



MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO - FACT SHEET

Registry and Self-Government Readiness Project: The “RSRP” or “Registry Review”

Background & Overview

- In [October 2017](#), the Métis Nation of Ontario (“MNO”) launched an independent third-party review of all its MNO Registry citizenship files, known as the Registry and Self-Government Readiness Process (“RSRP” or “Registry Review”), in order to prepare for the issuance of new MNO citizenship cards that verify new card-holders as members of a rights-bearing Métis community and Métis rights-holders under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.
- The Registry Review was undertaken as a critical step to prepare the MNO for formal self-government and Métis rights negotiations beginning with Canada and Ontario.
- It has long been the MNO’s position that all citizens who meet the citizenship criteria are Métis rights-holders – not just those who hold MNO Harvester Cards. However, due to changes to the MNO citizenship definition over time and, in the early years, limited funding and capacity, it was understood that some MNO citizenship files may not meet the MNO’s current citizenship requirements (as outlined in the MNO Bylaws and the MNO Registry Policy). Building off of the momentum of several years of previous work to refine and strengthen the MNO registry system over the past 28 years, the Registry Review was an effort to identify and address these outstanding legacy issues head on, in a transparent and accountable manner.
- As a result of the Registry Review, the MNO now has further clarity around: *who* exactly the MNO represents (i.e., verified section 35 rights-holders) and *where* those citizens ancestrally connect to (i.e., all seven of the Historic Métis Communities in Ontario, as well as to other parts of the Historic Métis Nation Homeland west of Ontario). The results of the review also further confirm the credibility, reliability, and legitimacy of the MNO’s centralized Métis citizenship registry system as an objectively-verifiable registration system based on the application of stringent criteria.

The Registry Review Process

- The Registry Review was conducted by Know History, an independent consulting firm retained by the MNO, and took over three years to complete. The Registry Review process

was officially completed on January 31, 2021 and [Know History's final report](#) was issued in June 2021 (the "Final Report").

- The Registry Review involved an independent review of the MNO's nearly 24,000 citizenship files to determine whether they met the current requirements for MNO citizenship as set out in the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy. These requirements align with the National Definition of Métis approved by the Métis governments that form the Métis National Council, the Supreme Court of Canada's direction in *R v Powley* ("*Powley*") as well as the MNO's assertions with respect to the Métis citizens and communities it represents in Ontario. (see MNO Fact Sheets on [Powley](#) and the [National Definition](#)).
- Throughout the course of the review, MNO provided regular updates on the progress of the Registry Review, including: memos to all citizens, updates at MNO Annual General Assemblies, articles in the Métis Voyageur newspaper, and maintaining a dedicated website with readily-available materials that all citizens can access..
- In order to show leadership in the review and provide MNO citizens with certainty that they are being represented by Métis rights-holders at the regional and provincial levels, the Registry Review started with a review of all elected leadership's citizenship files, beginning with the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario ("PCMNO").
- During the review, citizenship files were designated as either: "Complete" (meaning they contained all the documents needed to demonstrate a genealogical connection to a Métis Ancestor and a signed MNO Oath of Allegiance), "Missing Documentation" (meaning they included documented proof of a Métis Ancestor but needed additional documentation to support genealogical connection(s) or, in some cases, were only missing a signed MNO Oath of Allegiance), or "Incomplete" (meaning they lacked a historic document of any records evidencing an ancestral connection to a Métis ancestor as defined by the MNO Registry Policy).
- The assessment results were communicated to each MNO citizen in writing and, consistent with the direction in the PCMNO direction and the MNO's governing documents, no citizen had their MNO citizenship terminated as a result of the Registry Review process.

Citizens with "Complete" files were issued a new MNO citizenship card and were also provided with information about which of the seven identified Historic Métis Communities in Ontario they connect to, or where their Métis Ancestor was documented in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland:

- Citizens who were notified that their files are "Missing Documentation" or "Incomplete" were provided with notice of the documentation needed to complete their files, information on how to submit such documentation for re-assessment, and contact

information and resources to assist citizens with any questions. Re-assessment requests are ongoing.

