

Taku River Tlingit Citizenship Code

As per Citizenship Commission

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The Citizenship Code of the Taku River Tlingits is enacted by its Citizens at the Joint Clan Meeting on this day _____ of this month _____ of 2026.

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Preface / Foreword:

The clans represented by citizens in Taku River Tlingit have changed across time. The following table represents both in Column 1 & 2 the Clans of the Taku River Tlingit currently represented within our Citizens, and Column 3 honors and reflects Clans of Ancestors no longer with us. As of April 2026, the Nation's clan representation is as follows:

Taku River Tlingit Clans		
Wolf Moiety	Crow Moiety	Sleeping
Yanyeidí	L'eeneidí	Dakl'aweidí
	Ishkeetaan	Gaanax.ádi
	L'uknax.ádi	
	Kookhittaan	
	Deisheetaan	
	Gaanaxteidí	

Moiety vs Clan:

The distinction between Moiety and Clan is imperative to Tlingit Culture. Moiety refers to the two distinct halves of Tlingit society which are, Yéil I Raven, sometimes called Crow and Gooch ƙaa Ch'aak' I Wolf, sometimes called Eagle. Within each of these Moieties are many clans, and within Clans, smaller groups or "Houses".

Reflected within the above table is the Dauenhauer Orthography which was formally adopted at a CDC Meeting in February 2006. Spellings for the Clans (and in some cases, houses) are from the Tlingit Clans & Clan Houses Map located at <https://sftbcc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/TlingitMap.pdf>

1.0 Introduction:

In 1987 Canada acknowledged Indigenous communities right to take back control over their own Citizenship by classifying them as a Section 10 Band.¹ TRTFN Chief and Council (Now known as Spokesperson & Clan Directors Council) at that time moved ahead with creation of our Membership code which was unanimously passed at a General Assembly (Now a Joint Clan Meeting) and accepted by the Government of Canada in 1987. This document has been reviewed and recommends revisions by Taku River Tlingit's own citizens. As TRTFN is currently functioning as an Indian Act Band, we are required to either have a code of our own, such as this one, or to have our Citizenship administered by the Federal Government. Through acknowledgement of TRTFN Citizenship through this code, our Citizens are not ceding or surrendering any of their S.35 rights as defined under the Canadian Constitution, any of their rights as defined by Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms, nor do they cede or surrender any of their inherent allodial rights and title to the land and waters of Lingit aaní.

2.0 Definitions:

2.1 "Citizen"

A person of Taku River Tlingit Ancestry who has been registered via the Citizenship Registration Process and any Tlingit person recognized by the Citizenship Commission based on criteria set out in section 3.0.

2.2 "Citizenship Commission"

The body appointed by Joint Clan Meeting to make decisions on citizenship based on part 3.0 and procedure as outlined in part 5.0

2.3 "Clan"

A recognized TRTFN traditional family group, or "house". See also: Moiety

2.4 "Elders Council"

Shall be established by the clan members in accordance with sections 6.4 and 6.5 of the Constitution and consist of a maximum of eight (8) elders; (Defined as per TRTFN Constitution)

2.5 "Enrollment officer"

The keeper of the citizenship list and process, as detailed in section 4.0

¹ Band control of membership

10 (1) A band may assume control of its own membership if it establishes membership rules for itself in writing in accordance with this section and if, after the band has given appropriate notice of its intention to assume control of its own membership, a majority of the electors of the band gives its consent to the band's control of its own membership. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/section-10.html>

2.6 “Honorary Citizen” To be revised at a future JCM

A non-voting person, not of Tlingit Ancestry or descent, who meets the eligibility criteria set out in section 6.0 and is accepted into TRT by unanimous decision of the Citizenship Commission.

2.7 “JCM”

Joint Clan Meeting As per TRTFN Constitution.

2.8 “Matriarch”

The eldest female of a clan or family.

2.9 “Minor”

A TRTFN citizen under the age of 18.

