**Member Application Package**

Effective: May 2022



# Miigwetch, Marci, Niá:wen, Merci, Thank you

Dear Community Member,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA) Organization.

Established in 1971, ONWA is the oldest and largest Indigenous Women’s agency in Canada. As a not-for-profit organization that empower and supports all Indigenous women and their families through research, advocacy, policy, community development and programs.

ONWA is committed to providing services that strengthen communities and guarantees the preservation of Indigenous cultures, identities, art, languages and heritage. Ending violence against Indigenous women and their families and ensuring equal access to justice, education, health services, environmental stewardship and economic development, sit at the cornerstone of the organization. ONWA insists on social and cultural well–being for all Indigenous women and their families, so that all women, regardless of tribal heritage may live their best life.

### Benefits of ONWA Membership

By joining ONWA you become part of an Indigenous women’s collective community focused on collective action through meaningful engagement, building Indigenous women’s approaches in community and expand the collective voices and leadership of Indigenous women in your community, provincially, nationally, and internationally.

By becoming an ONWA member, you will have access to:

* Direct and meaningful engagement on issues facing Indigenous women
* Opportunities for capacity building supports and education/training sessions;
* Increased visibility to advocate and support for your Indigenous women in your communities
* Opportunities to collectively advocate and influence both provincial and national governments that impact Indigenous women in their communities.
* Support on increasing awareness of Indigenous women's leadership, strengths and resiliency
* The opportunity to attended ONWA’s Annual General Assembly and participate in setting strategies for the agency as well as elect our Directors to the governing Board

Please provide us with the enclosed information about our organization to assist you and your group in uniting with us. We look forward to hearing from you and we encourage you to contact 1-800-667-0816 if you have any questions. **We are here to help!**

Sincerely,

Cora-Lee McGuire-Cyrette
Executive Director

# Ontario Native Women’s Association

## Mandate

The Association is a not-for-profit corporation that empowers and supports Indigenous women and their families in the Province of Ontario. ONWA is a voice for Indigenous Women’s issues. ONWA encourages the participation of Indigenous women in the development of federal, provincial, municipal/local government policies that impact their lives and ensure issues affecting Indigenous women and their families are heard at key government tables.

ONWA is committed to providing services that strengthen communities and guarantees the preservation of Indigenous culture, identity, art, language and heritage. Ending violence against Indigenous women and their families and ensuring equal access to justice, education, health services, environmental stewardship and economic development, sits at the cornerstone of the organization. ONWA insists on social and cultural well-being for all Indigenous women and their families, so that all women, regardless of Indigenous heritage, may live their best life.

## Vision

At the Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA), we celebrate and honour the safety and healing of Indigenous Women and Girls as they take up their leadership roles in the family, community and internationally for generations to come.

​Our Structure

ONWA’s leadership is based on a Policy governing board of Directors comprising of 12 Indigenous women, including four youth Director positions to ensure the mentorship and voices of our future generation is reflective in our work. All the Directors are elected from ONWA's membership. Our membership also appoints a Grandmother’s Council to support the Directors with good guidance.

ONWA's membership consists of 11 Chapters (incorporated organizations providing front-line services) and 21 Councils (grassroots groups supporting community development models), representative of ONWA's four regional directions – North, South, East, West – throughout the province. For more information (<https://www.onwa.ca/about>).

Our structure is truly representative of the purpose of ONWA which is the restoring of Indigenous women’s leadership.

# About ONWA Membership

ONWA’s membership is based on the establishment of either Chapters or Councils within the province of Ontario. ONWA members are required to abide by the ONWA By-Laws (see Appendix B).

## Types of Members

An ONWA member is an organized group of at least five (5) Indigenous women at least eighteen (18) years of age, who reside in Ontario and who apply to become ONWA member.

There are two types of members (see definition Appendix A):

* **Chapter**: A group of Indigenous Women whose organization is registered and in good standing as an Incorporated group through the provincial or federal government.
* **Council:** A grassroots group of women, who chose not to become an Incorporated body

## Duties, Responsibilities and Obligations of Chapters and Councils

The role of the ONWA members is to provide a means for Indigenous Women within the community to structure and govern themselves, to actively support the aims and objective of ONWA, and to collectively promote the issues, ideas, and needs of their respective members and Indigenous women in their community.

It must be understood that to make change, Indigenous Women must become publicly and politically active. Affiliated ONWA membership are expected to role model healthy, strong Indigenous women’s leadership.

ONWA will meaningfully engage with your group to:

