

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

REGISTRY PROCESS

Frequently Asked Questions

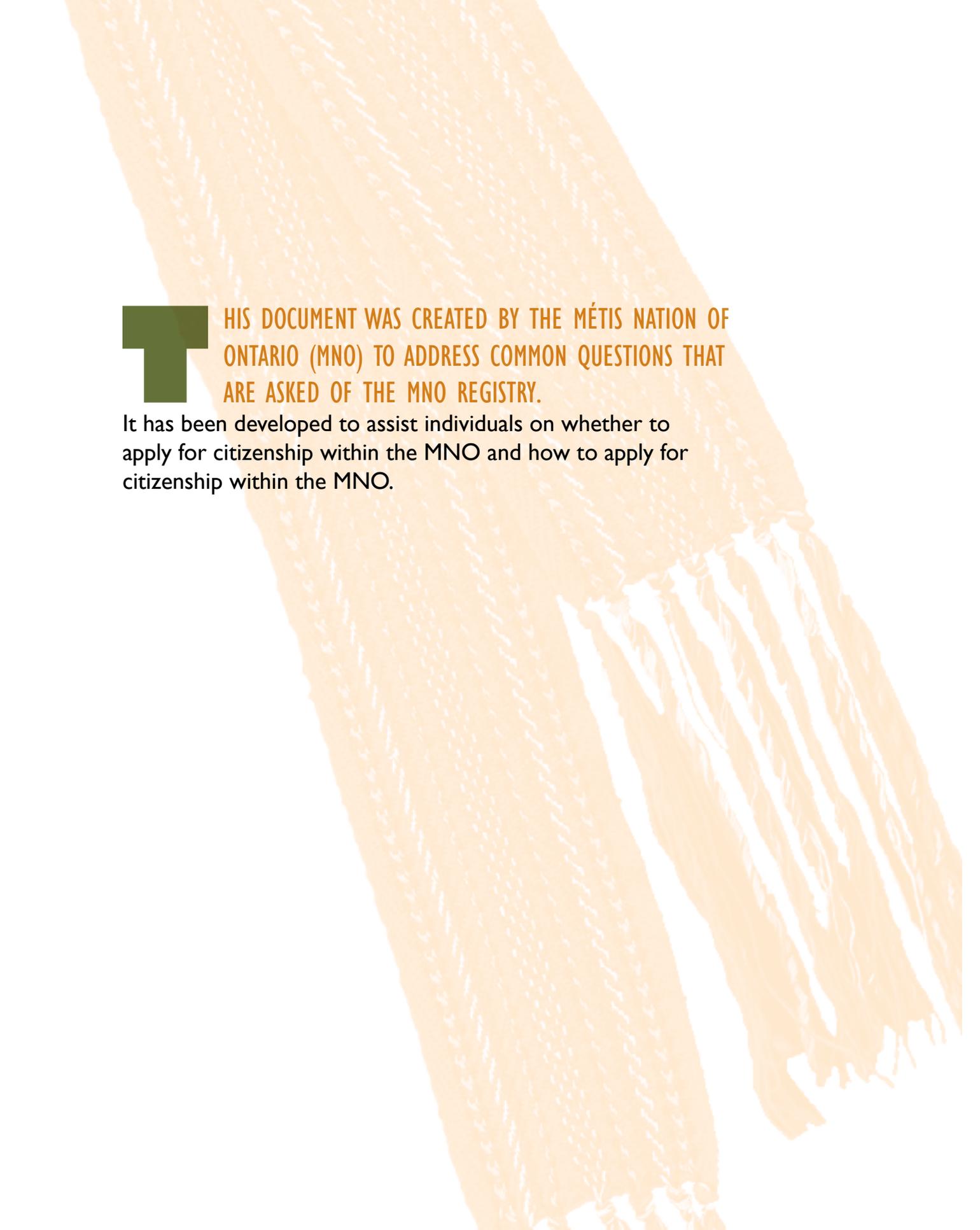


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Frequently Asked Questions

March 2011



T HIS DOCUMENT WAS CREATED BY THE MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO (MNO) TO ADDRESS COMMON QUESTIONS THAT ARE ASKED OF THE MNO REGISTRY.

It has been developed to assist individuals on whether to apply for citizenship within the MNO and how to apply for citizenship within the MNO.

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1. Should I apply for citizenship in the MNO?

This is an extremely personal choice that each individual needs to make for themselves. The MNO encourages all prospective applicants to review the MNO's [Statement of Prime Purpose](#) before applying for citizenship in the MNO in order to determine whether you agree with the MNO's mandate and goals and whether you are actually a part of the distinct Aboriginal people the MNO represents in Ontario (i.e., the Métis Nation).