Sample of new MNO citizenship card



Key Findings & Results

Of the 23,978 MNO citizenship files reviewed during the Registry Review, the final report concluded that:

- **A total of 71% of all MNO citizenship files (17,014 MNO citizens) were confirmed as having “Complete” citizenship files** (i.e., their file included all the necessary documentation required to meet the MNO’s current definition for citizenship and the MNO Registry Policy).
- Another 1.4% of MNO citizenship files (330 MNO citizens) could “Complete” their file if they signed the MNO’s required Oath of Allegiance, and another 4.7% (1,132 MNO citizens) could “Complete” their file simply by providing missing genealogical documents. **If these outstanding requirements were met, a total of 77% of MNO citizenship files (18,476 MNO citizens) would be confirmed as “Complete”.**
- A total of 22.5% of current MNO citizenship files (5,402 MNO citizens) were determined to have “Incomplete” files. In addition, as a part of the review, 1,061 MNO citizens’ files were determined to be inactive because of death, suspension, or withdrawal and were removed from the MNO Registry. At the end of the review, less than 1% of files reviewed remained “In Process”.
- Of the MNO citizenship files that are “Complete” (17,014 MNO citizens), based on the primary documents provided to the MNO Registry, these files demonstrate the following:
 - A total of 23% of the MNO’s citizenship (3,904 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to Métis communities in western Canada through Métis Scrip (2,470 MNO citizens),

- Métis land grants issued under the *Manitoba Act, 1870* (768 MNO citizens), or other historical documentation from 1901 or earlier (666 MNO citizens).
- A total of 9% of the MNO's citizenship (1,522 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the historic Métis community in Northwestern Ontario, with 884 MNO citizens being descendants of the "Halfbreeds of Rainy Lake and River" who collectively adhered as a Métis community to Treaty 3 in 1875 and another 638 MNO citizens ancestrally connecting to other historic Métis families and settlements in the region.
 - A total of 49% of the MNO's citizenship (8,332 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the Great Lakes Métis community that was recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Powley*. This community includes well-known Métis populations and settlements at Fort William (present day Thunder Bay), Michipicoten, Sault Ste. Marie, Killarney, and Georgian Bay/Penetanguishene.
 - A total of 6% of the MNO's citizenship (1,045 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the historic Métis community in the Abitibi-Temiscamingue region.
 - A total of 13% of the MNO's citizenship (2,211 MNO citizens) ancestrally connect to the historic Métis community in the Mattawa region.
- Collectively, the MNO's citizens with "Complete" files can be broken down as having a Métis Ancestor from Western Canada (23%), Northwestern Ontario (9%), the Upper Great Lakes Region (49%), and Northeastern Ontario (19%).
 - In addition, many of the MNO's citizens with "Complete" files have Métis Ancestors from two or more Métis communities within Ontario. For example, of the 17,014 MNO citizens with "Complete" citizenship files, 13,110 trace to one Ontario Métis community, with approximately 39% (5,082 MNO citizens) of that number ancestrally connecting to two or more historic Métis communities in Ontario.
 - Additional research will be undertaken in the future in order to assess further ancestral connections between historic Métis communities in Ontario as well as with those in Western Canada.

The Way Forward: Next Steps

On May 28, 2021, the PCMNO passed Resolution PC210528-09 approving of and directing the MNO administration to implement the following next steps related to the Registry Review:

1. Develop and release a series of communication tools in order to engage with MNO citizens on the outcomes of the Registry Review;
2. Undertake province-wide consultation with MNO citizens through a series of virtual Town Hall meetings open to all MNO citizens during the summer of 2021;

3. Develop a “What We Heard” report based on the province-wide consultations to be publicly released following review and consideration by the PCMNO; and
4. Based on the “What We Heard” report, look towards a province-wide vote (in Fall/Winter 2021) and/or Special Assembly on MNO citizenship (in Fall/Winter 2021 or early 2022, subject to public health and safety requirements) to guide further decision-making on next steps related to the Registry Review final report and/or potential amendments needed to the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy.