



# STATEMENT OF SERVICES



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## IDENTIFICATION OF THE ORGANIZATION

### CREE NATION GOVERNMENT

#### Head Office

2 Lakeshore Road  
Nemaska, Québec  
J0Y 3B0  
Telephone: (819) 673-2600  
Fax: (819) 673-2606

#### Head DOJCS Office

Justice Building  
301 Queen Street, Mistissini, Quebec  
G0W 1C0  
Tel: (418) 923-2661  
Fax: (418) 923-2560

## CREE CAVAC MISSION

The Cree Crime Victims Assistance Centre (“**Cree CAVAC**”) is operated administratively as part of the Cree Nation Government, a legal person established in the public interest under *An Act respecting the Cree Nation Government* (CLQR, chapter G-1-031).

The Cree CAVAC provides front-line services to any victim of a criminal offence and the victim's immediate family and the witnesses to a criminal offence throughout the nine Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee. The Cree CAVAC's assistance is available whether or not the perpetrator of the crime is identified, arrested, prosecuted or found guilty.

The Cree CAVAC works in collaboration with stakeholders from the judicial system, the health and social services network and community organizations. The Cree CAVAC intervenes with victims in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner and in accordance with their needs and their rhythm. It relies on their ability to manage their own lives and to make the decisions that concern them.

## DEFINITION

A victim is any natural person who, due to the commission of a criminal offence against him or her or another person, suffers interference with their physical or mental integrity or material loss, whether or not the perpetrator of the offence is identified, arrested, prosecuted or found guilty.

The definition of a victim for the application of this statement of services includes the victim's immediate family and the witnesses to the criminal offence in question.

## SERVICES OFFERED TO VICTIMS

The Cree CAVAC offers free, confidential front-line services to clients in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner and in collaboration with various legal-system and other partners, including by:

- providing post-trauma, socio-judicial and psychosocial interventions in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner;
- providing support, assistance and accompaniment for clients by, among other things, assisting them in their dealings with the legal system including in relation to victim impact statements, accompaniment to court hearings and similar matters;
- providing information on the rights and recourses of victims of crime;
- directing victims of crime to appropriate, complementary services such as legal, medical, social and community resources that may be available to them;
- coordinating with community services and other regional organizations, as appropriate; and
- implementing public information programs regarding the purpose of the Cree CAVAC and the services it offers, including information materials produced in local Cree dialects and through media campaigns for the same purpose, using regional public radio, the widely-read regional Cree publication "The Nation" and through speaking opportunities at public events in the Cree communities, including local General Assemblies.

Services of the Cree CAVAC are offered primarily in English and in Cree by Cree CAVAC workers and a Cree CAVAC Liaison Officer (Sexual Violence) to cover the nine Cree communities. In 2021, they are supervised by a Manager of Justice Services of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services (**DOJCS**) of the Cree Nation Government. All of the Cree CAVAC workers are Cree and promote services in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner to Cree clientele. This is a critical component for the successful delivery of CAVAC services in Eeyou Istchee.

The services offered are free of charge and strictly confidential.

A victim of a crime may have access to the services of the Cree CAVAC by different means. First, by directly contacting one of the Cree CAVAC offices in Eeyou Istchee (e.g. Cree Northern CAVAC; Cree Central CAVAC; Cree Southern CAVAC) or a Cree CAVAC worker responsible for his or her Cree community to make a request.

In view of the regular mobility of Cree CAVAC workers over the immense geographical territory of Eeyou Istchee, calls that are made to the Cree CAVAC office are forwarded automatically to the cell phones of the relevant Cree CAVAC worker after a certain number of rings. This mechanism helps to ensure that services are made available to prospective and existing clients in a seamless manner to the greatest extent possible.

Moreover, the Cree CAVAC may proactively contact a victim of crime in the context of a police referral service (*currently, in final stages of development*) and information programs. During this contact, the CAVAC worker informs the victim of the services available and the victim then may request access to such services.

These CAVAC services are available, regardless of:

- The nature and seriousness of the criminal offence;
- The time when the criminal offence occurred;
- The victim's sex or gender Identity;
- The victim's age.

## INTERVENTION

Short or medium-term post-traumatic intervention contributes to reduce the consequences and reactions related to victimization.

Ideally, this intervention is offered quickly after the criminal event, that is during a period of acute stress, to stabilize the symptoms experienced by the victim and to reduce the risks associated with the development of a post-traumatic stress disorder.

Psychosocial intervention is offered in the short and medium term. Its purpose is to equip victims to regain power over their lives after a criminal offence.

This intervention also allows support for immediate family members who sometimes experience secondary victimization when in contact with the victim or who need to be sensitized to the impacts of what the victim is experiencing and be able to provide support.

## ACCOMPANIMENT

Accompaniment can be offered throughout the judicial process, even upstream of a victim reporting a crime, until after sentencing.

In this regard, Cree CAVAC workers consistently assist and accompany clients in the judicial process whenever the Itinerant Court holds hearings in Cree communities. These assistance and accompaniment services are primarily provided at the request of clients, and typically relate to assistance and information regarding the judicial process in relation to Itinerant Court hearings.

