

Decision Making

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Community or village is the next circle of decision-making. Saqmaq are the sovereign leaders of the community. This is still true today.

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Roles

- Family Members** Families are large extended kin groups that share a matrilineal clan or totem. They form the core of decision-making. Decisions grow from the involvement of families.
- Saqmaw/Saqmaq (pl)** The Saqmaw is the leader of the families that comprise a community or village. Their leadership is the line of sovereignty, today and in the past. This is why there are so many signatories to the treaties and why today the Nation has to work together to respect the sovereignty of each Mi'kmaw community.
- Putu's** The Putu's is the recorder of the Nation, through Mi'kmaw oral history and using wampum to record and to communicate important decisions. They have to be keen listeners with amazing memory.
- District Keptins** Keptins are selected by the Saqmaq from their district. They carry the messages from their districts to the other districts represented at the Santé Mawio'mi. They work together to achieve consensus, but have to bring back any decisions to each Saqmaw, who is the only sovereign for their community.
- Kji-Keptin** The Kji-Keptin (Grand Keptin) supports the Kji-Saqmaw (Grand Chief) with leadership of the Santé Mawio'mi. They often speak on behalf of the Santé Mawio'mi and also carry messages to all the communities regarding issues of the day. They are excellent listeners as well as being gifted in the art of compromise and communication.
- Kji-Saqmaw** The Kji-Saqmaw is the Grand Chief of the Nation and carries forth the messages and decision of the Nation, both inside and outside of Mi'kma'ki. They guide the Nation in decision-making, ensuring the long-view of past experiences is considered and always holding Mi'kmaw values central to decision-making.

