

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO PROVINCE-WIDE PLEBISCITE

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **What were the results of the Plebiscite?**

27,805 MNO citizens were eligible to vote in the Plebiscite. 8,270 MNO citizens voted. 71% of those MNO citizens (5,898 MNO citizens) cast their ballot to remove “Incomplete” citizenship files from the MNO Registry.

## **Have MNO citizens with “Incomplete” citizenship files now been removed from the MNO Registry?**

No. All existing MNO citizens remain as MNO citizens today. The removal of any MNO citizen based on an “Incomplete” citizenship file can only be undertaken following an MNO special or annual assembly being called and a special resolution being passed to amend the MNO Bylaws and Registry Policy in order to remove MNO citizens. The Plebiscite did not automatically remove any MNO citizens from the MNO Registry.

## **Why did the MNO decide to undertake the Plebiscite?**

Since the MNO’s creation as a Métis government in 1993, democratic province-wide votes—where all citizens have an opportunity to have their voice heard—have been a part of the MNO’s governance customs and traditions. It is how MNO citizens elect their leadership. Given the significance of the issue at stake (i.e., whether to remove citizens with “Incomplete” files from the MNO Registry), the MNO wanted to ensure all of its citizens, including those with “Incomplete” files, had an opportunity to have their voices heard on this issue before it took any next steps.

## **What are the next steps following the Plebiscite results being released?**

Based on the direction from the 2022 MNO Annual General Assembly, the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) is “to call a special General Assembly in late 2022 or early 2023 to amend the MNO Bylaws, if a majority of those who voted in the referendum provide direction to remove members/citizens with incomplete files from the MNO Registry.”

Given the Chief Electoral Officer’s decision to extend Plebiscite voting until February 28, 2023, the timelines for the special General Assembly will also need to be adjusted. The formal date will be set by the PCMNO, but is anticipated to be called in May or June 2023. This special General Assembly will be called for a single purpose: to vote to amend the MNO Bylaws in order to remove members/citizens with “Incomplete” files.

Consistent with the MNO Bylaws and policies, the PCMNO will circulate and publicly post the special resolution and proposed amendments to the MNO Bylaws prior to the assembly. In developing the proposed amendments, the PCMNO will also consider the issues raised in the What We Heard Report, including: the need for a reasonable notice period, an appeal process, and clarity that removed citizens can re-apply at any time in the future if they provide the required documentation.

## **Have other Métis Nation governments had to deal with this issue?**

Yes. All Métis Nation governments have had to deal with this issue. Based on the inherent Métis right of self-determination and self-government, each Métis Nation government has the right to deal with these issues in their own way.

For example, in 2013, the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) passed a special resolution at its assembly that cancelled its old ‘red and white’ membership cards, and only recognized those with its new MNA citizenship cards going forward. This was after the MNA had unsuccessfully attempted to pass this type of resolution at previous assemblies for several years. Today, the MNA has over 57,000 registered citizens.

In 2017, when the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MNS) reopened its central registry office, there were only around 3,000 MNS citizenship cards that had been issued. At that time, the MNS undertook an audit of its existing citizenship cards and decided to not recognize old MNS cards that had been issued by previous administrations. Since 2017, over 25,000 new MNS citizenship cards have been issued, and this number continue to grow.

The MMF has chosen to continue to have “members” who do not have completed citizenship files. The MMF bylaws make a distinction between someone who is a “citizen” (with a completed file) and a “member” (who has not completed citizenship process). While these individuals may still be members of the MMF, they have “no right to vote or hold office”.

The MNO respects the jurisdiction of each Métis Nation government to deal with their registry and citizenship issues in their own way. That is what self-determination and self-government means.