

## COMMUNITY NOTICE

### Cannabis Becomes Legal on October 17, 2018 Next Steps for Nipissing First Nation

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**GARDEN VILLAGE, ON (October 15, 2018)** – On September 27, 2018, Ontario introduced legislation to move forward with private cannabis retail stores. Today, Nipissing First Nation's leadership met with representatives from the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) to have preliminary discussions about the impending legalization of cannabis this Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>.

Although this initial meeting signaled positive indications that Ontario's legislation will include flexibility to accommodate First Nation approaches, it remains unclear how this will be accomplished. So, while we are encouraged that there are First Nations-specific provisions in Ontario legislation that will provide for on-reserve delivery prohibitions; retail store opt-outs and approvals; and agreements between the Attorney General and Band Councils with respect to regulation, licensing and authorization of retail stores on reserves, we are also concerned by the lack of details around how these will be implemented and enforced. In other words, how will NFN's inherent jurisdiction and right to self-government be accommodated?

We need more information about how cannabis will be regulated and how related laws will be enacted and enforced. Further, we need to better understand what choices our nation has as far as working within (or outside of) provincial and/or federal laws. We are currently discussing two possible approaches:

- 1) Enacting our own *Cannabis Law* to complement (or counter-act) federal and/or provincial laws and regulations; and/or
- 2) Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ontario - similar to our Fisheries MOU with Ontario - to formalize our jurisdiction and set the terms for enforcement of cannabis laws and regulations within NFN's jurisdiction.

#### Current Status – Pre-Legalization

The motion passed by NFN Chief and Council on March 20, 2018 prohibiting the issuance of any business licenses for any activities related to the production and/or sales of cannabis remains in place. This is not a permanent ban, but a temporary measures until Canada and Ontario pass laws, *and* until we have consulted with Debendaagziwaad (citizens) about how we should proceed under the new legislation.

The Province of Ontario has yet to release its full framework and implementation plans, therefore it has been difficult for NFN (and most communities) to plan for legalization and to communicate important information about this new legislation that is understandably of great concern for many reasons, including but not limited to: potential health impacts on First Nation communities, particularly for youth; prevention, harm reduction and education; self-regulation, jurisdiction and funding (for effective oversight and compliance with legislation, as well as additional enforcement); and potential economic development opportunities (revenue/taxation models).

October 15, 2018

### **What to Expect – Post-Legalization (after October 17<sup>th</sup>)**

When the provincial cannabis legislation comes into force on Wednesday, October 17, 2018, it will now be legal for individuals 19 years of age and older to possess, cultivate and consume cannabis.

The Ontario Cannabis Retail Corporation (OCRC) will be the exclusive wholesaler and online retailer of cannabis in the province. People will be able to purchase up to 30 grams of cannabis for personal use through the Ontario Cannabis Store. Online orders will be delivered safely and securely. Consumers will be required to verify their age to accept delivery and no packages will be left unattended at the door.

[Ontario's Cannabis legalization website](#) currently states (as of October 15<sup>th</sup>):

*Ontario will have laws in place (after extensive public and stakeholder engagement) about how, where and who can buy and possess cannabis in the province. The government has also introduced legislation that, if passed, would help the province move forward with a tightly regulated private retail model for cannabis that would launch by April 1, 2019.*

### **What's Next? Community Consultation Meetings**

The most important factor in how we move forward under the new framework of legal cannabis will be determined by our Debendaagziwaad (citizens) in a series of consultation meetings that will take place before the end of the year. We will communicate the details of these sessions as soon as they are confirmed.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact:

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### **For More Information:**

Ontario Cannabis Legalization: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/cannabis-legalization>

Federal Cannabis Legalization: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations.html>