



Upcoming MCT Secretarial Election: Blood Quantum Change & Band Enrollment Independence

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The Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe is comprised of the Chairperson and Secretary-Treasurer from each of the 6 Bands. There are 12 voting Members of the TEC.

Each TEC member has 1 vote on all issues, so Mille Lacs has 2 votes.



While each Band is self-governing, there are 3 topics that the TEC has authority over:

- 1. Elections**
- 2. Enrollment**
- 3. MCT Land**



For decades, MCT Members and many MLB elders have been concerned that the blood quantum requirement of $\frac{1}{4}$ MCT blood is too restrictive.

They worry that their children and grandchildren cannot be granted citizenship in the tribe they have grown up in.

**The topic of blood quantum has
come up at nearly every MCT
Meeting for many years.**



**In 2017, the TEC decided to look
at changes to the Constitution. A
Constitutional Convention was
held. Enrollment came forward
as the top issue Delegates
wanted to address.**



In 2022, the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) held a **Non-binding referendum.**

The purpose of this 2022 referendum was to find out:

Are most MCT voters interested in holding a 2023 Secretarial Election about changing how MCT membership is determine?



QUESTION #1

Should the Blood Quantum requirement be removed from membership requirements for the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe?

YES: 4,778 NO: 2,629





QUESTION #2

Should the six reservations (Bands) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe be authorized to determine their own membership requirements by Band Ordinance?

YES: 4,236 **NO: 2,989**





WHAT DID THIS REFERENDUM TELL THE TEC?

That a majority of voters are interested in voting on whether blood quantum should be changed, and believe each Band's Membership should be able to decide its own enrollment requirements.



MCT Members who voted “No” to both questions may be concerned that increased membership would mean fewer resources for individual members.

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WHAT'S NEXT?



The ¼ blood quantum requirement comes from the MCT Constitution.

The MCT Constitution **can only be changed if the U.S. Secretary of the Interior authorizes a **“Secretarial Election”** for all eligible MCT voters to vote on changes.**

WHAT'S NEXT?



The U.S. Secretary of Interior **has authorized a **2023 Secretarial Election** for MCT Members to vote on **changes** to the constitution about enrollment but this is **now stalled** because **BIA** has concerns**

NUMBER OF VOTERS NEEDED TO CHANGE CONSTITUTION:



- **The MCT Constitution can only be changed if at least 30% of all eligible voters participate in the election. If less than 30% vote, no changes to the constitution can be made.**
- **There are approximately 32,700 eligible MCT voters, so at least 9800 must participate in the election for the results to count.**
- **In the 2022 referendum, only 7470 voters turned in ballots. If that had been a Secretarial election, there would not have been enough votes to make any changes.**

CURRENT MCT ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS



- **At least 1 parent must be a currently enrolled MLB member**
- **1/4 degree of MLB Indian blood**
- **Moratorium of October 24, 2001, disallows transfers into Mille Lacs from other Bands.**



- **The Federal government invented “Blood Quantum” in the 1930’s.**
- **It was designed to eventually rid the federal government of its treaty responsibilities to tribes by reducing the number of enrolled tribal members.**

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO BLOOD QUANTUM?



- Some nations are lowering blood quantum to 1/8**
- Some are allowing blood from other tribes to be counted**
- Some are changing all current enrolled members to full-blood status**



- Some are getting rid of blood quantum, and using Lineal Descendancy: Direct descendant of an enrolled member can enroll

- Some are using a combination of some blood quantum plus knowledge of language & culture, or being active in the tribe's community

Creative discussions are happening across Indian Country on ways to change enrollment.



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