

RED LAKE BAND
of CHIPPEWA INDIANS
RED LAKE NATION HEADQUARTERS



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ADVISORY COUNCIL:

7 HEREDITARY CHIEFS

Public Statement

October 16, 2026

Yesterday, the Red Lake Tribal Council held a special meeting to address several important matters surrounding the ongoing federal reassumption of our child protection services.

During this meeting, the Tribal Council took the following actions:

By a unanimous vote of 9-0, the Tribal Council voted to recuse the Tribe's media consultant from all matters pertaining to the reassumption matters only.

By a vote of 8-0-1 (Abstain Secretary May), the Tribal Council reappointed the Tribal Secretary's responsibility to oversee matters related to the reassumption only.

The Tribal Council also engaged in a difficult but necessary discussion regarding the leadership of our Nation. During this discussion, it was advised that the Chairman would be asked to respectfully step down and retire from his position within the next two weeks. He acknowledged that mistakes were made in how important information was not communicated to the Tribal Council, and agreed to step down. We recognize the difficulty of these circumstances and respect his decision to make this announcement on his own terms as we continue working together to move our Nation forward.

We recognize the seriousness of these circumstances, particularly the allegations that have surfaced, the ongoing reassumption, and most importantly, the tragic loss of children's lives. Our hearts and deepest sympathies remain with the families and community members who have experienced unimaginable loss. We must never lose sight of the lives and families at the center of these matters.

As a Tribal Government, we recognize that mistakes have been made and that accountability must be part of our path forward. We are committed to conducting a thorough internal review to establish the facts, continuing the mediation process, and cooperating with the appropriate federal agencies. We also want to acknowledge that there were mistakes in the letter and we ask for patience while we are continuing to gather all facts related to the ongoing appeal. Throughout this process, our highest priorities remain the safety, well-being, and continued services of our children, families, and community members.

We also recognize the dedication of our employees and programs who continue to serve our people during these difficult times. Their cooperation, professionalism, and commitment will be essential as we work toward restoring our services, start the healing journey, and correct and strengthen our systems, processes, and Nation.

Our commitment remains clear; We will continue working diligently to regain our child protection program as quickly and responsibly as possible, while taking the necessary steps to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

We understand that our people have questions, concerns, and frustrations. We share many of those same concerns, and we recognize that rebuilding trust requires more than words. It requires honesty, accountability, meaningful action, and a willingness to do better.

As Anishinaabeg, we have always been guided by our Seven Grandfather Teachings. During difficult times such as these, we must remember the importance of Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility, and Truth. These teachings remind us that leadership requires the courage to acknowledge our shortcomings, the humility to learn from our mistakes, and the wisdom to make decisions that serve the greater good of our people.

Moving forward, we will continue to be as transparent as possible while respecting the privacy of our children and families and the confidentiality requirements surrounding the ongoing appeal, mediation, and investigations.

Finally, we want to encourage all Red Lake Band Members to remember who we are as Anishinaabeg. Our strength has always come from our people, our resilience, and our ability to stand together through difficult times.

There is much healing that needs to take place, and that healing will not happen overnight. But we must begin somewhere, and we must begin together.

Our children, our families, and the future of our Nation deserve nothing less.

Miigwech to our Band Members for your continued patience, understanding, and support as we navigate these difficult times together.

Red Lake Tribal Council