



JOINT RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Tsiothohrkó:wa/January 13, 2022

DUE TO OMICRON VARIANT, IN-HOME WAKES PAUSED FOR 20 DAYS

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe have worked closely with local funeral service providers in both Ontario and New York State to ensure that family members can appropriately and safely celebrate the lives of loved ones who pass away during these unprecedented times. Both organizations and councils place the health and safety of all Akwesasronon as a top priority.

Due to the increase of COVID-19 cases in and around the community and the rate with which the Omicron variant spreads, MCA and the SRMT have made the careful decision to pause in-home wakes in the territory for a period of 20 days, effective today until at least February 1, 2022. The two councils will reassess the COVID-19 situation again at that time.

This decision was made with difficulty as we understand the needs of families in their time of mourning. However, in-home wakes are a known super spreader of the COVID-19 virus, and we must find ways to reduce our community's rates of infection and protect our vulnerable residents.

We send our heartfelt condolences to anyone who has lost a loved one during this difficult time or who may be impacted by this decision.

We are asking the community to continue practicing social distancing, reducing and limiting social gatherings, and wearing a mask regardless of vaccination status.

###