



# St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Chief Ron LaFrance Jr.  
Chief Paul O. Thompson  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Comprehensive Child Support Program Opens at Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe** *Tribe Receives Authority from the Administration for Children and Families*

**Akwesasne** - The Child Support Enforcement Unit of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe received approval from the Administration for Children and Families/Office of Child Support Enforcement (ACF/OCSE) to operate a Comprehensive Child Support Program. The Tribe's Family Support Act was signed into law by Tribal Council on February 4, 2014, after several public meetings, and then submitted to the ACF/OCSE for their approval. The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is the first tribe in New York State to receive this important designation.

Sub-Chief Eric Thompson participated in the planning and development stages of the process which involved the CSEU, Tribal Court and the ACF/OCSE, and shares, "The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Court, through the Family Support Act and the AC/OCSE designation will be able to use the Full Faith and Credit for Child Support Orders Act, to require full faith and credit for Tribal Child Support Orders from not only New York State courts, but for courts all over the country. Although the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe has always had the inherent authority to enforce Tribal Court child support orders on the reservation, this additional federal status, allows the Tribal Child Support Unit to utilize New York State and Federal resources to enforce child support orders both on and off of the reservation. It also allows the Tribal Child Support Enforcement Unit to take into consideration the unique cultural aspects of our families, for example, extended family placement of children and our unique jurisdictional concerns, as well as alternative forms of child support such as child care and non-monetary child support orders."

The SRMT CSEU program is as unique as the Akwesasne territory. "We are anxious to begin to work with the other departments within the Tribe to help both custodial and non-custodial parents who may be struggling to support their children, and find the help and support they need. These referrals may be to an educational program or job training or perhaps a referral for support through a domestic violence program. Whatever the needs are, the SRMT-CSEU will work diligently to ensure the success of the family, and most importantly the future success of our children," states CSEU Director Sandy Rourke.

*Continued*

A part of the Family Support Act involves employers and their obligations to withhold child support from employees pursuant to a valid Child Support Order. The Tribal Child Support Enforcement Unit will be working closely with Tribally licensed businesses, to assist them in understanding their obligations under the new Act. To that end, all Tribally licensed businesses will be receiving a letter explaining these obligations with a sample Income Withholding Order and the SRMT CSEU will also be conducting training for employers to clarify their responsibility. To schedule training, you may contact the SRMT CSEU at 518-358-2272 x410 or email [jennifer.brown@srmt-nsn.gov](mailto:jennifer.brown@srmt-nsn.gov). For further information, please contact the Communications Department at 518-358-2272.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.