



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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Kahnawake Economic Relief Measures (KERM) Fund mandate ends

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 18, Onerahtohkó:wa/May 2022) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to advise the community that the Council of Chiefs passed a Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Directive at Monday's duly-convened Council Meeting that has officially ended the mandate of the Kahnawà:ke Economic Relief Measures (KERM) Fund.

The KERM, as it was commonly known, was created on March 19, 2020, to provide funding to community members impacted by COVID-19 in relation to their employment or the operation, and to support workers and businesses who were most vulnerable to the economic interruption as a result of COVID-19-related emergency measures in the community. Its initial mandate was extended on several occasions due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic.

The KERM was co-developed by the MCK, Tewahtohni'saktha, and the MCK's Client-Based Services (through its Social Assistance department). It was a critical component in the mitigation of the pandemic. Upon its establishment, the original KERM budget was set at \$9 million. Of that, \$4 to \$6 million was set aside for Income Security Funding; \$2.5 million was allocated to Business Interruption Funding, and \$500,000 was designated for Basic Needs/Essentials Grants & Subsidies.

Significantly, Mohawk Online contributed a dividend of \$1 million, followed by a second dividend of \$3 million. Additionally, the Department of Indigenous Services Canada contributed \$3 million.

The total amount of funds allocated to the KERM Fund during its existence (including the Business Interruption Fund) was \$17.5 million, with the total expenditure amounting to just under \$15 million. The unused allocated funds will remain in the MCK's general reserve.

Please note that, as the pandemic remains ongoing, those who do not have coverage for Medical Isolation Benefits due to COVID-19 will still be able to seek minimum income support through Social Assistance.

"We'd like to thank everyone who stepped up to ensure the needs of the community were met during one of the most challenging times in our history," said Ratsénhaienhs Michael Delisle, Jr., who was a member of the KERM board of directors throughout its existence. "We were fortunate to withstand many of the economic hardships better than many other communities. Thanks to Tewahtohni'saktha, Mohawk Online, and, especially, the staff of the Social Assistance department – who put in countless hours to ensure our workers and businesses were able to access benefits to keep them afloat during the pandemic."