

# Notice to the Tla'amin Community from the Tla'amin Nation

February 28, 2019

## Subject: Revised Survey re: Tla'amin Citizenship

### Purpose

The Tla'amin Nation is distributing a new revised survey to gather the opinions of Tla'amin people on Tla'amin ancestry and Tla'amin Citizenship. We were hearing from people that they found the original survey distributed in Fall 2018 to be too technical, so we have modified the survey to get the best input we can. For those that had completed and submitted an earlier survey, we ask that you please complete one of the new surveys, and we apologize for the confusion and inconvenience.

The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from Tla'amin Citizens regarding their thoughts on what it means to be a Tla'amin Citizen in order to assess whether amendments to the Tla'amin Citizenship criteria may be required. This initiative is not going to remove anyone from Tla'amin Citizenship. It is about the future.

### Background

In early 2018, the Citizenship Committee was having some difficulty implementing the current Tla'amin Citizenship criteria and asked that the Tla'amin Government carry out a review of the *Citizenship and Enrolment Law*, in particular the Citizenship criteria. In essence, there are concerns among the Citizenship Committee and Legislative Assembly regarding the expansive, open-ended eligibility Tla'amin Citizenship criteria. This has raised questions about whether there should be reasonable limitations on qualifying for enrolment to be a Tla'amin Citizen.

Under the authority of a Tla'amin Legislative Assembly Order, the Nation's staff and Citizenship Committee have been instructed to undertake a comprehensive review initiative which goes from Fall 2018 – Fall 2019. There will be a variety of opportunities for Citizens to shape the content and direction of potential amendments to the criteria. Activities will include: in-person dialogue sessions (both on and off Tla'amin Lands); a survey (both paper and electronic); in-home visits, sessions with individuals/family groups/elders; and focus group sessions.

If you require assistance in completing the survey please contact Serena Barnes at the Tla'amin Governance House. For more information, contact:

Serena Barnes  
Membership, Citizenship and Lands Clerk  
1-604-483-9646 ext.120  
[serena.barnes@tn-bc.ca](mailto:serena.barnes@tn-bc.ca)

**Note:** this initiative specifically deals with Tla'amin Citizenship and is being led by the Tla'amin Nation alone. **Please do not confuse Tla'amin Citizenship with “indian band membership” or “Indian status registration”, which also happens to be under review by Canada.**



# Tla'amin Citizenship – Engagement Survey

The purpose of the survey is to seek input and direction of Tla'amin Citizens regarding potential amendments to the *Tla'amin Citizenship and Enrolment Law*.

In early 2018, the Tla'amin Citizenship Committee identified concerns regarding implementation and operation of the existing *Tla'amin Citizenship and Enrolment Law*.

In this context, and consistent with amendment procedures set out in Tla'amin Law, the Tla'amin Nation is undertaking a review of the existing law, including eligibility criteria for Tla'amin Citizenship.

All information provided through survey responses will be kept anonymous in accordance with Tla'amin Law as per section 26 and 27 of the Tla'amin Nation *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Law*.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. The Tla'amin Nation Government and the Tla'amin Nation Citizenship Committee wish to thank all Tla'amin Citizens in advance for your time and commitment in responding to these important questions.

## Part 1: General Questions

**Q1:** A Tla'amin Citizen is defined as an individual enrolled as a Tla'amin Citizen in the Citizenship Register.  
Are you a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes       No

**Q2:** What age category do you fall within?

- 10 – 24 yrs of age  
 25 – 39 yrs of age  
 40 – 59 yrs of age  
 60 yrs of age or older

**Q3:** Do you currently live within the Tla'amin territory (i.e. Teeshosum, Powell River, etc.)?

- Yes       No

PART 2: Tla'amin Ancestry

What does ancestry mean to you?

Q4: What factors would you use to define Tla'amin ancestry? Please select all that apply.

- At least one biological parent (matrilineal/patrilineal) is a Tla'amin Citizen or eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen.
- Having Tla'amin lineage **and** being eligible to be added to the "554" list of Status Indians.
- A minimum blood quantum of Tla'amin ancestry (e.g. at least 10%).
- A minimum blood quantum of Tla'amin plus other First Nation ancestry (e.g. at least 25%).
- Other – please explain:

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Q5: What do you believe should be the requirements for demonstrating Tla'amin ancestry? Please select all those that apply.

- Birth certificate that confirms a parent is/was a Tla'amin Citizen or eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen.
- Statutory declaration (i.e. affidavit) from another Tla'amin Citizen.
- Ancestry confirmed by lineage on the Tla'amin family tree.
- Combination of 1 or more of the factors above.
- Other – please explain:

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## PART 3: Other Considerations for Citizenship Criteria

**Please read before answering Questions 6 & 7 below:**

Some other First Nations have required a social or cultural connection to their community or territory to gain citizenship. Examples of a cultural or social connection includes but is not limited to:

- *Full-time or part-time residence within the geographic area of the First Nation's traditional territory and participation in social and cultural life of that Nation's people;*
- *Regular visits to the First Nation's traditional territory during which social and cultural connections are maintained, for example during vacations;*
- *Regular hunting, fishing, other harvesting or other traditional activities with Citizens of the First Nation; or*
- *Frequent attendance at social or cultural events or gatherings of the First Nation.*

Q6: Should applicants for Tla'amin Citizenship be required, in addition to other criteria, to demonstrate a present day cultural and/or social connection with the Tla'amin Nation?

- Yes  No

Q7: If you have answered “yes” to Question 6, what are some ideas you have about how an individual can demonstrate or prove a cultural/social connection to Tla'amin Nation?