2.10 “Moiety”

“Tlingit society is organized in two reciprocating divisions called moieties. The two moieties are named Raven and Eagle. Raven is sometimes also known as Crow, and Eagle as Wolf. Crow and Wolf may in fact be older terms. For example, the word “wolf” always appears in songs as the term for that moiety, and women of the Raven moiety are usually referred to as Tsaxweil Sháa, meaning “Crow Women.” Crow and Wolf are commonly used by the Inland Tlingit, and Raven and Eagle on the coast.” (Dauenhauer : Haa Tuwunaagu Yís, p.6)

2.11 “Spouse”

A person who is married to, OR, who cohabitates with a Citizen in a conjugal relationship for three years outside of marriage and provides proof of such.

2.12 “Taku River Tlingit Ancestry”

Lineage linked to the Taku River Tlingits as verified via the TRTFN family tree database.

2.13 “TRTFN”

Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

3.0 Citizenship Criteria

3.1 Lineage & Ancestry

All those who have Taku River Tlingit lineage and ancestry are Tlingit by blood. Tlingit society is based upon a Matrilineal Clan system, and those people follow their mother's clan and ancestry. Children who have a Tlingit father and a non-Tlingit mother, are known as a "Child of" the fathers clan and will be approved based on their ancestry & relationship to a Citizen. While in pre-contact times Tlingit society was based solely on

matrilineal ties, in present days both lineage classes are equal to the Tlingit people and if you have Tlingit blood you are considered a Tlingit person.

3.2 Eligibility

A person is eligible to be registered as a TRTFN Citizen if:

1. That person's name appears on the list of TRTFN as of June 30, 1987 which is the date when our first Citizenship Code was accepted by the Government of Canada. This clause is about ensuring that nobody's rights are extinguished through the 1987 process of taking control of our own Citizenship.
2. That person has ancestral lineage to a TRTFN Clan as verified by the TRTFN's ancestral database.

3.3 In-eligibility

The following persons are not eligible to be registered as a Citizen of TRTFN:

- 3.3.1 A person registered as a Citizen/Member of another First Nation.
- 3.3.2 The Child of an Honorary Citizen who is not otherwise eligible to be a Citizen of TRTFN.

4.0 Citizen Rights

Through acknowledgement of TRTFN Citizenship through this code, our Citizens are not ceding or surrendering any of their S.35 rights as defined under the Canadian Constitution, any of their rights as defined by Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms, nor do they cede or surrender any of their inherent allodial rights and title to the land and waters of Lingit aaní. TRTFN Citizenship Code upholds both the aforementioned rights as well as include the right to:

1. Vote and run in all TRTFN elections in accordance with TRTFN Election Code
2. Hunt, fish and gather according to Taku River Tlingit law
3. Any royalties or revenues acquired by TRTFN as determined by JCM
4. Learn, Speak, Teach, Encourage and support in any way the revitalization and preservation of Lingít yoo x'atangi (Lingít Language)
5. Learn, encourage and support Lingít Kusteeyí (Tlingit Culture) ensuring it is taught to future generations, including the right to learn about clan crests, songs and stories and to receive regalia reflective of their clan.
6. Learn and uphold Taku River Tlingit laws around land, air, water, and all our relations including at.óow, names and other ancestral ties, ensuring they are taught to future generations.
7. Right to participate in Tlingit meetings, serve on committees, and other bodies
8. Speak entirely in Lingít yoo x'atangi and have a translator present if possible.
9. Right to occupy space in Lingít aaní (our territory) on the land and waters which have sustained us since time immemorial.
10. Any other benefits as defined by TRTFN through consensus at a JCM

5.0 Honorary Citizen Criteria **To be revised at a future JCM**

5.0-5.3

In the past, it was customary for Elders and Matriarchs to adopt individuals who had reached some degree of esteem, through contributions to a specific family, clan, or community. Our Elders have informed us that we do not adopt our own citizens, but that adoptions were a means of recognizing and honoring non-Tlingit individuals. The term “Honorary” recognizes the honor this process bestows upon specific non-Tlingit, non-voting individuals who contribute to the community in a dedicated fashion and who deserve this recognition. These individuals may be invited to select meetings, but are not allowed to speak.

