chief Settee. “I want to commend the leaders in **Chemawawin Cree Nation** and **Misipawistik Cree Nation** in working to raise this issue from the outset of the pandemic. I encourage fishers to call Service Canada at 1-833-674-8283 if they need help in applying for the benefits.”

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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.