



Customary Care

and the Parents

Summary: *The Customary Care Program is based on our Anishinaabe cultural belief system. It is a program that recognizes and respects inherent rights of the Anishinaabek. This current model of Customary care will be implemented only if a child is deemed in need of protection, as identified through a Child Welfare Authority or the Courts and the respective First Nation community declares that the child(ren) be cared for under a Customary Care Agreement, through a Band Council Resolution.*

Key points for you and the Customary Care Program:

1. Parental rights are preserved. Throughout this process, the connection between parent and child remain protected in the best interest of the child(ren) and family.
2. Agreements can be short term (6 months) or long term, dependant on circumstances. *Reviews are completed at least annually to re-assess circumstances. This process involves all parties to the agreement, which addresses the well-being of the children and the family.*
3. This is a Voluntary Agreement. Consent can be revoked at any time and by any signatory.
4. Customary Care is a collective community driven approach to caring for our children.
5. A child who is 12 years or older, is also required to sign the agreement.

Commonly asked Questions

How is a customary care placement selected?

- The “helping wheel” includes the Parents, Band Representatives and the involved service providers. Together, a potential Customary Care provider is identified.

Is my child considered “in care”?

- Children are not considered “in care” as per subjected to legislative timeframes. The First Nation Band has exercised the right to look after our own children, by this process court is not required and applications for society/crown/adoption orders need not occur.

Will I still be able to see my child(ren)?

- Yes, the relationship between the parent and child is of greatest importance, a parent may also designate family members to maintain contact, extended family has a vital role to the well-being of a child.

When and who decides the return of my child(ren)?

- The care and maintenance of an agreement is shared between the Parents, Band Representatives and the service providers. Together, they will determine when a child is able to return home, based on the best interest of the child(ren) and family.

For further information, please contact:

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KINA GBEZHGOMI Child and Family Services



Customary Care and the Providers

Summary: *The Customary Care Program is based on our Anishinaabe cultural belief system. It is a program that recognizes and respects inherent rights of the Anishinaabek. This current model of Customary care will be implemented only if a child is deemed in need of protection, as identified through a Child Welfare Authority or the Courts and the respective First Nation community declares that the child(ren) be cared for under a Customary Care Agreement, through a Band Council Resolution.*

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3. This is a Voluntary Agreement. Consent can be revoked at any time and by any signatory.
4. Customary Care is a collective community driven approach to caring for our children.
5. A Customary Care home is eligible to receive the regular or specialized “foster care” rate, training, reimbursements and support provided by Foster Care in accordance to the child’s needs. Funding guidelines require the application of Child Care and Foster Care Licensing Standards.

Commonly Asked Questions

Do I have to complete a Homestudy assessment?

- Yes, as required, this is completed with Kina Gbezhgomi Child & Family Services. If you are an existing licensed foster home, you are able to provide Customary Care placements.

How many workers will be attending my home? and how often?

- Home visits are completed by a Child Care Worker and an Alternative Care Resource Worker as required within departmental standards. Regular visits could occur as often as monthly to a minimum of every ninety days according to the level of support required.

What happens if I terminate or revoke my consent to the agreement?

- Should you revoke your consent to the agreement a circle/case conference will be held and alternative childcare plans may include: a.) selection of another customary care provider/ home. b.) obtain legal custody or another form of permanency c.) default to mainstream practices, legislative timeframes and court proceedings for the child and family.

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Customary Care and the Band Representative

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Going Forward with a Customary Care Agreement...

STEP 1: Selection of a customary care home/provider. Placement can occur immediately with the home study to be completed within 60 days.

STEP 2: A Referral Letter/Form is completed by the Band Representative and/or Chief which is the forwarded to the Customary Care Program. This referral includes the child's name, D.O.B, First Nation, parents name and the identified Providers contact information.

STEP 3: A Customary Care Agreement becomes effective with the "Customary Care Declaration" from the date of the Band Council Resolution.

Commonly Asked Questions

Who pays the customary care home?

- A per diem is payable to the provider by Kina Gbezhgomi's foster care program.

When and who decides the return of the child(ren)?

- The care and maintenance of an agreement is shared between the Parents, Band Representatives and the service providers. Together, they will determine when a child is able to return home, based on the best interest of the child(ren) and family.

What happens if consent to the agreement is terminated or revoked?

- Alternative options may include: a.) selection of another customary care provider/home. b.) obtain legal custody or another form of permanency c.) default to mainstream practices, legislative timeframes and court proceedings for the child and family.

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