

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

On April 28, 2023, the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (“PCMNO”) officially called a one-day, in-person special General Assembly (“Special Assembly”) to be held on June 17, 2023 in Toronto, in accordance with the notice requirements outlined in the MNO Bylaws.

This document provides responses to Frequently Asked Questions about the Special Assembly based on issues and questions that have been raised by some citizens. Additional information is also available on the MNO’s designated Special Assembly webpage at: <https://www.metisnation.org/registry/registry-review-report/2023-special-general-assembly/>.

Why is the MNO holding a Special Assembly if it just held a province-wide plebiscite where 71% of citizens that voted confirmed they want citizens with “incomplete” files removed from the Registry?

The current MNO Bylaws do not allow for a plebiscite to immediately end someone’s citizenship within the MNO. To formally remove citizens from the MNO Registry, we need to amend the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy, which requires us to hold an assembly and pass a special resolution. In addition, we also need to follow the requirements set out in Ontario’s *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*, since the MNO’s legal and administrative arm—the MNO Secretariat Inc.—is still incorporated under that act.

It is important to note that in the future, after we adopt our own Constitution—as Métis law—we will no longer be constrained by limiting corporate bylaws and Ontario’s *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*. This is why we are working to develop our own Constitution and negotiating our self-government treaty with Canada. Until we get to that ultimate self-government destination, we need to comply with the MNO Bylaws and Ontario’s *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*.

Why are there no online participation/voting options available for this Special Assembly?

The MNO continues to investigate how virtual assemblies, with effective and reliable online voting tools, can be held in the future. At this time, the MNO has not found a technology that will allow for this. While virtual assemblies were held during the COVID-19 pandemic, these assemblies did not consider special resolutions and did not have effective online voting procedures.

Given the reality that there may be future legal challenges to this Special Assembly, the PCMNO did not want to risk holding this assembly with an unproven and untested virtual voting technology. As such, the only citizens that will be able to vote at this Special Assembly are those in physical attendance. No proxy voting will be allowed either. This has been the MNO’s practice for conducting assemblies over the last 30+ years.

Doesn't having the Special Assembly in Toronto create a disadvantage for citizens living in northern Ontario from attending?

The decision to hold the Special Assembly in Toronto creates disadvantages for those who do not live nearby. Given the vast size of Ontario, and since MNO assemblies move to different locations each year, this disadvantage has been consistently raised over the last 30+ years. Whatever MNO Region we host an assembly in, there will be citizens who will not be able to attend in person because of costs and distance. One of the reasons for selecting a hotel by the Toronto airport for this Special Assembly was because of travel accessibility.

In order to attempt to alleviate some of the above-noted disadvantage, the PCMNO has also authorized funding be provided to all MNO Regions so additional citizens can attend the Special Assembly. In addition, enhanced funding is being provided to MNO Regions in the north to attempt to address distance and cost factors. A memo on this was issued last week and is available here. With that said, we appreciate that not all citizens who may want to attend this Special Assembly will be able to do so.

What if the Special Assembly does not confirm the will of citizens as demonstrated through the plebiscite?

The current PCMNO is united in implementing the democratic will of MNO citizens as demonstrated through the plebiscite. These results are consistent with the direction MNO citizens have consistently provided to leadership on this issue at numerous MNO AGAs, through the 2020 province-wide election, and during province-wide consultations.

If the democratic will of MNO citizens is not given effect through the proposed special resolution passing at this Special Assembly, the current PCMNO will work to ensure the democratic will of MNO citizens is ultimately implemented in some other way. This issue is not going away. MNO citizens have overwhelmingly and collectively spoken on what they want elected leadership to do: move forward on a process that ensures all MNO citizens are verified Métis rights-holders.