

COMMUNITY JUSTICE STRENGTHENED IN SAGAMOK*McGuinty Government Increasing Access To Justice For Aboriginal Peoples***NEWS**

August 27, 2008

A new community justice initiative will help to reduce crime and victimization among First Nations people.

Sagamok Anishnawbek will receive approximately \$75,000 per year from Ontario to develop and implement an Aboriginal community justice program. The program will offer pre- and post-charge direct accountability services to adults and youth in the criminal justice system. In appropriate cases, the program will ensure offenders make amends directly to their victims and the community and receive cultural and healing supports that reduce the risk of re-offending.

This initiative supports Ontario's Aboriginal Justice Strategy to improve the criminal justice system's understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit justice systems and perspectives.

In addition, Ontario's [Aboriginal Victims Support Grants Program](#) is helping Aboriginal communities support victims of crime.

QUOTES

"We want to help victims of crime in First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities while providing more effective alternatives for Aboriginal sentencing," said Attorney General Chris Bentley. "We're building a new Aboriginal justice partnership with the Sagamok Anishnawbek to support healthier, safer Aboriginal communities."

"We are improving and increasing access to justice for Ontario's First Nations, Métis and Inuit," said Michael Bryant, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. "Our government is ensuring that the unique cultures of Ontario's First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities are recognized and respected by our justice system."

"The Aboriginal Community Justice programs we support allow local communities to offer culturally appropriate ways to help Aboriginal people deal with the criminal justice system," said Mike Brown, MPP Algoma-Manitoulin.

"With the relationship building and support of the Ontario Government, Sagamok Anishnawbek will work towards its vision to establish a comprehensive justice system that can work hand-in-hand with provincial and Canadian systems, but which provides Sagamok with the means to create and operate a system that is community and culturally appropriate and which meets our real needs," said Sagamok Anishnawbek Chief Paul Eshkawkogan.

"Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation looks forward to creating a partnership with the Government of Ontario to address our justice related issues and challenges," said Brenda Rivers, Sagamok Anishnawbek Director of Operations.

QUICK FACTS

- Aboriginal Community Justice Programs in Ontario are benefiting from an additional \$600,000 in provincial funding and a doubling of overall funding in partnership with the federal government.
- Ontario currently funds [nine programs](#) providing Aboriginal community justice in 19 locations across the province.

LEARN MORE

[Ontario's New Approach to Aboriginal Affairs](#)

Read the Ministry of the Attorney General's [Crown policy manual](#) section on Aboriginal justice

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