



For immediate release

## **Métis Nation – Saskatchewan declares state of emergency**

**April 18, 2020** (Saskatoon, SK) - The Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) has declared a state of emergency today in response to the continued spread of COVID-19 within Saskatchewan and the grave threat this poses to the health and well-being of Métis citizens across the province.

To comply with public health orders and support limiting the spread of the virus, MN-S has relied on its strong partnership with the federal government and with private stakeholders. These efforts have allowed the MN-S to obtain the equipment, including masks and sanitizers, needed to protect Métis citizens, work with Métis leadership to slow the spread of the virus within their communities and provide financial support to help citizens who are struggling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MN-S is taking this unprecedented step as it steps up its own interventions to support its citizens to respond to this health emergency, including securing a source of personal protective equipment (PPE), stronger measures to protect remote and northern Métis communities with checkpoints and perimeter controls, and increased financial supports to Métis in large urban areas. The MN-S has and will continue to take pro-active and aggressive actions to support its citizens across the province.

The preventative measures taken by the MN-S alone cannot meet the needs of the province's 75,000 Métis citizens. This state of emergency is required to urge action and further collaboration between all levels of government to respond to the unique challenges facing Métis people in urban centres and remote and northern communities. This includes better communication regarding confirmed COVID-positive cases, further coordination of critical food and other essential services, and further strengthening perimeters to protect communities from unmonitored visitors, including restrictions on non-essential travel in the north and other remote areas. Without stronger measure northern and remote Métis communities are at risk of further spread of the virus without adequate critical medical services or infrastructure.

The MN-S is committed to protecting and advocating for its citizens as this deadly pandemic continues to unfold. Until the essential and lifesaving needs of Métis peoples are properly met, MN-S must declare a province-wide state of emergency on behalf of its citizens.

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