

# MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### MNO Registry and Self-Government Readiness Process (RSRP)

Q: Is this process meant to remove MNO citizenship from individuals?

A: No. This is about preparing the MNO for self-government negotiations, solidifying the integrity of the MNO Registry and demonstrating what MNO has always believed—that all of our citizens are Métis rights holders.

Q: Why is the MNO doing this?

A: The credibility of the MNO in future self-government and Métis rights negotiations is tied to its ability to say that it represents Métis rights-holders. This process will validate what the MNO has always believed—that all of our citizens are Métis rights holders.

Q: I thought all MNO citizens were “grandfathered”. Why is MNO doing this?

A: While it was previously decided to “grandfather” all MNO citizens who may have incomplete files (i.e. to not require them at that time to complete their files), this did not make these individual Métis rights-holders. In *Powley*, the Supreme Court of Canada made it very clear that “no matter how a contemporary community defines membership, only those members with a demonstrable ancestral connection to the historic community can claim a s. 35 right.” This process will verify that individuals who receive new MNO Citizenship Cards are Métis rights-holders.

Q: Will this process remove MNO citizens who do not ancestrally connect to the Red River Settlement or Métis communities in western Canada?

A: No. In order to be a MNO citizen, you can ancestrally connect to a historic Métis community in Ontario or to a historic Métis community in western Canada. In August 2017, the Ontario Government recognized with the MNO that there are, at a minimum, seven historic rights-bearing Métis communities throughout Ontario that meet the requirements of the *Powley* test. MNO citizens—who will be identified as Métis rights-holders—can ancestrally connect to one of those seven historic Métis communities in Ontario or to the Métis Nation in western Canada.



Q: Can I still make an application to the MNO Registry for Citizenship or a Harvester Card while this process is ongoing?

A: Yes, the MNO Registry continues to process cards in accordance with the MNO Registry Policy as well as the MNO Harvesters Card Policy. The processing of pending applications remains the utmost priority.

Q: Am I still able to access MNO programs and services during this process?

A: Yes, there will be no impact on your ability to access MNO programs and services that are available to all MNO citizens and/or self-identifying Métis (who do not have a MNO Citizenship Card) during the review process.

Q: Is there a cost to me to moving forward with getting the new MNO Citizenship Card?

A: No, there will no charge for this process. If your citizenship file is complete, you will automatically receive a new MNO Citizenship Card in the mail—at no cost to you. If you file is incomplete in some way, you will receive a letter identifying what is needed. The MNO will provide as much assistance as possible to assist you in completing your citizenship file in order to issue a new MNO Citizenship Card.

Q: If I currently have a valid MNO Harvesters Card, will I automatically get a new MNO Citizenship Card.

A: Yes. All of the existing 1,450 MNO Harvester Card holders have already been validated as being Métis rights-holders. As soon as the new MNO Citizenship Cards are designed, these will be issued to the 1,450 valid MNO Harvesters Card holders as well as other MNO citizens who have completed files.

Q: Are there other benefits to issuing new MNO Citizenship Cards?

A: Yes, the new card is expected to include added security features to ensure it remains current, confidential and can be utilized as recognized government photo identification. Further, the card will provide a MNO citizen with the confidence that they have been verified as a Métis rights-holder. The new cards can also be produced in a manner to specify the MNO citizen's historic rights bearing Metis community, which will provide greater certainty in ongoing Crown

consultation and accommodation negotiations. And, it is anticipated that through self-government negotiations new programs and services will be made available.

Q: Are other Métis governments doing this?

A: Yes. Following Powley, the Métis Nation of Alberta undertook a process where all of its existing members needed to re-register to obtain new cards. In 2013, it cancelled its old cards and only now recognizes the new cards that identify Métis rights-holders. The Manitoba Metis Federation has a membership list that includes 50,000+ individuals, but has now re-registered 22,000 individuals with new cards that identify these individuals as Métis rights-holders.