



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs  
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 30, 2022

**The AMC is disappointed in Canada's continued restrictions on the incarcerated**

**Treaty One Territory, Manitoba** – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) puts forth this statement to express their disappointment and concern with respect to Canada's approach in preventing inmates from any in-person visits in federal institutions, despite the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions across Canada.

The reason for suspending in-person visits, according to Correctional Services Canada (CSC) is for the "health and safety of staff and inmates." However, this does not reflect the current public health orders in Manitoba. As of March 28, 2022, there were zero active cases of COVID-19 in the Stony Mountain Institution.

"We know that there has always been a double standard regarding how people who are incarcerated are treated, more specifically how First Nations involved in any federal institution are treated. First Nations are highly overrepresented in correctional facilities and often withstand the worst of such government decisions. Throughout the pandemic, we have also witnessed First Nations families involved in the child welfare system that are being prevented from visiting their children," stated Acting Grand Chief Eric Redhead.

"Since the onset of COVID-19, restrictions and public health orders that required isolation from family and friends, have impacted the emotional, spiritual and mental well-being of individuals. However, for incarcerated First Nation citizens, it only escalated these challenges. When the CSC is using 'health and safety' as an excuse to prevent family visits, I question their definition of health and safety. The mental and emotional toll of being physically isolated from their loved ones needs to be considered as this can lead to bigger problems in some instances," stated Acting Grand Chief Redhead.

In Manitoba, approximately 25 km north of Winnipeg, the Stony Mountain Institution provides medium security. For inmates at the Stony Mountain Institution, they are suspended from private family visits, but they are allowed no-contact visits that are conducted behind glass or some other form of physical barriers.

"So much more is needed to support the wellbeing of First Nation citizens that are incarcerated. The only connection with the outside world for many of the inmates is that connection with their families and friends. To continue to prevent this contact with loved ones is inhumane and has negative impacts on one's mental health," concluded Acting Grand Chief Redhead.

**For more information, please contact:**

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**About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineu (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.