In addition, Cree CAVAC workers may participate in meetings with the various judicial actors as needed, such as Crown attorneys, so that the victims clearly understand each step.

Cree CAVAC workers also provide and facilitate the delivery of interpretation services for Cree victims, including in their contact with Crown attorneys.

## INFORMATION

Promotional and information activities to raise awareness of Cree CAVAC services include:

- development of pamphlets regarding issues of importance for the Cree communities;
- participation of Cree CAVAC workers in the creation of various video clips, in Cree and in English, to explain their services and raise awareness regarding the support that they provide to victims of crime;
- advertisement on regional Cree radio, in both Cree and English, to promote the services and raise awareness of the Cree CAVAC in Cree territory;
- publication of several advertisements in the regional Cree magazine of Eeyou Istchee, "The Nation", with relevant contact information for Cree CAVAC workers;
- attendance and presentations at local general assemblies in Cree communities, including by means of a CAVAC booth;
- diffusion of contact information for Cree CAVAC workers and links to informational materials relating to CAVACs generally through the website of the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services at <http://www.creejustice.ca/index.php/ca/programs/victim-s-assistance> (the links on this

- *website provide useful information regarding services provided by the CAVAC network generally, and also promote access to information materials produced by other CAVACs in the network);*
- making available promotional materials regarding the services of the Cree CAVAC at Justice facilities in Cree communities.

## REFERRAL TO RESOURCES

After assessment of the needs, the victim may be referred to judicial, medical, social, psychological or other resources.

## SERVICES NOT OFFERED

The Cree CAVAC does not defend rights or otherwise represent persons in Court as a lawyer does.

The Cree CAVAC does not offer legal advice.

## COMMITMENT TO THE VICTIMS

The Cree CAVAC undertakes to offer the following services in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner:

- reliable and courteous services;
- personalized and quality information;
- simplified approaches and clear information, as soon as possible;
- fair, impartial and professional treatment of the requests it receives (*for example, to ensure impartiality in the delivery of services, a Cree CAVAC worker will not accept a request for services and will refer the matter to another Cree CAVAC worker if the victim or the offender is a member of their immediate or extended family or a friend, which is not uncommon in smaller communities*);
- confidential services.

Cree CAVAC workers travel to all Cree communities to ensure the provision of services in each of them, even in the communities where there are no permanent Cree CAVAC office.

## REFUSAL, SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF SERVICES

The Cree CAVAC reserves the right to refuse, suspend or terminate the services offered in certain exceptional situations, and as a last resort, where the victim engages in abusive or other unacceptable behaviour relating to the Cree CAVAC's obligation to offer its employees a safe and secure work environment, free of violence, harassment or any other behaviour of a similar nature, or in cases where the needs of the victim exceed the mandate or expertise of the Cree CAVAC.

At any time, a client may also choose not to receive CAVAC services.

# COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

## SCOPE

The complaint procedure set out in this document applies to all the personnel members of the Cree CAVAC with respect to the delivery of services or the activities of the Cree CAVAC.

The following complaints are excluded from the application of this complaint procedure:

- Complaints concerning judicial processes and challenges of court judgments;
- Complaints not related to the quality or delivery of CAVAC services, including requests for services or support that are outside of the mandate and responsibilities of CAVACs (e.g. requests for legal representation or legal advice: see “Services Not Offered” section, above);
- Complaints relating to any other situation for which possible remedies already exist with other authorities; or
- Complaints that are frivolous, vexatious or made in bad faith (i.e. not serious/not important; intended to irritate; untrue or made for an improper purpose).

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### *Accessibility*

The quality of services is at the core of the concerns of the Cree CAVAC, and it is necessary that any victim be able to formulate a complaint easily regarding the services received.

As such, a victim may use the complaint form set out in **Appendix A** for any complaint relating to the Cree CAVAC services or request a copy of the form from any Cree CAVAC office or Cree CAVAC worker.

The Assistant Director of the DOJCS of the Cree Nation Government (**Assistant Director**) is responsible for the operational management of the Cree CAVAC, and reports to the DOJCS Director.

Victims may require assistance to set out their complaint in writing, including in view of language barriers for persons whose primary language is Cree. The Assistant Director will designate an appropriate person to assist a victim, on request, to set out his or her complaint in writing. If the complaint concerns the Assistant Director, the DOJCS Director will designate an appropriate person to assist the victim for this purpose, on request.

### *Simplicity and Attentiveness*

Any victim must be able to communicate his or her dissatisfaction easily in writing with the assurance that a response stating reasons will be transmitted to him or her in a timely manner, in clear and precise language.

### *Confidentiality and Impartiality*

Every complaint shall be addressed attentively, in a timely manner, confidentially and impartially.

All information and documentation relating to a complaint, including written notes, statements, files and reports, must be stored securely and in a manner that ensures confidentiality<sup>1</sup>.

### *Communication of Dissatisfaction*

A victim who is dissatisfied with the services of the Cree CAVAC is invited to first communicate directly with the person who is the source of the dissatisfaction by informing that person of the details of the situation, ideally in writing.

