

Lineal Descendancy

Constitutional Amendment Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we pursuing a Constitutional Amendment to move to Lineal Descendancy?

In August 2019, the Tribe published a special issue of the Tilixam Wawa to share many of the Tribes enrollment related issues and errors with the membership. Many of those errors involved blood quantum and had existed since before termination.

Since then, the Tribe has worked closely with the membership to identify a path forward on our enrollment related issues. In 2023, the Tribe conducted an advisory vote and 65.328% of Tribal members supported moving forward with a Lineal Descendancy Constitutional Amendment.

What Are The Current Enrollment Requirements Under The Constitution?

Currently an applicant must have fully and unconditionally relinquished membership in another Indian tribe for five years and must show all of the following:

1. 1/16th or greater degree Grand Ronde blood, defined as all Indian blood derived from a direct ancestor whose name validly appears on the official tribal membership roll prepared under the Grand Ronde Restoration Act;
2. Born to a parent who was a member of the Tribe at the time of the applicant's birth; and
3. Born to a parent who, unless deceased, is a member of the Grand Ronde Tribe at the time the applicant files an application for enrollment.

What are the Proposed Changes?

Under Section 1. Requirements. The proposed changes to subsection (c):

(c) who possess Grand Ronde Indian blood, descend from a biological parent or grandparent who at any time was an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde provided such ancestor was not enrolled in error, have filed an application for enrollment according to procedures established pursuant to Section 3 of this Article, and have been accepted as members in accordance with the tribal ordinance adopted under Section 3 of this Article.

- The 1/16 Blood quantum requirement is removed and replaced with a requirement to possess Grand Ronde Indian Blood and that you must descend from a Grand Ronde parent or grandparent (as long as that ancestor was not enrolled in error).
- The 1999 Amendment requirements are removed including the requirement to be born to Tribal member and to have a parent enrolled at the time of your application.

Under Section 1. Requirements. The proposed changes to the definition paragraph:

For purposes of this section, Grand Ronde Indian blood is defined as all Indian blood derived from a direct ancestor who at any time was an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde provided such ancestor was not proven to be enrolled in error. Enrolled in error is defined as having been disenrolled due to: (1) being enrolled in another federally recognized tribe at the time of enrollment, (2) having been enrolled through fraud, or (3) having not met the enrollment criteria at the time of enrollment. An ancestor that was enrolled in error but has since been reenrolled, and met the enrollment criteria at the time of reenrollment, is no longer considered to be enrolled in error.

- The definition of Grand Ronde blood is being updated.

- A definition of Enrolled in error is being added.
- The 1999 Amendment requirement to have an ancestor on the Restoration Roll is removed.

Under Section 3. Ordinance. The proposed changes are:

The Tribal Council shall enact and maintain an ordinance establishing procedures for processing membership matters, including but not limited to application procedures, procedures for correction of the tribal roll, the right to appeal from a rejected application for membership, loss of membership, procedures for voluntary relinquishment of membership, and procedures governing reinstatement of former members who have relinquished membership.

- Removes the requirement to within six months enact an ordinance, and adds a requirement to maintain the enrollment ordinance.

There would be a new Section 4: Annual Limitation. The new proposed section is:

There shall be an annual limit on the number of individuals who may be accepted as members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde each year. The annual limit shall be 150 and Tribal Council may, by Tribal Council Resolution, increase the Annual limit to no more than 200; and further provided the annual limit shall not apply to minors under 6 months of age or who are the subject of pending juvenile dependency proceedings.

- This is a new section that adds an annual limit on the number of new members each year. The limit is set at 150. Tribal Council may increase the limit to no more than 200. The limit does not apply to minors under 6 months old or children who are subject to child welfare proceedings.

If we are removing the 1/16 Blood Quantum requirement, why are we keeping a definition of Indian Blood?

We are aware of a couple of individuals who are enrolled but do not have Indian Blood. They were adopted by a Tribal Member and enrolled as if they were biological children. This occurred prior to DNA requirements. This provision will prevent their descendants from being eligible for enrollment.

Does the 5 Year Relinquishment Still Apply?

Yes, this amendment does not change the 5 year relinquishment requirement, it will still apply to all applicants.

What Happens Next?

A resolution will be considered by Tribal Council at the August 21, 2024 meeting that will call on the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to conduct the Election. That resolution once approved will be transmitted to the BIA on Monday, September 9, 2024 to avoid overlapping with the 2024 Tribal Council Election.

