

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Onywatenda'yerahtih de akhrihontha' (Our rules when we designate someone for official duty)

Revision of the Wendat Nation's Representation Code – (the "Electoral Code")

LAST UPDATED: JANUARY 30, 2026

1. Why is the Electoral Code being revised?

- To modernize our rules that have existed for 25 years, ensure a clear and fair process, strengthen trust, and reflect current governance practices.
- This revision also responds to the recommendations from the Léger survey conducted in 2023 among Nation members.

2. Who participated in the revision of the Electoral Code?

The Working Group is composed of:

- A group of five (5) Wendat selected following a public call: Karine Lirette, Johanne Sioui Couture, Pierre Gros-Louis, Pierre Martineau, and Luc Lainé.
- The Council's Electoral Code Committee (three chiefs – Denis Bastien, Stéphane Picard, and René W. Picard), which oversees the process.
- A representative from the Circle of Elders participates in the work and conveys their recommendations (Oney Maher).
- The Council's lawyers, accompanied by an external firm, have reviewed the proposed Electoral Code to ensure legal compliance.

3. How is the revision process proceeding?

- The Working Group analyzed each article and proposed amendments.
- A first draft of the revised Electoral Code was presented at a public assembly on November 15, 2025, then to the Council and the Circle of Elders at the beginning of December.
- Information sessions will be held in February and March 2026.
- A referendum will be held on April 24, 2026 (at least six (6) months before the next election).

4. What are the most important proposed changes?

- Duration of the electoral period reduced from 51 to 40 days.
- Addition of a provision allowing for electronic voting.

- Addition of a provision prohibiting an elected official from behaving disrespectfully or engaging in conduct that damages the honor and dignity of the elected position.
- Removal of family circles from the electoral process.
- New role assigned to a group of Wendat responsible for monitoring the application of the Electoral Code:
 - Hennennonhnhha' means: They guard something, protect it, take care of it (usually).
 - Hennennonhnhha' becomes a group of five (5) persons, responsible for ensuring compliance with the Electoral Code, without political function.
 - Composition: "young Wendat, men and women, aged eighteen (18) to thirty-five (35) years, Wendat residing in Wendake, Wendat not residing in Wendake, as well as Wendat elders aged sixty-five (65) years or older."
 - Hennennonhnhha' must also adopt a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- Creation of a Wendat Ethics and Professional Conduct Commissioner, accompanied by a lawyer, responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for elected officials.
- The Circle of Elders no longer has any responsibility related to the application of the Electoral Code or the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for elected officials.

5. Who will choose the members of Hennennonhnhha'?

The first Hennennonhnhha' members are selected by the Working Group on the revision of the Electoral Code. Subsequent members are selected by the Selection Committee, following a pre-selection carried out by the Council Clerk, in accordance with the criteria established in the following articles.

6. Why remove family circles from the electoral process?

They no longer reflect the demographic reality and their activity is low. Their removal makes the process more equitable and inclusive.

7. How many elected officials and what is the duration of their mandate?

- No change to composition: The Council is composed of a Grand Chief and eight (8) Chiefs.
- No change to duration: Mandates last four (4) years, with partial renewal every two (2) years.
- Addition to the Electoral Code: An elected official may serve up to three (3) consecutive terms.

8. Who can vote?

No change. Any registered member of the Wendat Nation aged 18 or older. Voters may verify their registration on the electoral list with the Election President.

9. Who can be a candidate?

Any eligible voter, unless they are ineligible (fraud, conviction, conflicts of interest, employment with the Council without leave, etc.). A Council employee must obtain an unpaid leave to run for office.

10. Filing a candidacy: how does it work?

- Complete the official form provided by the Election President.
- Each candidacy must be supported by twenty (20) signatures from Wendat voters.
- File the candidacy before or during the nomination assembly.
- The candidate's presence at the nomination assembly is mandatory.
- A proxy may be used if the voter is absent during the assembly, but only in exceptional circumstances.
- A letter justifying the absence must then be submitted by the absent candidate.

11. Electoral campaign: important rules

- Prohibition on using the Council's logos, coat of arms, and resources.
- Prohibition on soliciting on Council premises or within its organizations.
- Obligation to respect the confidentiality of information contained in the electoral list.

12. Voting: how does it work?

- Each voter may vote for a maximum of eight (8) Chiefs depending on the number of positions in the election and one (1) Grand Chief.
- Voting may be done in person or by mail.
- Postal votes must be received before midnight the night before the vote.
- Removal of the preferential voting method and return to plurality voting by marking an X, a check mark, a cross, or by filling in the box.

13. How will the counting of results work?

- Scrutineers carry out the counting under supervision.
- Results are announced publicly by the Election President.
- In case of a tie or insufficient candidates for the number of announced positions, a by-election is triggered.

14. How to contest an election?

- Hennennonhaha' analyzes irregularity reports.
- An election may be annulled in case of fraud, violation of the Electoral Code, or inadmissible candidacy.

15. Vacant position of an elected official: what happens?

- A position becomes vacant in case of resignation, death, conviction, or serious breach.
- A by-election is triggered if more than twelve (12) months remain in that elected official's term.
- An elected official who is absent from more than three (3) consecutive regular assemblies without justification automatically loses their position.
- If an elected official is absent for more than three (3) months for a serious reason beyond their control, the Council may decide that this absence does not end their mandate, provided it causes no harm to the Nation. The Council may review this decision as needed.
- However, if the absence reaches six (6) consecutive months, the position is declared vacant. In this case, when the absence exceeds three (3) consecutive months, the elected official receives only half of the planned compensation.

16. Why create an Ethics and Professional Conduct Commissioner?

To strengthen impartiality and professionalize the handling of breaches.

17. Why regulate petitions more strictly?

Because they are multiplying and require a clear and fair framework for their submission. These new provisions will govern not only petitions, but also any letter, request, petition, report, or any other document.

18. When will the referendum take place?

Friday, April 24, 2026. Four (4) information sessions are scheduled before then: February 3, 2026 from 7pm to 9pm, February 12, 2026 from 7pm to 9pm, February 21, 2026 from 10am to 12pm, and March 17, 2026 from 7pm to 9pm.

19. How will we be able to vote in the referendum?

- Either by mail: voting kits will be sent to the entire population.
- Or directly in person during the vote on April 24, 2026.

