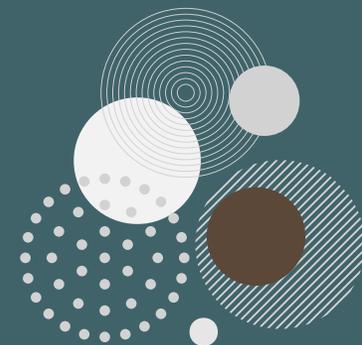


Presentation of the Work on the Revision of the Wendat Nation Representation Code

Onywatenda'yerahtih de akhiringontha'



Wendat Title:

Onywatenda'yerahtih de akhilihontha'

" Our rules when we designate someone for an official position "

Working Group

Composed of:

- 3 Chiefs: Chief Denis Bastien (President), Chief René W. Picard, and Chief Stéphane Picard;
- 5 Wendat: Karine Lirette, Johanne Sioui Couture, Pierre Gros-Louis, Pierre Martineau, and Luc Lainé; and
- 1 representative from the Circle of Elders, Elder Oney Maher.

Working Group

Selection of the 5 Wendat members of the Working Group based on:

- Representation of family circles;
- Expertise and knowledge of the Code and its provisions;
- Gender diversity (men and women);
- Place of residence (on-community and off-Wendake).

Background

- ▶ Adopted in 2000, the Representation Code has ensured stability and consistency for 25 years.
- ▶ In 2023, the Council mandated the *Léger* research firm to conduct a survey to obtain the opinion of Wendat voters on the need for a reform of the Code.

Context

In January 2025, following a public notice to voters, the Council and the Code Revision Committee created the "Working Group on the Revision of the Representation Code" .

- to follow up on the results of the 2023 survey,
- Goal : to adapt the Code to current realities, and strengthen democratic governance.



Working Group

The Working Group exercises apolitical work.

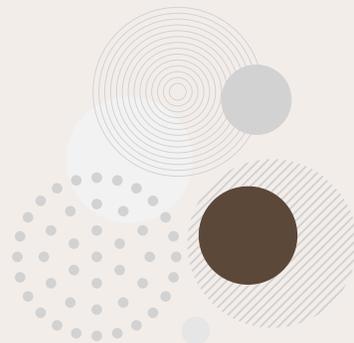
Revision work from February 2025 to January 2026.

The Working Group has held 22 meetings to date.



Modernization After 25 Years

- At the time (in 2000), the Code met the specific needs of the Nation
- Realities in 2026: increasing number, living on and off Wendake, wsignificant governance challenges



Foundations Guiding the Working Group's Work

The work was initially based on a *Léger* survey conducted among **351 Wendat** and carried out in 2023, entitled:

"OPINION ON THE NEED FOR A REFORM OF THE HURON-WENDAT NATION REPRESENTATION CODE."

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Survey Results

65% do not wish for complete abolition of family circles, but 58% request a new method of representativeness.

64 % favour a first-past-the-post uninominal vote without circles.

82 % want to maintain the Circle of Elders, 52% wish to review its role

60 % support a term limit, leading to the proposal of a maximum of three.