5.1 Honorary Citizen Eligibility

An Applicant may be eligible to be accepted by the Citizenship Commission as an Honorary citizen, if they meet the following criteria:

- 5.1.1 The person is a Spouse of a TRTFN Citizen. Spouse defined via section 2.11
- 5.1.2 The person has a longstanding relationship in the TRTFN community in which they have contributed to the community for the benefit of the TRT people.
- 5.1.3 The person has agreed to adhere to Tlingit laws and ways of being

5.2 Honorary Citizen Approval Criteria

In order to be accepted as an Honorary Citizen the Applicant must meet the following requirements:

- 5.2.1 Must have a legitimate reason to join that is accepted by the Citizenship Commission such as the following:
 - The privilege to hunt or fish in TRTFN territory is to provide for their Tlingit family or for the TRTFN Community and not for personal financial benefit.
 - The applicant has a longstanding relationship in the TRTFN community in which they have contributed to the community for the benefit of the TRT people.
- 5.2.2 Must be adopted into a Tlingit Clan in the traditions specific to that clan.
- 5.2.3 Must be approved by vote via the Citizenship Commission.
- 5.2.4 Individuals who have been adopted prior to this code can be grandfathered in if they wish, for there are some who have been adopted but who were never recognized as an Associate Member (Former terminology for Honorary Citizen)

5.3 Revoking Honorary Citizenship

As Honorary Citizens do not hold any Tlingit lineage, they do not have any inherent right to Citizenship, it is a privilege. An Honorary Citizen may have their Citizenship revoked in specific scenarios.

- Abuse of hunting and fishing privileges for personal financial benefit
- Abuse of Tlingit Citizen, partner, children or other relatives
- Inflicting Harm upon the community through distribution of drugs or other substances

- Case by Case basis as circumstances may require.

Depending on the nature of the offense, at times the CDC representative on the Citizenship Commission may need to relay information to and from CDC for further action to be taken.

6.0 Honorary Citizen Privileges **To be revised at a future JCM**

6.0-6.1

Any person not otherwise entitled to be registered who meets the eligibility criteria set out in section 5.0 and is accepted into TRT by decision of the Citizenship Commission, shall be recognized by the Commission as an “Honorary Citizen”, and shall have only Honorary Citizen privileges and responsibilities.

- 6.01 Hunting, fishing and gathering according to TRT Traditions
- 6.02 Other benefits defined through Mandate of a JCM.

6.1 Honorary Citizen Limitations

As the privileges bestowed on Honorary citizens are a privilege, not a right, there are limitations to those privileges and customs within Tlingit society that they must adhere to. Such as:

- 6.1.1 May attend meetings and administrative gatherings for TRTFN, but may not speak.
- 6.1.2

7.0 Adoptions **To be revised at a future JCM, 7.0-7.4**

Adoption is a Tlingit cultural process, unique to each clan and based on an individual’s Tlingit lineage. Citizenship is a colonial concept in which people are Citizens of the Taku River Tlingit Nation. Clans connect people to their ancestors and histories. For the purposes of this document, we are focusing on scenarios where Tlingit adoptions would be required. Adoptions such as those which meet the definition of colonial government understandings are not about cultural identity and community affiliation, and are not included in this document. It is not the place of the Commission to tell a person which clan they belong to, ultimately it is the clan’s decision but having access to the individual’s lineage ensures that the Commission can support the process of adoption by connecting any individuals who need it to the appropriate Clan leaders and Matriarchs.

7.1 Adoption Timing

Citizenship is not contingent upon adoption. Adoptions can occur before or after approval of Citizenship for those with ancestral lineage to TRT. Those who apply without lineage have adoption as a requirement as per section 5.2 (Honorary Citizen) of this code.

7.2 Requiring Adoption

Clanless individuals are often met with discrimination within their own communities. The word for a clanless individual in Lingít yoo x'atangi is a severe insult which speaks to the importance of ensuring all Tlingit requiring adoption are supported.

Because of the traditional knowledge around clanless individuals found within Tlingit language, it is crucial that we support those who need to be adopted in that process. Matrilineally connected individuals already have a clan through their mother. Patrilineally connected individuals are known as a "Child of" their fathers clan.