It is important for prospective applicants to realize that the MNO was not created to represent all individuals who claim to be "Métis". It only represents individuals who are ancestrally connected to the Métis Nation, which has communities throughout much of Ontario and the rest of the Métis Nation Homeland. You must ancestrally connect to the Métis Nation. Simply having mixed First Nation and non-Aboriginal ancestry does not qualify you as a MNO

citizen. You must have Métis ancestry connected to the Métis Nation.

It is also important for prospective applicants to realize applying for citizenship in the MNO will take time and effort because the MNO is not simply a "club" or "association". The MNO Registry does not grant Métis citizenship simply because an individual completes the application forms and submits a fee. It requires reliable and documented proof that an applicant meets the MNO's definition of Métis. You might very well be requested to find and provide additional documentation, if necessary. Self-identification as Métis is not enough to obtain citizenship in the MNO.

After considering these factors, an individual may have a better sense of whether they should apply to the MNO for citizenship.

2. What is the Métis Nation of Ontario's definition of Métis?

The MNO's definition of Métis is the same as that of the Métis National Council's National Definition for Citizenship within the Métis Nation (the "National Definition"). This same National Definition is in place in all of the other Métis Nation governments across the Homeland (i.e., Manitoba Métis Federation, Métis Nation – Saskatchewan,

Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation British Columbia).

Specifically, the MNO Bylaws, state that:
Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

3. Is there a generational cut-off where you would no longer be eligible to receive citizenship with the MNO?

No, there is no generational cut-off for Métis citizenship. The Métis Nation has long rejected using "blood quantum" to determine Métis citizenship and the Métis Nation's position was affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in *R. v. Powley*. All an individual

is required to prove for citizenship is an ancestral connection to a Métis ancestor within the Métis Nation Homeland, along with self-identification as Métis.

4. I have one ancestor who was identified as an Indian in the 1800s and they married a non-Aboriginal person. As such, I am mixed ancestry. Does this qualify me as a Métis citizen?

No. Prior to Canada becoming Canada, distinct Métis communities emerged in Ontario and the rest of the Métis Nation Homeland. These Métis communities were not simply groups of mixed ancestry people. They developed their own distinct Métis language, culture and traditions, as a part of the larger Métis Nation. The MNO represents the descendants of these distinct

Métis communities that are a part of the larger Métis Nation. It does not represent individuals who simply have mixed First Nation and non-Aboriginal ancestry. It represents individuals who have Métis ancestry. For additional information on what is required to ancestrally connect to the Métis Nation please review the MNO's [Interim Registry Policy](#).

5. I heard that the Métis Nation Homeland excludes Ontario and I have to ancestrally connect to Métis in the Prairies to become a Métis citizen. Is that true?

Absolutely not! Distinct Métis communities emerged in Ontario and these communities were a part of the historic Métis Nation and continue to be a part of the Métis Nation today. For example, some of the more well-known historic Métis communities that emerged in Ontario, include, inter-related settlements established around the Great Lakes and along the trade and river routes of the province. Just some of the historic settlements along the Great Lakes include Kincardine, Owen Sound, Penetanguishene/Midland, Lafontaine, Parry Sound, Sault Ste. Marie, Michipicoten, Terrace Bay, Thunder Bay, etc.. Similar settlements emerged along Ontario's river and lake systems, including, Mattawa, North Bay, Sudbury, Chapleau, Nipigon, Atikokan, Fort Frances, Dryden, Kenora, etc. Métis who were originally from Moose Factory moved into the James Bay and Temiscamigue regions and settled in location such as Cochrane, Timmins, NewLiskeard, Temiskaming, etc. As well, other unique settlements emerged throughout the province as a result of historic

circumstances in Ontario (i.e., Burleigh Falls, etc.). These are just but a few of the many settlements that form parts of historic and contemporary regional rights-bearing Métis communities throughout Ontario.¹ Moreover, regional Métis communities in Ontario are inextricably connected to each other and the larger Métis Nation. Individuals who ancestrally connect to these Métis settlements and communities meet the requirements of the National Definition and the MNO definition for Métis citizenship.

¹ It is important to note that the settlements listed in this paragraph are not an exhaustive list of locations of historic Métis settlements or communities in Ontario. They have only been provided to give applicants a general understanding of some of the locations of historic Métis communities in the province. The MNO continues to undertake research to better understand and document Métis history in Ontario, but applicants have increasingly asked for some guidance in order to focus their genealogical research.

6. Should I just be looking in the historic records for someone being identified as “Métis”?

Not necessarily. *Métis ancestors are identified in the historic record in various ways.* For example, by and large in Ontario, the term Métis is not seen in the historic record. For the most part, the term “Halfbreed” is used and may be modified in various ways (i.e. French Breed, Other Breed, English Breed, Breed, etc.). As well, other terms in the historic record can be proof of a historic Métis ancestor too (i.e., chicot, bois-brule, northmen, Canadian

inhabitant, half caste, Indian voyager, etc.). In many cases the context of the record, the timeframe, kinship connections, and location of where the Métis ancestor was living may also need to be factored into a determination. For assistance on what to look for in the historic record for your genealogy please review [Researching Your Métis Ancestors in Ontario: Standards and Sources](#).