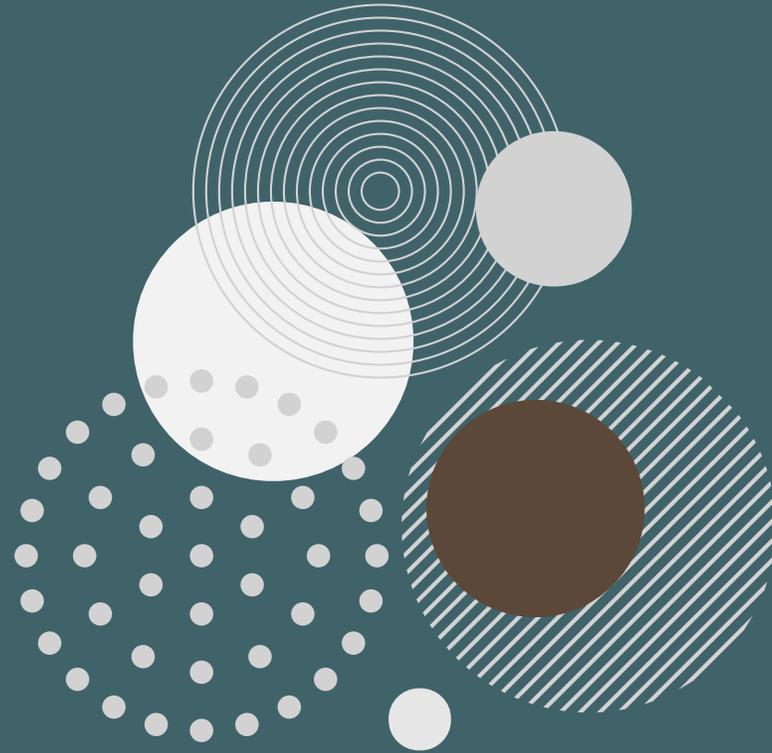
88 % support postal voting and 57% support electronic voting.

The Working Group Sought to Build a Representation Framework that:

- **Strengthens transparency:** Clear and accessible electoral processes for all;
- **Ensures equity:** An equal voice for every Wendat, regardless of place of residence;
- **Preserves national unity:** Promotes cohesion and a sense of belonging;
- **Affirms political and cultural autonomy:** Decolonized vocabulary and promotion of the Wendat language;
- **Modernizes electoral practices:** Simplified voting, electronic voting (forthcoming), candidacies on a web page, etc.



Proposed Orientations



LANGUAGE AND DECOLONIZATION OF THE CODE



ORIENTATION

Replace words such as "band," "member," and "on/off reserve" with terms:

- reflecting a modern administration, that of a Nation whose rights are protected by treaty within the meaning of section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982;
- in Wendat whenever possible.

LANGUAGE AND DECOLONIZATION OF THE CODE



Rationale

- Reflection of Wendat national identity
- Liberation from terminology stemming from the Indian Act, which no longer corresponds to the reality of an autonomous and proud Nation.
- The Code becomes a governance tool rooted in the culture and language of the Wendat people.
- This approach strengthens the legitimacy of the Code and the sense of collective belonging.

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NUMBER OF ELECTED OFFICIALS



ORIENTATION

Maintain the Council at nine (9) elected officials - 1 Grand Chief and eight (8) Chiefs.



RATIONALE

- The Working Group considered that a smaller Council would limit representativeness, while a larger Council would burden management.
- Eight (8) elected officials offer a balance between efficiency, diversity, and task sharing.
- This size allows coverage of the main files for which elected officials are responsible without creating an imbalance in workload.

ELECTION DATE



ORIENTATION

Maintain the last Friday of October.



RATIONALE

- Changing the date would pose significant administrative constraints (e.g., financial statements).
- The current date is well established in community life and ensures stability and predictability of the electoral calendar.

ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN



ORIENTATIONS

- Duration reduced to 40 days – aligned with best practices of other communities;
- Nomination: collect 20 supporting signatures and mandatory attendance at the nomination assembly.



RATIONALE

- The 51-day campaign duration was too long and costly. Shortening it:
 - Reduces voter and candidate fatigue;
 - Focuses debate on the real issues;
 - Simplifies the work of the election chair..

POSTAL VOTING



ORIENTATION

Maintain postal voting. However, in times of postal strikes, alternatives will need to be found, including electronic voting if technology permits.



RATIONALE

- Postal voting ensures the participation of Wendat living outside Wendake.
- 88% of the population supports it.
- It strengthens the democratic participation of the entire Nation, whether residing in Wendake, elsewhere in Quebec, or outside.
- Procedures will continue to be secured and supervised by the election president.

CANDIDATE PAMPHLETS



ORIENTATION

Maintain postal mailing and add an official web page.



