

Governance Pilot Project: Sakimay First Nation

Sakimay First Nation's governance project was expansive, delivering several governance products, including a Code of Conduct for Chief and Council. The Code establishes provisions that speak to Council's general and specific responsibilities, nonperformance and breach of duties, and administrative relationships. A description of the Sakimay Chief and Council vision statement provides us with an indication of the numerous obligations that are associated with being a leader in the community. These are reflected in an oath of office, a belief statement and a code of ethics. In each instance, Chief and Council must agree to act in accordance with and uphold the guidelines for leadership. Penalties for breach of duty are specified, including suspended remuneration or reimbursement of expenses for Chief and Council meetings. Provisions for motions of non-confidence also are specified. Motions to proceed with a vote of nonconfidence must be presented at a general membership meeting and must clearly cite reasons for consideration of the motion. A motion to proceed with an expression of non-confidence must be voted upon by the membership. It must receive the support of a majority of those present at the general meeting. If passed, a community referendum would be held to make a final decision. The relationship between Council and the First Nation's administration also is clarified. More specifically, the code makes it clear that Council's role is to provide direction to the First Nation's Director of Operations through policy, and that all administrative and staffing concerns are to be forwarded to the Director of Operations. The Code would come into effect upon the approval of a majority of Sakimay First Nation electors in attendance at a general membership meeting.

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