- Photographs or videos
- Statutory declaration (i.e. affidavit) from another Tla'amin Citizen
- Proof of residency or visitation (address or travel confirmation)
- Other – please explain:

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**PART 4: Custom Adoption**

**Q8:** Should an individual with no Tla'amin ancestry, adopted as a minor child under laws recognized in Canada, or by Tla'amin custom, be eligible for Tla'amin Citizenship?

- Yes  No

**Q9:** Should the adoption of an individual who is not a minor child qualify an individual for Tla'amin Citizenship? If so, please explain.

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**Q10:** According to your understanding – what are the features of Tla'amin custom adoption that Tla'amin law should recognize? Please select all that apply and provide any further comments in the lines provided.

- Established family arrangements (e.g. children raised by other family members as opposed to their biological parents).
- An adoption carried out according to Tla'amin ceremony and witnessed by individuals.
- Other – please explain:

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**Q11:** Please identify any Tla'amin practices and/or old teachings (Indigenous laws) that you are aware of that currently guide Tla'amin custom adoptions.

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Part 5: Ten (10) hypothetical examples of Tla'amin Citizen applications

Example 1:

*The individual is the great grandchild of someone who was added to the "554" band list prior to the Effective Date. The individual's great-grandmother did not have any Tla'amin, Klahoose, or Homalco ancestry (i.e. blood connection). The individual lives in San Francisco and has never been to Tla'amin territory.*

Q12: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes  No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 2:

*An individual's mother is not of Tla'amin ancestry but is on the "554" band list due to a marriage to a Sliammon band member in 1982. The individual's father is not the Sliammon band member, but is a Nisga'a Citizen, as the individual's mother conceived the individual with a Nisga'a man in 1990. The individual lives in Vancouver.*

Q13: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes  No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 3:

*The individual's father was added to the "554" band list prior to the Effective Date, as the individual's father transferred from the K'omox First Nation in 2015. The individual and her 5 siblings are currently still registered with the K'omox First Nation, but the individual and her 3 children are applying for Tla'amin Citizenship as they recently moved in with her father in the Tla'amin community.*

Q14: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

Yes

No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 4:

*An individual is applying for Tla'amin Citizenship at the encouragement of their cousin that is of Klahoose ancestry but transferred to the 554 list years ago and is now enrolled as a Tla'amin Citizen. The individual's cousin has signed a statutory declaration (affidavit) in support of the individual's Citizenship application stating that the individual and the individual's cousin shared a grandfather who was a Status Indian registered with the Klahoose First Nation. The individual lives in Powell River.*

Q15: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

Yes

No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 5:

*An individual whose family traces back to Churchhouse is currently registered with Homalco First Nation. The individual's brother is a Tla'amin Citizen who married a Tla'amin woman and transferred to the "554" band list in 2010. The individual is arguing that Homalco, Klahoose and Tla'amin were once all one Nation, and therefore the individual has Tla'amin ancestry. The individual lives in Campbell River but visits her brother and his family in Tla'amin every few years and she has attended numerous funeral services in Tla'amin over the years.*

Q16: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes  No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 6:

*An individual's mother is on the "554" band list, is of Tla'amin ancestry, and is eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen but is not currently enrolled as a Tla'amin Citizen. The individual's father is non-Tla'amin. The individual does not meet the criteria to become a Status Indian registered on the "554" band list. The individual lives in the Tla'amin community.*

Q17: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes  No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 7:

*An individual is 1/32<sup>nd</sup> (3%) Tla'amin from their mother's side (lineage verified by the Tla'amin family tree) and 1/2 (50%) Haida from their father's side. The individual is currently registered with the Skidegate Band Council but is making application to be a Tla'amin Citizen. The individual lives in Victoria and does not have any social or cultural ties to the Tla'amin community or territory.*

Q18: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

Yes

No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 8:

*An individual is 1/32<sup>nd</sup> (3%) Tla'amin from their mother's side (lineage verified by the Tla'amin family tree) and the rest of their ancestry is mixed European. The individual lives on Texada Island, has a close friend who is a Tla'amin Citizen who he often goes fishing with.*

Q19: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

Yes

No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 9:

*An individual's father has no Tla'amin ancestry but was adopted as a minor child under Canadian law by an individual who was on the "554" band list prior to the Effective Date. The individual's father was raised in Surrey and visited the Tla'amin community a few times as a child. The individual applying for Tla'amin Citizenship lives in Tacoma, USA and has never visited Tla'amin territory and has no social connections to the Tla'amin community.*

Q20: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes  No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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Example 10:

*An individual's father has no Tla'amin ancestry but was adopted as a minor child by an individual who was not on the "554" band list but had Tla'amin ancestry (as verified by the Tla'amin family tree). The adoption was carried out according to Tla'amin ceremony and witnessed by Tla'amin people. The individual's father is a Tla'amin Citizen and was raised in the Tla'amin community but has lived in Vancouver for the past 30 years. The individual applying for Tla'amin Citizenship also lives in Vancouver and attends the Tla'amin Nation Christmas dinner every year with his father.*

Q21: In your opinion, should this individual be eligible to be a Tla'amin Citizen?

- Yes  No

Why or why not? (please explain)

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## INVITATION TO ALL TLA'AMIN MEMBERS/CITIZENS

Is your family interested in having the Tla'amin Nation hold a family focus group session for your family to learn more on our Citizenship Law and possible amendments if so please contact Serena Barnes at the Government House at 604-483-9646 extension 150 and put in your request.

- ✓ Would you like to learn more on Citizenship Law
- ✓ Would you like to know of possible changes happening in Citizenship
- ✓ Would you like to have your input on possible changes
- ✓ Would you like to understand the difference between membership and citizenship

Now is the time to have your voice heard, and understand the possible changes happening with our Tla'amin Citizenship Law.