

Citizenship Within Wahta



Saturday November 18th 10am – 4pm at the Cultural Healing Centre

We are looking for a working group of members that can offer input into what the future means for Wahta and how we can ensure that Wahta's roots stay strong and that our community thrives.

As it stands now the stated purpose of the membership code is to *preserve cultural integrity and sovereignty*.

Our current code is based on Indian Act authority, adopting a method of determining people's rights through blood quantum which only preserves racial purity and does not address cultural values or contribution.

What does it mean to be a member of Wahta Mohawks?

How do we define community contribution?

Tools such as UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People) state:

"to properly recognize our members through the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community concerned and no discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of this right." UNDRIP

This speaks to a universal goal, but we cannot dismiss the impacts of colonization on our community. How do we recognize these impacts and start to move forward once again in a healthy way?

Some of the issues we face on an ongoing basis include: status vs. non-status, off reserve vs. on reserve members, and blood quantum comparisons all perpetuated by the Indian Act. Many citizens of Wahta Mohawks live away from their home territory, this should not affect the collective rights of the nation, every member counts.

The role of non-member spouses and children is also important, how can we support and encourage everyone in the community and their families?

Questions to Consider

What does it mean to be a member of Wahta Mohawks?

What do you think you and your family should be receiving and giving back as a Mohawk person, what should community contribution mean?

How can you contribute and build a stronger Wahta Mohawk Nation?

Is blood purity the same thing as lineage? What is lineage?

How do you define your history as a Mohawk person and how will you pass this down to your children?

What are the impacts on children and grandchildren?

How would you like to see the future of Wahta for you and your children and grandchildren?

What are the most important values and principles that should be reflected in our own Wahta citizenship code?

How does the current Citizenship code address the next seven generations?

Citizenship Criteria

Part of the process is to determine and define the agreed upon criteria. Such criteria to consider may include:

Descendants, Lineage, Blood Quantum, Tradition, Language, Duties and Responsibilities as members, Residency, History, Marriage, Adoption etc.

Chief and Council have the responsibility in the collective decision making process to ensure that the citizenship code, roles and responsibilities reflect the values of Wahta Mohawks and its members. This process will include identifying key decision points, being respectful of other points of view, facilitating and creating a safe place for ongoing discussion.

Please join us Saturday November 18th 10am – 4pm at the Cultural Healing Centre to start the discussion, lunch is provided.

Please direct any questions or comments to info@wahtamohawks.com