7. What do I need to apply?

- ∞ A completed, signed and dated [Citizenship Application](#) and Checklist form.
- ∞ A [Genealogical Chart](#) that starts with yourself and ends with your Métis ancestor.
- ∞ Supporting documents that link every generation and confirms who your Métis ancestor is (Each document must name both child and parents in order to confirm the lineage.)
- ∞ A recent photograph (with your name printed on the back as well as dated)
- ∞ A copy of your photo identification (that indicates an Ontario residency)
- ∞ A copy of your Baptism or Long-Form Birth Certificate which names your parents.
- ∞ A non-refundable \$30 administrative processing fee (cheque or money order made payable to The Métis Nation of Ontario)

8. How do I get my baptism certificate?

Contact the church where you were baptised and request a copy. If you cannot find one there, contact the area diocese and they can direct you.

There may be a modest fee for a copy.

9. What is a Long Form Birth Certificate and how do I get one?

Your Long-Form Birth Certificate is a certified copy of your birth registration with detailed information that identifies the names of your parents. You can order a copy from the [Office of Vital Statics](#).

10. Does my MNO citizenship card expire?

No, your card does not expire. However, if you move, you should update your contact information with the MNO Registry. Individuals may also want to update their photos periodically in order to keep their cards current with their appearance. If you lose your card, a replacement card can also be issued.

11. What is acceptable Photo I.D. (Identification)?

Government issued photo identification such as a **Drivers License or Health Card**. Also, anything that has your recent photo, full name and can be used to identify you as a resident in Ontario.

If the applicant (child, youth or adult) does not have acceptable photo identification, you can complete a [Sworn Statement](#). Contact the Registry Office to request a Sworn Statement form.

12. What is a genealogical chart (family tree)?

This is a diagram chart that links you to your parents, and your parents to your ancestors. This chart chronologically identifies and links you to your Métis ancestor. Please complete the chart with as much relevant information as you have. It is important to stress that a genealogical chart is not all that is required. You must provide documented proof that

each generation in your chart links to the next. Simply completing a genealogical chart with no proof that shows how one generation links to the next will not be sufficient. However, a genealogical chart is usually helpful in organizing and mapping out your lineage (i.e., family tree). You may obtain a copy the [Genealogical Chart](#) online.

13. What is lineage?

Lineage is the kinship relation between you and your ancestors. This is commonly known as your Family Tree.

14. Why do I have to fill out a genealogical chart?

Each applicant is required to complete his/her own chart, beginning with themselves. This chart ensures accuracy in your family tree and properly identifies your Métis ancestors. The genealogical chart and supporting documents are used to verify your lineage and as such, enable the MNO Registry to verify your

eligibility for citizenship. As noted above, a genealogical chart is not all that is required. You must provide documented proof that each generation in your chart links to the next. Simply completing a genealogical chart with no proof that shows how one generation links to the next will not be sufficient.

15. Will the MNO registry help me with my genealogy and family research?

Unfortunately, at this time, the MNO does not have the staff or resources available to aide with an applicant's research. However, we

can direct you to available resources and encourage you to visit the [Métis Nation of Ontario's Resources for Applicants Page](#).

16. Where can I go for help to do my genealogy research and get the documents that I need?

Please visit the [Métis Nation of Ontario's Resources for Applicants Page](#). There is information on our site designed to assist you with your research.

17. Why do I have to sign the Oath of Allegiance?

As discussed above, the MNO was not created to represent all individuals who claim to be Métis. In 1993, the MNO raised the Métis Nation's flag in Ontario and asked individuals who support the vision set out in the [Statement of Prime Purpose](#) to join. It was formed to represent the citizens of the Métis Nation and its communities in Ontario. The MNO's successes over the years flow from its steadfast commitment to the Statement of Prime Purpose.

Signing this oath verifies that you are aware and agree to the Métis Nation of Ontario's Statement of Prime Purpose and its mandate, rights-based agenda and goals. If the MNO's Statement of Prime Purpose does not reflect your identity as Métis or your aspirations, you may not want to join

the MNO. By signing the oath, individuals need to personally reflect on whether joining the MNO is something that feels right for them.

As well, signing the oath commits an individual to work in support of the MNO – not against it. If you hold a card with any other Aboriginal organization you would be in conflict with the MNO's bylaws, regulations and policies. By signing the oath you swear that you are not a registered Indian or a member of any other Aboriginal organization. It also indicates your acknowledgement that if you ever in the future become a registered Indian or a member of any other Aboriginal organization, you would remove yourself from the MNO Registry or could be removed by the MNO.