When Would the Constitutional Amendment Election be Held?

The election would take place this Fall / Winter (2024).

Will There be Meetings to Explain the Election Process and Amendment?

Yes. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 21, 2024 at 5:00PM in the Governance Center and will be offered as a hybrid meeting. Additional meetings will be scheduled once the election timeline has been set.

How Many Meetings Have Been Held to Date on This Issue?

The Tribe has held more than 25 public meetings and / or office hour sessions to discuss enrollment related issues and potential paths forward in the last few years. Work around this issue increased considerably in 2019 when the special issue of the Wawa came out and the Tribe began gathering input on enrollment-related issues and discussing potential paths forward. Some of the work completed to date includes but is not limited to the items listed below. **Please note this list does not include a complete list of meetings and / or work sessions.*

2017-

- Advisory Votes Re: Removing the Requirement that an Applicant be Born to a Parent who was a Tribal Member at the Time of the Applicant's Birth, Removing the Requirement that the Applicant be Born to a Parent who was a Tribal Member at the Time the Enrollment Application is Filed, and to Return to Pre-1999 Amendment Blood Quantum Requirements.

2018-

- Advisory Vote Re: Amending the Tribe's Constitution to Allow the Enrollment of Applicants Who have Enrolled Brothers or Sisters by the Same Tribal Parent(s) and Who Meet the Pre-1999 Constitutional Enrollment Requirements.

2019-

- Constitutional Amendment to Amend Article V to Allow for the Enrollment of Applicants who have Enrolled Brothers and Sisters by the Same Tribal Parent(s) who were Enrolled Before Sept. 14, 1999, and who Meet Pre-1999 Constitutional Enrollment Requirements.
- 2012 Enrollment Audit Declassified
- Special Issue of the Tilixam Wawa Published
- Discussions Around the State of Enrollment
- Advisory Votes Re: Banning Disenrollment with the Exception of Fraud and Amending the Tribe's Constitution to Remove the BIA from the Constitutional Amendment Process.

2020-

- Tribe Hires a Consultant to Research and Provide Information on the Tribe's Enrollment History
- Advisory Vote Re: Moving Forward with a Constitutional Amendment Removing Parent on the Roll at the Time of Birth as a Requirement for Enrollment.

2021-

- Study Finalized and Released
- Community Input Meetings Around Enrollment

2022-

- Workshops with the Membership
- Constitutional Amendment to Ban Disenrollment with the Exception of Fraud / Dual Enrollment.

2023-

- Informational Meetings on the State of Enrollment
- Workshops
- Staff Research Report Released
- Membership Surveys
- Advisory Votes Re: Should the Tribe Change the Current Enrollment Requirements, Do you support the Tribe Moving Toward Lineal Descendancy for Enrollment, Supporting the Tribe Moving Toward a 4/4 Blood Quantum Applied to a Specific Roll or Date for Enrollment,

Supporting Repealing and Replacing the 1999 Constitutional Amendment Requirements Including: Parent on the Roll at the Time of Application, Parent on the Roll at the Time of Birth and the Indian Blood Tied to the Restoration Roll Ancestor Requirement, and What Constitutional Amendment Election Would be your Top Choice for Tribal Council to Pursue.

2024-

- Draft Constitutional Amendment Language Workshops with the Membership
- Surveys
- Projection Analysis
- Staff Office Hours
- Constitutional Amendment re: Lineal Descendancy

What Materials Can I Look at to Get Caught Up on the Issue?

The Tribe has a number of different materials available for members including but not limited to Smoke Signals articles, special issues of the Tilixam Wawa, the 2012 audit report, the 2021 White Paper on Enrollment, enrollment workshop material(s), a staff generated research report on potential paths forward and the Tribe's most recent projection analysis. To obtain copies of any of the items listed above please reach out to Stacia Hernandez at stacia.martin@grandronde.org.

Will I have to Register to Vote in the Constitutional Amendment Election?

Yes. The Constitutional Amendment Election is an election that is conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. As a result, you will have to register to vote in the election. Registration packets will be mailed to all eligible voters this Fall. We will be sure to provide you with an update on timing as more information becomes available.

What if the Constitutional Amendment Fails?

If the constitutional amendment fails the Tribal Council will need to discuss next steps with Tribal staff and Tribal members.

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