

Proposal of a new Citizenship Code submitted to the vote of the members of the WWFN



1 Why change the Citizenship Code?

The WWFN members requested at the 2016 General Assembly the revision of the WWFN Citizenship Code. The goal being to modernize the current Citizenship Code which dates back to 1987, so that the new Code reflects the modern reality of the WWFN following the revitalization of the Nation.

2 Why is it important to vote?

A Citizenship Code or a Code of Belonging is the very foundation and basis of a Nation. It is an inherent right of the WWFN to decide its membership and identity. It is therefore essential that this right be exercised so that the Citizenship Code reflects the modern reality of the WWFN.

3 How was the draft of the new Citizenship Code written?

A Citizenship Code Review Committee was established in 2019 to make recommendations to Grand Council and ultimately propose a draft of a new Citizenship Code with the assistance of a legal firm specializing in Indigenous law. The committee includes members of the Council of Elders and WWFN youth with legal backgrounds:

Édith Bélanger

Simon Brière

Nicole Aubin

Ernest Daniel Nicolas

Jocelyn Dionne

Léandre Nicolas

Mathieu Desjardins

4 What changes are proposed in the new Citizenship Code?

The main purpose of the proposed new Citizenship Code is to codify current practice in the process of accepting new people as citizens of the WWFN. The most important principles include the following:

- Automatic revision of the Code every 10 years;
- End of acceptance of new associate members (applicable for new applications only);
- Acceptance of members for one generation after the last adjudicated member;
- Establishment of a clear citizenship application review process.

A summary document will be sent to all members in the November 9th mailing. The complete draft of the new Citizenship Code can be ordered in hard copy by calling the Nation or can be viewed online

at the Nation's website. To do so, go to the menu in the upper right corner of the screen and select WWFN—Public Consultations and Referendums—Proposed New Citizenship Code to be voted on by WWFN members—December 8, 2022.

5 How will the vote on the proposed new Citizenship Code be conducted?

In accordance with the current Citizenship Code, the vote for the adoption of the proposed new Citizenship Code will be conducted entirely by mail in order to achieve the highest possible voter turnout. The vote will be conducted in accordance with the Voting Code and other WWFN guidelines.

A Returning Officer has been appointed to ensure compliance with the WWFN's internal rules. The Returning Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the vote is conducted in an impartial manner.

Mr. Jean Desjardins

Returning Officer

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All WWFN citizens who will be 18 years of age or older as of December 8, 2022 (the day voting closes) will receive a voting package in the mail.

In accordance with the current Citizenship Code, in order for the proposed new Citizenship Code proposed by the Code Review Committee to be accepted, two thirds (2/3) of the members voting must vote in favour of adopting the new Code.

6 Why revise the Citizenship Code every 10 years?

The situation of the WWFN is evolving rapidly since the Descheneaux decision. The Descheneaux decision has resulted in an increase in the number of members being adjudicated. It is therefore difficult to predict that the Citizenship Code will still meet the needs of the WWFN in 10 years. Therefore, rather than waiting for the need for a review, the proposed new Citizenship Code provides for a review every 10 years to avoid a situation where it no longer meets the needs.

7 The proposed new Citizenship Code will no longer accept new "associate" members. Does this mean that an "associate" member will lose their status?

No, the proposed new Citizenship Code will not accept new "associate" members until it is adopted. Thus, those who are currently "associate" members of the WWFN will remain so and will still enjoy their privileges.

A member who is currently an associate member will lose his or her privilege only in the event of divorce, legal separation or termination of a relationship.

8 Why limit access to citizenship to one generation after the last adjudicated member?

The Descheneaux decision has resulted in a rapid increase in the number of WWFN members. In this context, in order to ensure that the services and organization of the WWFN can adequately adapt, it was intended to limit access to citizenship status to one generation after the last adjudicated member.

As the Code is scheduled to be reviewed every 10 years, this situation could change as the number of citizens changes.

