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Restorative Justice working in SCO communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANISHINAABE TERRITORY, MB-With a 74% of inmates in Manitoba jails being indigenous and the province having the highest incarceration rate in the country, the Southern Chiefs Organization Justice department is actively working on a restorative justice diversion which is seeing a 94% success rate of cases being diverted from the regular court process in 6 of the communities we represent.

The process of diversion is one that involves coordination and cooperation from Manitoba Justice, law enforcement agencies and includes the successful completion of the restorative justice program by the client. Each client's program is tailored to meet his/her individual needs and is case specific.

"The process itself is community driven," said SCO Justice coordinator Joanna White. "It deals with charges while restoring the balance within a community by which an offender and victim are healed. The offender sees the effects his/her actions have had on others and allows for restitution and the restoration of harmony within our communities."

The communities which currently have restorative justice programs in place are Sagkeeng, Long Plain, Waywayseecappo, Pine Creek and Pinaymootang with Sandy Bay First Nation to be added in the new year.

For further information, please contact Philip Paul-Martin, Communications Officer at (204) 946-1869 or via email at Philip.paulmartin@scoinc.mb.ca.