Most cases of dissatisfaction can be resolved quickly and to everyone's satisfaction in this way.

A Cree CAVAC employee who receives communication of dissatisfaction on the part of a victim must discuss this with his or her immediate supervisor at the Cree CAVAC.

### *Submitting a Complaint*

If the dissatisfaction is still not resolved or if the victim prefers not to contact the concerned Cree CAVAC employee directly, a complaint may be submitted to the Assistant Director using the form set out in **Appendix A**.

Any complaint concerning the Assistant Director and received by him or her **must** be forwarded immediately to the DOJCS Director.

As mentioned in the "Accessibility" section (*above*), on request, the Assistant Director or DOJCS Director will designate an appropriate person to assist a victim to set out his or her complaint in writing.

### *Handling of the Complaint*

An acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint must be sent to the victim generally within 10 business days following the receipt of the complaint by the Assistant Director or the DOJCS Director, as applicable. If the complaint is directed to the DOJCS Director under this complaint procedure, the acknowledgment of receipt mentions it.

The complaint shall be examined and the solutions proposed or implemented will be communicated to the victim in writing within 60 business days following the date of transmission of the acknowledgment of receipt. Any situation that may cause a delay to this process will be communicated to the victim immediately. When communicating to the victim the solutions proposed or implemented, the victim shall be informed that if the Cree CAVAC does not hear back from him or her within 30 days of the transmission of the letter or if the victim indicates that they agree with the solution, the file shall be considered closed and resolved.

In the case of a complaint addressed to the Assistant Director, if the complaint is not resolved to the victim's satisfaction, the victim may ask the Assistant Director to forward his or her dissatisfaction to the DOJCS Director. The DOJCS Director shall examine the complaint, and communicate his or her final decision to the client on the solutions implemented or to be implemented, in writing and with reasons, within 45 business days following the date of the transmission of the initial response to the complaint. This decision is final and binding, and shall not be appealed to any authority.

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<sup>1</sup> Relevant, required information relating to a Cree CAVAC worker may be shared with the Human Resources Department of the Cree Nation Government in an appropriate manner, including for the application of any disciplinary measure.



In the case of a complaint addressed to the DOJCS Director under this procedure, the victim may ask the DOJCS Director to forward his dissatisfaction to the Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government. The Executive Director shall examine the complaint, and communicate his or her final decision to the client on the solutions implemented or to be implemented, in writing with reasons, within 45 business days following the date of the transmission of the initial response to the complaint. This decision is final and binding, and shall not be appealed to any authority.

No later than June 30<sup>th</sup> each year, the Cree CAVAC shall file with the Québec Ministry of Justice a report containing, in summary, the number of complaints filed, the nature of such complaints (by category), the outcome of such complaints (by category) and any changes made as a result.

## CONTACT INFORMATION AND BUSINESS HOURS

### CREE NATION GOVERNMENT

#### Head office

2 Lakeshore Road  
Nemaska, Québec  
J0Y 3B0  
Telephone: (819) 673-2600  
Fax: (819) 673-2606

#### Head DOJCS Office

Justice Building  
301 Queen Street, Mistissini, Quebec  
G0W 1C0  
Tel: (418) 923-2661  
Fax: (418) 923-2560

#### CAVAC Offices

To reach a Cree CAVAC worker, an email can be forwarded to [cavacinfo@cngov.ca](mailto:cavacinfo@cngov.ca) or a person may contact the following toll free number: 1 877 342 2822.

A Cree CAVAC worker is assigned for each Cree community, as follows:

- Chisasibi/Wemindji (CAVAC office based in Chisasibi)
- Mistissini
- Whapmagoostui
- Eastmain/Waskaganish/Nemaska (CAVAC office based in Waskaganish)
- Waswanipi/Ouje-Bougoumou (CAVAC office based in Ouje-Bougoumou)

The business hours of the Cree CAVAC are as follows:

|            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| Sunday:    | Closed           |
| Monday:    | 8:30AM to 4:30PM |
| Tuesday:   | 8:30AM to 4:30PM |
| Wednesday: | 8:30AM to 4:30PM |
| Thursday:  | 8:30AM to 4:30PM |
| Friday:    | 8:30AM to 1:00PM |
| Saturday:  | Closed           |

## DATE OF ADOPTION

October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

**APPENDIX A - COMPLAINT FORM**

**Complaint Form**

To contribute to the continuous improvement of the services of the Cree CAVAC, please do not hesitate to communicate your complaint to us. We undertake to give it all the attention required.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone : \_\_\_\_\_  
Address : \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Which office of the Cree CAVAC is concerned by this complaint?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Which person is concerned by this complaint?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Which service(s) is (or are) concerned by this complaint?**

- Intervention
- Accompaniment
- Intervention
- Information
- Technical Support
- Referral to Resources

**Detailed description of the facts, events, circumstances or actions concerning the complaint.**

**As needed, attach other pages.**

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send form by email to the Assistant Director of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services of the Cree Nation Government: [AssistantDirector@cngov.ca](mailto:AssistantDirector@cngov.ca) .  
If the complaint concerns the Assistant Director, it will be provided to the DOJCS Director.