RATIONALE

- Access to reliable and uniform information about candidates is essential to democracy.
- Adding a web platform modernizes the process, reduces costs, and ensures equal access to information for all voters.

REPRESENTATION BY FAMILY CIRCLES



ORIENTATION

Electoral system no longer based on family circles.



RATIONALE

In 2000: They were created in order, among other things, to counter partisan divisions and fulfilled their role of political stabilization.

In 2025: The increase in population and the current context no longer allow them to adequately fulfill this role.

REPRESENTATION BY FAMILY CIRCLES



RATIONALE

- Family circles are no longer proportional to the number of members they represent.
- Their activity is low, and many Wendat, particularly those living outside Wendake, no longer identify with them.
- Citizen participation in elections as well as the number and diversity of candidacies have declined over the past several elections.
- The Working Group concluded that it was necessary to return to a simple and open system where any Wendat who qualifies as a voter can run as a candidate.
- Family circles may remain symbolically for those who wish, but they will no longer be attached to the political sphere or the Code.

FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF ELECTIONS



ORIENTATION

Maintain elections every two (2) years, for four (4) year term.



RATIONALE

- Elections every four (4) years would offer stability but would reduce citizen participation.
- Too frequent elections lead to high costs and electoral fatigue.
- The compromise found ensures both continuity, renewal, and accountability.
- This pace promotes project stability while regularly giving the population a voice.

CONSECUTIVE TERM LIMIT



ORIENTATION

Maximum of three (3) consecutive terms (Grand Chief and Chiefs)



RATIONALE

- Discussions opposed democratic freedom (letting the population decide) to the need to promote new leadership.
- The compromise recognizes the value of experience while avoiding the professionalization of elected positions.
- Three (3) consecutive terms offer a sufficient cycle to complete projects while ensuring the renewal of ideas and faces.

VOTING



ORIENTATION

Return to single majority vote (x, +, v, or filling in) and abolition of preferential voting (1, 2, 3, etc.)



RATIONALE

- The preferential method, introduced to increase representativeness, proved complex and sometimes misunderstood.
- The Working Group chose a return to simplicity and clarity, so that each vote counts in a direct and understandable way.

VOTING



RATIONALE

- A maximum of eight (8) candidates for the position of Chief and the candidate for the position of Grand Chief who received the most votes will be elected.
- In case of a tie between the last positions, a by-election must be declared.

ABSENCE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS



ORIENTATION

Provide a mechanism in case of prolonged absence of an elected official.



RATIONALE

- Absence of more than three (3) consecutive regular meetings without justification = automatic loss of position.
- Absence = the Council may decide that this absence does not end the term, provided it causes no prejudice to the Nation.
- If absence of six (6) consecutive months: position declared vacant.
- If absence exceeds three (3) consecutive months: half of the planned remuneration.

HENNENNONHHA'



ORIENTATION

- **Hennennonhha'** is proposed (in odd numbers) to oversee the electoral process. *It means: They take care of something, protect it, look after it (usually)*
- Ethical and professional conduct issues concerning elected officials will be handled by **Onkierihahtändihk** “Someone who makes things right for us (usually and currently)” (role of “ethics and professional conduct commissioner”)
- The desire to keep the Circle of Elders is maintained to play a nonpolitical, ceremonial and symbolic role within the Nation.

HENNENNONHHA'

ORIENTATION



Group primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with the Electoral Code, without political function.

- May, unanimously, declare vacant the position of Grand Chief or Chief for one of the grounds set out in section 5 of the Electoral Code.
- May, unanimously, declare a candidate ineligible for one of the grounds set out in section 14.1 of the Electoral Code.
- Acts as an advisor to the Council on any matter within the scope of the Code and may, for this purpose, call upon external resources.
- Must confirm an election and may reject it or order a new one, particularly in cases of fraudulent practices

HENNENNONHHA'

ORIENTATION



- 5 members, chosen to ensure balanced representation:
 - Young Wendat (18 to 35 years old)
 - Wendat women and men
 - Wendat residing in Wendake
 - Wendat residing outside Wendake
 - Wendat Elders (65 years and older).
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- The candidates sought for *Hennennonhnha'* distinguish themselves by their membership in the Wendat Nation as well as their knowledge of its culture and traditions.