18. How long does it take to get a Citizenship card?

If you have provided all of the initial requirements and supporting documents that links you to a Métis ancestor, the average time to process a completed application and to create your citizenship card is currently about one year. Again, this is applicable *ONLY IF ALL OF YOUR DOCUMENTATION*

HAS BEEN PROVIDED. If upon a review of your application it becomes apparent that documentation is missing, this could be prolonged. The Registry staff is working diligently to decrease this wait time, but the MNO Registry has limited staff and resources.

19. If one of my family members already has his/her MNO Citizenship card will it still take months for my application to be processed?

Yes. As we receive so many applications, all submissions are reviewed on a “first-come-first-served” basis. It would not be fair to other applicants if we put your application at the front of the line. The MNO Registry has recently hired new staff to assist with the application process, but even with these additional staff the MNO Registry does not have all the capacity it requires to process the number of applications that are in the

system and continue to arrive each week.

If you would like to use a relative’s file to access their documentation in order to complete your application, we require a letter of permission from them granting you access to their file or a signed and dated Permission to Access form. This does not, however, exempt you from providing a genealogical chart and all initial requirements.

20. Can I get an update on one of my relative’s file?

No. Due to the Canadian privacy legislation, the MNO cannot give that information to anyone except the original applicant unless a letter of permission is given to the MNO. The letter must state that we may discuss the

applicant’s file with you and be signed and dated by the applicant.

21. Can I transfer my citizenship from one province to another?

At this time, the Métis Nation registries across the Métis Nation Homeland do not have a standard procedure for individuals who move between provinces. Therefore, you will have to submit a full application within

the province in which you live. However, it would be helpful if you could request your file from the organization you were previously registered with to provide to the Registry.

22. How do I get a Replacement Card?

If you have lost your card, changed your name, or your appearance has changed since your initial card was issued, you can access the [Request for](#)

[Replacement Card](#) form online, or contact our registry and request this document and we will be happy to mail one out to you.

23. I've moved. What do I do?

Complete a [Change of Address Form](#) to update your information.

24. I have had legal name change. What do I do?

You need to complete a [Request for Replacement Card](#) form and provide a document that proves your name change.

Example: copy of your marriage certificate and/or updated photo identification with your new legal name.

25. When can I apply for a harvest certificate?

If you qualify for a harvester's certificate, you can apply *AFTER* you have received your MNO Citizenship Card.

For more information go to our [Harvesting](#) Webpage.

26. What are my rights as a Harvester?

For any information on our Harvesting rights refer to our [Harvesting](#) Webpage or contact your regional [Captain of the Hunt](#).

27. How can I get involved with the MNO, meet other Métis and attend events in my community?

Watch our website for upcoming events, read the [Métis Voyageur](#), visit your local MNO Office, attend community council meetings, or contact the [Métis Community Council](#) closest to you.

28. If I cannot be verified as a MNO citizen, will my \$30.00 application fee be refunded?

No. This is not a membership or club fee. The \$30.00 fee is an administration processing fee that assists to cover some of the costs for our supplies and staff to review, process and

attempt to verify your Métis citizenship application. It is payable regardless of whether an application is ultimately approved for Métis citizenship.

29. What does my card entitle me to?

- ∞ Proof of citizenship within the Métis Nation,
- ∞ Access to all MNO programs and services, including, training, education, housing, economic development, health, etc.
- ∞ Ability to participate in all MNO related activities (i.e., community meetings, cultural events, etc.),
- ∞ Voting privileges in MNO elections and Annual General Assemblies,
- ∞ Ability to run and hold office on MNO governance structures (i.e., MNO Community Councils, Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario, etc.)
- ∞ Allows you to apply for a MNO Harvesters Card,
- ∞ Source of identification as proof of Métis Nation ancestry,
- ∞ Put on MNO mailing list for the Métis Voyageur newspaper and other MNO updates,

30. Can a MNO citizenship card be used for tax exemption?

No. Métis are not presently tax exempt from paying provincial or federal taxes. You should not attempt to use a MNO citizenship card for

this purpose. If you do, you will be personally liable for any legal consequences that flow from that misuse.

31. What is a valid supporting document?

Valid documents are any official civic or church records, such as birth, baptism, marriage or death records, census records, Indian Affairs record pertaining to Métis, fur trade records (i.e., Hudson Bay Company

journals), early military service records or Métis land scrip (Western Canada). For more information, please consult [Researching Your Métis Ancestors in Ontario: Standards and Sources](#) and our Genealogy Page.

32. How can I get an application form?

A pplication forms are available on our website or by contacting the Registry Office:

Toll Free: 1-855-798-1006
Ottawa region: 613-798-1006

the Métis
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