



Rainy River First Nations **MANITOU RAPIDS**

Membership Code Amendment Proposal- March 14, 2025.

Overview:

The Membership Code of Rainy River First Nations (RRFN) was explained and explored in sessions held by the RRFN Policy Analyst with the Community. The intent of these sessions was to inform Members about what is contained within the Membership Code and the current state of the RRFN Membership List. The goal of these sessions was to get Members to discuss and think about what changes may need to be made to the Code. A memo will be posted after the discussion sessions with Members as to why people are in favour or not in favour of the proposed amendments (Will be distributed May 2nd due to the postponement of the discussion sessions.)

Amendment Process:

Below is the Amendment Process as stated in the Membership Code:

“4. Any Member of RRFNs may propose reasonable amendments to the Code by submitting those amendments to the RRFNs Council. The Council shall, in its sole discretion on the basis of reasonableness, forward notice of the proposed amendments to the Members in writing thirty (30) days in advance of a meeting scheduled by Council for the purposes of voting on the amendments. The notice shall contain the text of any proposed amendment and an explanation as to why the amendment(s) are being proposed. Council shall schedule at least one (1) meeting per calendar year to consider and vote on any amendments to the Code.”

“5. This Code shall be amended at a community vote of the Members whereby every Member of RRFNs who is the full age of eighteen (18) years and whose residence address is known by RRFNs is provided the opportunity to take part in the voting process. The amendment is considered to be approved by the Members if at least 25 Members participate in the vote, with 75% or more of votes cast in favour of the amendment(s).”

Proposed Amendment One (1)

To be eligible to apply for Full Membership at RRFN, the applicant needs to have a Rainy River First Nations status number from Indigenous Services Canada. This includes under 18's.

This would be an addition to the eligibility criteria in Section 7 of the Membership Code.

The reason this amendment is being proposed is to protect the lineage of Rainy River First Nations and to uphold the Treaty that was fought for. Funding is received for status individuals only, and thus, if we have Full Members without status who are, through RRFN policy given the same rights as status Members, we will be depleting the resources that RRFN has outside of government funding.

Because there are currently people on the RRFN Membership List that have Full Membership yet do not have status, if this amendment is passed, there will be a secondary vote to decide what will happen with these Members. The options to be voted on are:

Proposed Amendment One Point One (1.1)

1. Remove the Members on the List that have Full Membership who do not have status.
2. Grandfather-in the individuals on the list that do not have status. However, any of their relatives will have to apply for Membership separately and will need to have Status to be able to apply.
3. Give the Members on the Full Membership List that do not have status two (2) years to apply for status. The length of time granted follows the timelines of Indigenous Services Canada to process status applications. If these Members are granted Status after these two (2) years, then they can remain on the Membership List. If not, they will be removed and lose their Full Membership.

Proposed Amendment Two (2)

Remove Conditional Membership from the Membership Code and any Conditional Members that are currently on the Membership List.

This would remove all sections of the Membership Code that refers to Conditional Members.

The reason this amendment is being proposed is that Conditional Members have no lineage connection to the Community and have the right to vote meaning that laws, policies and elected officials can be determined by potentially non-indigenous people.

Proposed Amendment Three (3)

Adopted Children will not be eligible for Full Membership.

This will change the eligibility criteria in Section 7 and 7.1 of the Membership Code.

The reason this amendment is being proposed is that, although the adopted person is part of the Members family, they do not have lineage to Rainy River First Nations and thus should not receive Membership.

Proposed Amendment Four (4)

When applications are approved and the applicant over 18 becomes a Full Member, there will no longer be a Probationary Period of any length of time for the Member to access to all programs and services offered by RRFN.

This will erase sections 26-36 of the Membership Code and any other place where the probationary period is mentioned. There will still be an appeal package and process available.

The reason this amendment is being proposed is that if someone has been accepted as a Full Member, then it does not seem right that they do not have access to all that Full Members have the right to immediately.

Information Sessions

To educate the Membership on exactly what these Amendments look like, mean, and to provide a place to ask questions and have discussions surrounding them, the Policy and Communications Analyst will hold information sessions. The dates for these Amendment Information Sessions in person and via Teams are:

Tuesday March 18th @ 6:30-8PM

Thursday April 3rd @ 6:30-8:30PM

Thursday May 1st @ 6:30-8:30PM

These sessions will be dedicated to discussing the Amendment Proposal. However, if you would like to schedule a meeting- virtual, telephone or in person- with the Policy and Communications Analyst Lauren Hyatt to discuss the proposal, feel free to contact her at lauren.hyatt@manitourapids.ca to set up a time or ask a question via email or call at 807-482-2479 ext. 214.

Amendment Vote:

The vote on the proposed amendments will be held on:

Wednesday May 7th @ 5:00PM-9:00PM.

- You can vote in person or on Teams. Please bring Photo ID when voting in person.
- If you are voting on Teams, your video will need to be on, and you will have to confirm your identity with Photo ID.
- Each Separate Amendment will be voted on.
- If in person, you will be provided with a paper ballot with 5 spots to vote for or against each Amendment.
- If on Teams, your answers will be recorded on a ballot for you after your identity as a member has been verified.
- Votes will be tallied immediately after the vote in front of any Members still present. Results will be posted in the Administration Office and sent out via One Feather.
- Any Amendments that are passed will be incorporated into the Membership Code by the Policy Analyst in collaboration with RRFN Legal representation.
- Once this is completed, the new Membership Code will be available to all Members and Membership Applications will be processed under this new code.