HENNENNONHHA'



ORIENTATION

- Each Guardian is elected for a term of 2, 3, or 4 years.
- If the new Electoral Code is adopted by referendum, the members of the Working Group on the revision of the Code will form the first *Hennennonhnha'*.
- Subsequent Guardians are selected by the Selection Committee, after a pre-selection made by the Council Clerk, in accordance with the criteria established in the following articles.

ONKHIERIHAHTÄNDIHK



GOVERNANCE OF THE CONDUCT OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

- 2020: Adoption of a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to govern the conduct of elected officials
- NEW: **Onkhierihahtändihk** “*Someone who keeps us on the right path (usually and currently)*” (role of “ethics and professional conduct commissioner”)
- Assisted by an external lawyer
- Remuneration: Per diem, based on requests processed
- Distinct from *Hennennonhnha'* for greater independence and legal rigour

CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT - REMINDER

An elected official is subject to sanctions, particularly if they:

- Place themselves in a conflict of interest
- Solicit or accept a gift or benefit that compromises their independence
- Use confidential information for personal purposes
- Lack diligence in attendance
- Damage the image or reputation of the Council
- Damage the dignity or honour of the office of elected official



Sanctions provided (According to the severity of the breach):

- Reprimand
- Partial or total removal of mandates (recommendation to the Grand Chief)
- Suspension of the right to sit, with suspension of allowances and benefits
 - Until a condition imposed is met OR for a maximum period of 90 days
- Monetary penalty
- Return or reimbursement of a gift or benefit
- Reimbursement of profits unduly obtained
- Reimbursement of allowances received during the breach
- Removal from office

PETITION PROCEDURE AND PERSONAL INFORMATION



ORIENTATION

- Addition of rules on the petition process;
- Policy on personal information.



RATIONALE

- The petition has grown in popularity and provisions are added to provide a framework for this mechanism.
- They govern any letter, request, petition, report or any other document intended to be submitted to the Council.
- The coming into force of Bill 25 and the increased importance of the protection of personal information led to the adaptation of the Code in order to secure electoral data.

IN SHORT, THE CODE HIGHLIGHTS OUR CULTURE AND BRINGS US TOGETHER

- Promotion of the Wendat language;
- Creation of *Hennennonhnha'* which gives a voice to a variety of Wendat of all ages;
- Reaches Wendat outside the community who represent the majority of the population and strengthens the sense of belonging;
- Facilitates voting and nomination (everyone can run every 2 years);

SUMMARY

THEME	Orientations
Langage	Decolonize vocabulary, insert Wendat language terms
Representation of elected officials	No longer based on family circles
Number of elected officials	Maintain 9 (Grand Chief + 8 Chiefs)
Election fequency	Every 2 years, 4 year terms
Term limit	3 consecutive terms
Electoral period duration	40 days
Voting method	X, check, + or fill in the box (signle vote)
Postal voting	Maintained with a single mailing
Candidate leaflets	Maintained (paper and web)
Oversight and enforcement	HENNENNONHNHA' ONKHIERIHAHTÄNDIHK : Ethics and Conduct Commissioner for elected officials
Election date	Maintained the last Friday of October

Important Dates

2 hybrid information sessions at the SOCCA hall at the Wendake Sports Complex (Mandatory registration to attend virtually)

- **Saturday, February 21, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**
- **Tuesday, March 17, 2026, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM**

Questions? code@wendake.ca

Documents available on the website www.wendake.ca as well as on-site at the Council.

Referendum on Friday, April 24, 2026 (SOCCA Hall)