

# MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS FAQ

### **We are in a pandemic. How will this affect Community Council elections?**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, conducting Community Council Elections has been modified. Until it is determined to be safe, in-person Community Council Elections will not be conducted. Processes have been put in place for citizens to cast their votes either online or over the telephone.

### **Where can I find the rules surrounding Community Council elections?**

Community Council elections are governed by the [MNO Electoral Code: Part B](#), last updated February 2002.

Elections of the Métis Nation of Ontario are also governed by the [MNO Electoral Code: Part A](#). The most recent version of this Code is dated August 24, 2019, reflecting amendments made at the 2019MNO AGA.

MNO elections are also governed by the [Métis Nation of Ontario Policy #2019-003: Policy On Electronic and Telephone Voting](#) (August 2019).

Finally, *MNO Electoral Code: Part B* states that the PCMNO may take any steps necessary to ensure the good conduct of Community Council elections. At their meeting December 5 – 6, 2020, PCMNO resolved three things by consensus related to Community Council elections:

1. That electronic and telephone voting are acceptable methods of voting for Community Council elections in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.
2. Waiving the requirements to post election announcements, voters lists and candidate lists in Community Council offices (until such time as PCMNO directs or the Code is amended by Special Resolution at an Annual General Assembly).
3. And waiving the requirement for signatures on nomination papers (until such time as PCMNO directs or the Code is amended by Special Resolution at an Annual General Assembly).

### **What has been arranged to facilitate online and telephone elections?**

To support Community Council elections, MNO has engaged OneFeather, an independent company that will execute the online and telephone voting for MNO's Community Council elections.

OneFeather is an independent, Indigenous-owned election services company. OneFeather has more than 20 years of elections management experience and is a leader in Indigenous election administration and a pioneer of electoral technology and best practices.

OneFeather has provided an Election Officer dedicated to supporting all MNO Community Council elections. This Election Officer has sworn an Oath of Office to follow all the rules that govern MNO elections (including MNO Electoral Code Part B), privacy and confidentiality. OneFeather is the partner that provided voting support to MNO for the 2020 PCMNO elections.

### **How will I be able to vote?**

Electors in Community Council elections will vote online or by telephone.

Register or update your information with OneFeather – for online **and** telephone voting. Please do this in advance. As per the Electoral Code, all MNO Citizens must accept the MNO's Oath of Allegiance to cast a ballot.

### **Online Voting:**

<https://www.onefeather.ca/nations/mno>

### **Telephone Voting and Support:**

1-855-923-3006 (Toll Free)

### **How long will the polls be open?**

For Community Council elections, it has been arranged with OneFeather that online voting will be available up to 7 full days for electors to cast ballots (24 hrs per day). There will be a different link for each Council, sent to every elector by mail.



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The MNO has arranged for two opportunities for electors to cast a ballot by telephone: 4 hours (5 pm-9 pm) on the first day of voting and an additional 4 hours (5 pm-9 pm) on the last day of the Community Council's voting.

### **How does telephone voting work?**

To facilitate secure and private telephone voting for Citizens, a dedicated OneFeather Election Officer will staff the telephone. This process is different from the PCMNO election when an automated answering machine collected telephone votes. The following is how telephone voting will work in Community Council elections:

Citizens can call the OneFeather Election Officer at **1-855-923-3006** between the hours of 5:00 pm and 9:00 pm on the first and last day of the online voting period;

When calling the toll-free number, voters may get an answering machine (the OneFeather Election Officer may be assisting other voters at the time of your call). If you get an answering machine, you should leave your name, and phone number and the OneFeather Election Officer will return your call.

The OneFeather Election Officer will verify their identity and have the elector acknowledge the MNO's Oath of Allegiance (required in the Electoral Code), and also declare the following:

*I, [Citizen Name] permit OneFeather to be marking and casting a ballot as directed by the [Citizen Name] and that the [Citizen Name] explicitly agrees and consents to this process and are doing so of their own free will without compulsion.*

Having completed the oath and declaration, Citizens will advise the Election Officer of their choice on the Ballot. The OneFeather Election Officer will mark a ballot, and the Ballot will be placed into a secure Ballot box;

The Citizen will be noted as having voted by telephone – electors can't vote both by phone and online.

At the close of all polls (telephone and online), OneFeather tallies all ballots and documents the outcome. At the end of all voting in a Community Council election, the OneFeather Election Officer submits a complete record of voting to the Métis Nation of Ontario and returns all paper ballots (telephone) to the Métis Nation of Ontario's Electoral Officer.

### **How will I find out about my Community Council's election?**

Every MNO household will receive a package by mail with details about their Community Council election. The mail-out will include information on how to run for a position, how to vote, and who to contact with questions or concerns.

Please make sure that the MNO Registry has your current mailing address! If you are running for a position, please ensure that the MNO Registry can verify your permanent residence within the council boundaries. You can reach the MNO Registry at 1-855-798-1006 (Toll-Free).

### **What can I do if I am having difficulty voting?**

If citizens have any issues or difficulty voting online, they can call OneFeather toll-free at **1-855-923-3006**. A OneFeather Elections Officer will return your call to answer any questions

### **What if I have other questions about Community Council Elections?**

To help conduct Community Council elections, as per *MNO Electoral Code: Part B*, every council appoints an Electoral Officer or committee. Loma Rowlinson from the MNO's Community Relations team has been appointed to serve as the Electoral Officer for Community Council elections at this time. You can contact Loma to answer questions or offer assistance at:

#### **Loma Rowlinson**

[LomaR@metisnation.org](mailto:LomaR@metisnation.org)

[councilelection@metisnation.org](mailto:councilelection@metisnation.org)

Toll-Free 1-800-263-4889 ext. 344