1. Host one (1) Community Event that supports Indigenous women
2. Provide education and capacity supports for your group

ONWA’s is here to assist our membership through meaningful engagements on identifying Indigenous women’s needs, issues and most importantly your solutions and we are here to work collaboratively together on restoring balance.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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| **About the Association/Group** |
| Name of Association: |  |
| Date of Establishment: |  | Is the association incorporated?   |
| **Types of Membership you have (see Definitions in Appendix A):** *(NOTE: 75% of each Chapter/Council’s members must be eligible to be Regular Members at all times)* |
|    |
| **Association/Group MAIN Contact Information (This is where ONWA will send information to)** |
| Address: |  |
| Town/City: |  | Postal Code: |  |
| Phone: |  | Cell: |  | Email: |  |
| **About Your Membership** |
| **President or Member One** |
| Name: |  |
| Gender (please specify): |  | Date of Birth: |  |
| How does this person identify? *Declaration of Indigenous ancestry may be requested.*      |
| Address: |  |
| Town/City: |  | Postal Code: |  |
| Phone: |  | Cell: |  | Email: |  |
| **Vice-President or Member Two** |
| Name: |  |
| Gender (please specify): |  | Date of Birth: |  |
| How does this person identify? *Declaration of Indigenous ancestry may be requested.*      |
| Address: |  |
| Town/City: |  | Postal Code: |  |
| Phone: |  | Cell: |  | Email: |  |
| **Treasurer or Member Three** |
| Name: |  |
| Gender (please specify): |  | Date of Birth: |  |
| How does this person identify? *Declaration of Indigenous ancestry may be requested.*      |
| Address: |  |
| Town/City: |  | Postal Code: |  |
| Phone: |  | Cell: |  | Email: |  |
| **Member Four** |
| Name: |  |
| Gender (please specify): |  | Date of Birth: |  |
| How does this person identify? *Declaration of Indigenous ancestry may be requested.*      |
| Address: |  |
| Town/City: |  | Postal Code: |  |
| Phone: |  | Cell: |  | Email: |  |
| **Member Five** |
| Name: |  |
| Gender (please specify): |  | Date of Birth: |  |
| How does this person identify? *Declaration of Indigenous ancestry may be requested.*      |
| Address: |  |
| Town/City: |  | Postal Code: |  |
| Phone: |  | Cell: |  | Email: |  |
| **Additional Members** |
| Do you have more members then noted above?  *If yes, please attach list with Name, Address, Date of Birth, Membership Type, Position (if appliable).* |

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| Declaration |
| The  hereby makes application for membership with the Ontario Native Women’s Association and we declare the following:We/I agree to provide a means for Indigenous Women within the Community to structure and govern themselves, to actively support the aims and objective of ONWA, and to collectively promote the issues, ideas, and needs of their respective members and their families.We/I agree to abide by the ONWA By-Laws We/I commit to the Members Code of Ethics are articulated in the ONWA By-Laws noted as follows:* I pledge to honour the belief of supporting the unity of all Indigenous women, regardless of legal categories – Status, Non-Status, Inuit, and Métis.
* I pledge to, at all times, stand and speak with the pride and dignity that my heritage demands.
* I will be tolerant of diversity, honest with my opinions and feelings and above all, respect the opinions and feelings of my Indigenous sisters, even though we may disagree.
* I will support and work toward the stated aims and objectives of the organization.
* I will, at all times, conduct myself in a manner that brings respect and credibility to the Ontario Native Women’s Association.
* At no time, will I say or do anything that might appear to discredit my Indigenous sisters or the Ontario Native Women’s Association.
* Any grievances, comments or criticisms that I may have, that relate to the provincial organizations, I will assume the responsibility to bring the present Board of Directors of the Ontario Native Women’s Association.
* Any grievance, comment or criticisms that I may have with respect to a Local chapter, will be brought to the attention of the Local chapter’s membership, and/or officers openly and honestly without prejudice.
* I will endeavour to work co-operatively with other groups, organizations or individuals – Native or non-Native, to solve problems and to support mutual concerns.
* I will work responsibly and co-operatively with fellow citizens towards a humane society – equal opportunity for participation, tolerance of differences and respect for all living things. (ONWA By-Laws)

I/We understand that additional information may be requested to complete the application assessment. Applying does not guarantee ONWA membership approval.By signing below, I have the authority and approval of the  to make this declaration on behalf of the association/group/organization. |
|  |  |  |
| Name | Signature | Date |

### Please Return the completed application to:

**Ontario Native Women’s Association**

**#15-684 City Road**

**Fort William First Nation, ON P7J 1K3**

**Fax: 807-623-1104 or email** **members@onwa.ca**

**Have questions?? We are here to help. Please call** **1-800-667-0816**

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| **Support Document Checklist** |
| **Chapter Applicant (Incorporated)** | **Council Applicant (Unincorporated)** |
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# Appendices

## Appendix A - Definitions

*For complete details please refer to ONWA By-laws.*

* **Chapter**: A group of Indigenous Women whose organization is registered and in good standing as an Incorporated group through the provincial or federal government. Chapters will be eligible to apply to become an ONWA service delivery site and will be required to enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the ONWA to formally strengthen roles, responsibility and accountability in the relationship.
* **Council:** A grassroots group of women, who chose not to become an Incorporated body, but maintain a presence to provide supports, educate and advocate for Indigenous women and or children in their community. These groups can also be in the process of becoming an ONWA Chapter.
* **Regular Member (Voting):** Female person of Indigenous ancestry, at least eighteen (18) years old, who expresses an interest in working towards the Councils stated aims and Objective.
* **Member at Large**: Female person of Indigenous Ancestry, at least eighteen (18) years old, who wishes to work with the Association, and whose application is approved by an affiliated Chapter of the Association and is a resident of Ontario.
* **Honourary Member:** Any female person of Indigenous ancestry who, in the opinion of the Board of Directors of the Association merits such recognition, accepts the membership and is granted this title by ONWA’s Board of Directors and is ratified by the membership at an Annual Assembly.