Yukon government explores National Aboriginal Day as statutory holiday in Yukon

WHITEHORSE—The Yukon government is seeking public input from May 16 to July 16 on the possibility of National Aboriginal Day becoming a statutory holiday in Yukon.

"National Aboriginal Day is a day for all people in Yukon to celebrate and recognize the rich heritage, cultures and achievements of aboriginal peoples in our territory and across the country," Minister of Community Services Currie Dixon said. "Work needs to be done before we can consider whether to recognize it as a new statutory paid holiday in Yukon and this will take some time."

Last December, Minister Dixon submitted an amendment to Motion 1039 that sought public input into the possibility of creating the holiday in law to make June 21 a statutory paid holiday. This followed a petition submitted with more than 500 signatures from members of the public in support of National Aboriginal Day becoming a statutory holiday in Yukon.

"We need to ensure local businesses and organizations, as well as the general public, have an opportunity to provide their feedback on how a new holiday would affect them," Dixon added. "For instance, it will be important to understand what financial effects an additional statutory paid holiday might have on seasonal businesses or organizations operating within a collective agreement."

To make National Aboriginal Day a statutory holiday in Yukon, the Employment Standards Act and other legislation would need to be amended, as would be collective agreements for public service employees.

To participate in the survey, visit www.community.gov.yk.ca/es.html.

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