7.3 Patrilineal Adoptions

The Citizenship Commission and the Enrollment officer will recognize those registrations that are approved, but do not have a clan yet, and will direct these citizens to their respective Clan Leader, Matriarch and Elders. It will be the responsibility of the Clans to perform the necessary adoptions in due process.

Citizens not yet adopted into a Clan, such as those who are patrilineally connected, will be identified by Moiety in the Citizenship Registrar to ensure their ability to run or vote in clan specific instances.

OR: Citizens not yet adopted will be identified as such in the registry and cannot vote or run in clan-specific instances until such time as they are adopted into a clan.

Patrilineally connected Citizens who require adoption will have the clan they are to be adopted by identified by tracing back the individual's Dad's, father's, mother to find the correct opposite clan. This procedure is in accordance with established protocol for these scenarios from our Lingít relatives in other Kwaans.

7.4 Honorary Citizen Adoptions

The adoption process for Honorary Citizen's is performed the same as that for Tlingit Citizens, but done following adoption of Tlingit citizens, not before.

Honorary Citizens should be introduced to the clan by the Matriarch or Elder that wishes to adopt them, as a part of their adoption process.

8.0 Enrollment Officer

8.1 Enrollment Responsibilities

The Enrollment Officer shall be appointed by the CDC and shall have the following responsibilities:

Or appointed by the Citizenship Commission

- 8.1.1 Maintaining the TRTFN Citizenship registry which is the Master Contact List for Citizens.
- 8.1.2 Processing and approving registrations according to the Citizenship criteria within a period no longer than (30) days following the receipt of the application, or referring to the Citizenship Commission where the registration criteria is in question.
- 8.1.3 Notifying each registrant in writing, the determination of eligibility.
- 8.1.4 Providing information concerning this Citizenship Code.
- 8.1.5 Co-chairing and arranging meetings of the Citizenship Commission.
- 8.1.6 Provide an Official Voters List when requested as required in TRTFN Elections Code Section 11.1.

9.0 The Citizenship Commission

In the 1987 code there was not any due process by which this commission was established. This version provides some guiding principles for the establishment of the Commission going forward.

9.1 Commission Establishment

The Citizenship Commission shall be established by a Joint Clan Meeting and shall consist of one Citizen of each active Clan as referenced by the foreword and a representative of CDC. Alternate representatives will be appointed at the same JCM. If an active Clan does not have a representative, the Commission will follow the process outlined in their TOR to ensure the aforementioned Clan's approval and involvement.

9.2 Commission Responsibilities

The Citizenship Commission shall have the following responsibilities:

- 9.2.1 Act as an information source for the Enrolment Officer.
- 9.2.2 Support the Enrolment Officer in determination of a decision on an application utilizing criteria set out herein regarding Citizenship
- 9.2.3 Make a unanimous decision within sixty (60) days when a matter has been presented for appeal. (see section 12.0)
- 9.2.4 Make recommendations on matters related to the Citizenship Code.

A more detailed outline of the Citizenship Committee Roles and Responsibilities is in the Citizenship Committee Terms of Reference Document.

10.0 Elders Council

The Elders Council Shall be established in accordance with the TRTFN Constitution. The Council shall have the following responsibilities:

- Advising the Enrollment Officer and Citizenship Commission when requested for matters relating to Citizenship Registrations.
- Act as the Final Appeal facilitators in the Appeal Process as outlined in Section 11.0
- Participate in the Code Review Process as outlined in section 14.011.0

11.0 Appeals

11.1 Appeals Process

If a Citizenship Application does not meet the criteria set out in this Code, they will be notified in writing by the Enrollment officer and be given the option to request an appeal. If they request an appeal in writing, the Enrollment officer will implement the following process:

1. The Enrollment Officer will inform the Citizenship Commission of the notice of appeal and will provide the applicant's documentation to the Commission for them to review.
2. The Enrollment Officer will organize a meeting within one month (30 days) of the notice of appeal between the Applicant and the Commission. The Applicant will be advised by the Enrollment Officer of the nature of this meeting, which serves to aid the Commission in their decision.
3. The Citizenship Commission will meet with the Applicant and discuss the reasons for application and history. The questions asked in this meeting will be provided by the Enrollment officer to the Applicant prior to the meeting.
4. The Commission will invite the applicant to exit, and the table will deliberate.
5. The Commission will reach a decision to approve or deny Citizenship via unanimous decision in this meeting and will notify the Applicant in writing within one (1) week of the meeting.
6. If the Appeal is denied for any reason by the Citizenship Commission, a final appeal may be made to the Elders Council.
7. If a final appeal in writing is requested, the Enrollment Officer will assist the Applicant in the process specific to the Elders Council.