9 Why does the proposed new Citizenship Code use the term citizens?

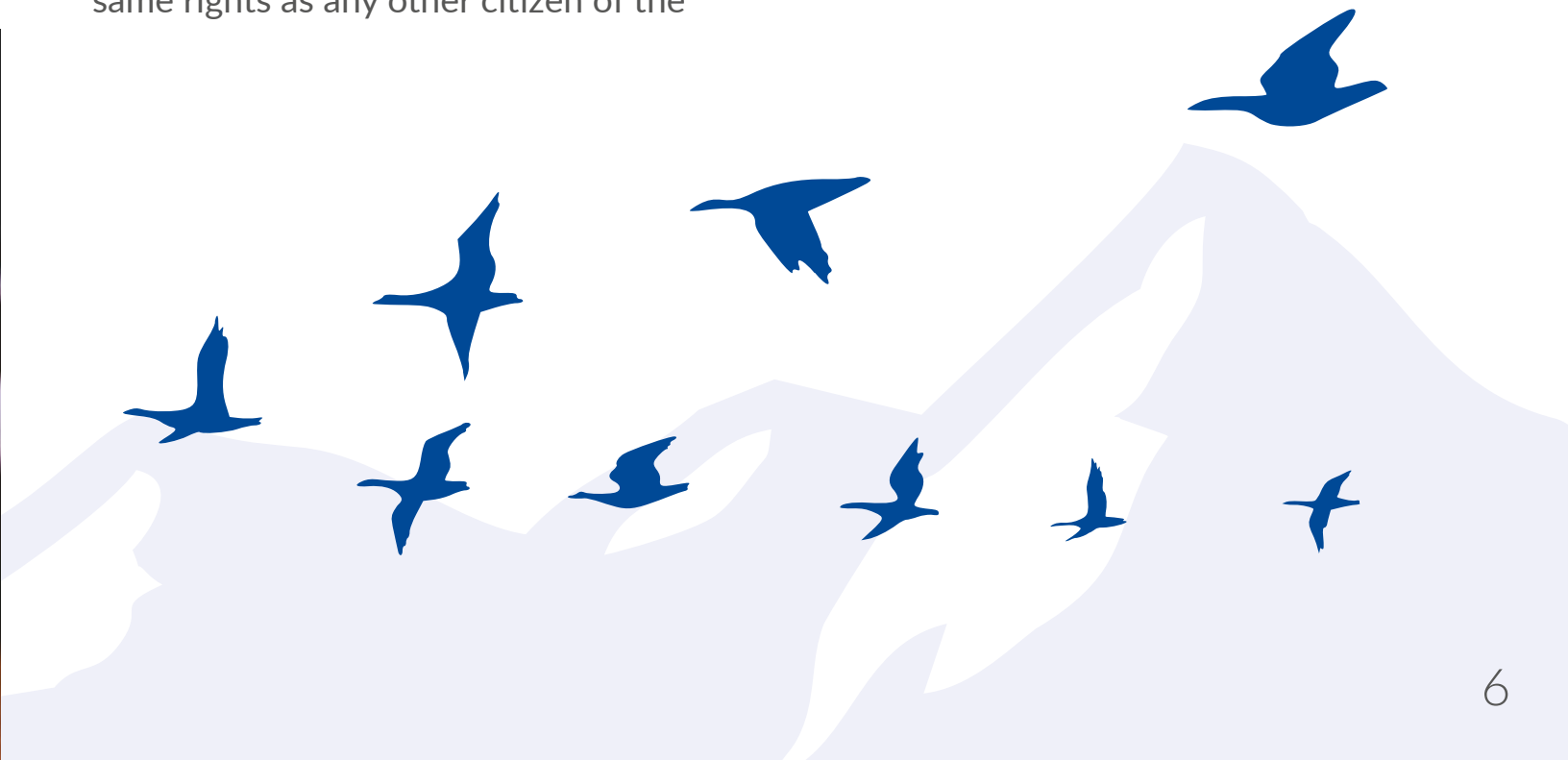
This term is used to refer to all members of the WWFN. Thus, the term “Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk Citizen” represents both a statutory member under the *Indian Act* and/or a non-statutory member of the WWFN. This designation was established by the Citizenship Code Review Committee so as not to make any distinction based on the *Indian Act* between members of the WWFN.

10 What does the concept of “acculturating citizens” mean in the proposed new Citizenship Code?

A person from another Indigenous nation or a person on the General List under the *Indian Act* who has no ancestry with Wolastoqiyik families may apply for citizenship under the Code. If successful, this person would be granted temporary status as an “acculturated citizen.”

The acculturation period is a sort of “probation” period that lasts for 5 years, during which time the citizen has the same rights as any other citizen of the

WWFN with the exception of the right to vote, the right to run for elected office, the right to represent the WWFN in an official capacity, and the right of their children to become citizens.



11

Since the WWFN has a Voting Code, why does the proposed new Citizenship Code include voting procedures?

Given the importance of the WWFN Citizenship Code, the amendment process must provide for a high level of consent from the citizens of the WWFN.

The following is a summary of the amendment procedures in the proposed new Citizenship Code:

A quorum for the Special General Meeting to vote on proposed amendments to the Code is established at fifteen percent (15%) of the voting citizens.

An amendment is adopted if:

- The 15% quorum shall be established;
- At least thirty percent (30%) of the eligible voters have voted, including absentee and electronic ballots if any;
- An absolute majority (fifty percent [50%] plus one [1]) of the votes counted, including absentee and electronic votes, if any, are in favour of the amendment.