



# SCAGO

Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario

May 10, 2023

Dear City Clerk's Office:

I am writing to introduce myself as the Communications and Marketing Manager for the Sickle Cell Awareness Group of Ontario (SCAGO). As a member organization under the national umbrella of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada, SCAGO was established in 2005 with the aim of improving treatment and care for patients living with Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), educating the community on SCD and sickle cell trait, and support those living with the disease.

SCD is a hereditary genetic disease characterized by the presence of abnormal crescent-shaped red blood cells and affects Canadians of various heritages. It is estimated that over 2000 Ontarians are living with sickle cell disease, and up to one in four from specific cultural backgrounds carries the sickle cell trait.

June 19th is observed as World Sickle Cell Day to encourage global awareness and action to bring awareness through information, activities and concern. The Canadian government passed Bill S-211, enacting June 19th every year as "*National Sickle Cell Awareness Day*" to increase awareness of SCD, the importance of education on SCD and genetic testing, assist in patients realizing there is a community across Ontario, and give hope, inspiration and empowerment to individuals living with sickle cell disease.

We are requesting that York Region declare a Proclamation to recognize World Sickle Cell Day on June 19, 2022, as our missions are aligned with the aim of a proclamation. We believe that improved awareness of SCD will help reduce the number of new births and assist patients in realizing there is a community across Ontario.

Since 2017, we have partnered with various organizations to illuminate their landmarks, including the CN Tower, Exhibition Princess Gates, and Niagara Falls, with proclamations in multiple cities in Ontario. We found that this initiative generated a lot of conversation on social media platforms about the disease and provided a platform for SCD patients to share their experiences with friends and co-workers. As we continue to find new ways to raise awareness and dispel stereotypes surrounding SCD, we push to recognize SCD patients who continue to live with the disease, as well as those who have lost their lives.

We hope that York Region will consider our request to declare a proclamation to recognize World Sickle Day on June 19, 2023. Thank you for taking the time to read this proclamation request. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,

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**Organization's Information**

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