11.2 Appeals Representation

In the event that the Registrant is unable to represent themselves, (ie a child or vulnerable adult) the Applicant may have a representative appointed for this process, such as a parent, legal guardian or other designated representative.

12.0 Citizenship Withdrawal **To be revised at a future JCM**

12.1 Citizenship Withdrawal

Any Citizen may withdraw their Citizenship by filling out a Citizenship Withdrawal form and submitting it to the Enrollment Officer.

- 12.1.2 After the Enrollment Officer receives a withdrawal form, they will instruct the person that they have up to five business (5) days to reconsider and after this timeframe the consequences of withdrawal will be effective immediately. In instances where the individual chooses not to withdraw in writing, they shall retain their Citizenship.

12.2 Consequences of Withdrawal

The consequence of withdrawal of Citizenship are as follows:

12.2.1 The person who has withdrawn their Citizenship will be removed from the Citizenship Registry immediately and their corresponding rights and responsibilities will be terminated.

12.2.2 If a person wishes to reapply to be a Citizen after they have withdrawn their Citizenship, they will have their application sent directly to the Citizenship Commission for their decision.

12.2.3 If a person has withdrawn and reapplied more than two times, the Commission may reject the application based on this.

12.3 Citizenship Review

If the Enrolment Officer finds that a Citizen holds Citizenship or Membership with another First Nation, the following process will be implemented.

12.3.1. The Citizen will have their Citizenship reviewed via the Citizenship commission and will be notified of the review and following process

12.3.2. The Enrollment officer will schedule this topic to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

12.3.3. The Enrollment officer will reach out in writing on behalf of the Citizenship Commission to set up a meeting with the Citizen.

12.3.4. A meeting shall transpire between the Citizenship Commission and the Citizen to discuss keeping their registration with TRTFN or withdrawing. A decision will be reached at this meeting regarding their withdrawal from TRTFN or the other First nation they have been found to be registered with.

12.3.5. If the Citizen wishes to remain with TRTFN they must provide written proof within one month (30 days) of the meeting in 11.3.4 of their withdrawal from the other First Nation.

12.3.6. If the Citizen wishes to withdraw from TRTFN, the process mentioned in section 11.1 of this code shall be implemented.

12.3.7. If the Commission and the Enrollment officer find evidence that there have been benefits received fraudulently by the Citizen from both TRTFN and the other first Nation, they must pass this information on to the Spokesperson, Clan Directors Council and the Elders Council for disciplinary measures.

13.0 Removal of Deceased Citizens

In order to remove a Citizen from the Citizenship Registry due to death, proof of this death is required. This can come in one of the following forms and must be verified by the Enrollment Officer. Each option must include the full name of the deceased, their date of death and birth.

- Death certificate
- Proof of *ku.éex'* such as a pamphlet, or other written documentation
- Clan confirmation, through a clan meeting the deceased's clan can verify a death in writing, providing this document has signatures of those in attendance
- Confirmed named grave site within the TRTFN Atlin Graveyard
- Written notice from three direct family members, (ie child, parent, sibling or spouse of the deceased)

14.0 Amendment and Review

14.1 Review Schedule

This Code shall be reviewed in an annually scheduled Citizenship Commission meeting dedicated to this purpose. In-person is preferred but electronic attendance may be required if budget or other factors prevent in-person attendance.

14.2 Review Team

The review team will include the Elders Council, Citizenship Commission, and the Enrollment Officer. Requested changes can be submitted to any of these bodies by citizens. All necessary review information will be provided to all of these bodies by the Enrollment Officer.

14.3 Ratification of Changes

Recommended changes if approved by the Commission will be taken to the earliest JCM for its consideration.