

Factsheet #5

Déline Got'ine Government elected representatives and advisory councils

The Déline Got'ine Government (DGG) is a made-for-Déline model of government. It will bring decision-making closer to the community level and will ensure decision-makers are accountable to the people who elect them.

The DGG will be structured and operate in a way that respects the Final Self-Government Agreement (FSGA), the Sahtu Land Claim Agreement and the Déline Got'ine ʔeʔadó (Constitution) and laws.

Elected Representatives

The DGG will be made up of an ʔekw'ahtidá (leader), a Déline K'awəđó Kə (Main Council), an ʔhda K'áowə Kə (Elders Council), a Beneficiaries Board and a K'a Dats'eredi Kə (Justice Council). Each has specific authorities and responsibilities under the FSGA.

The ʔekw'ahtidá (leader)

Pronounced: E-kw'ah-ti-day

- *The leader of the government*
- *A voting member of the Déline K'awəđó Kə*
- *The Déline Constitution may require that the ʔekw'ahtidá be a DFN Citizen who lives in Déline*
- *After the first election, the DGG will have the authority to decide what the process is for selecting the ʔekw'ahtidá*
- *The ʔekw'ahtidá's term cannot be more than four years at a time*

The Déljñę K'owədó Kə (Main Council)

Pronounced: Day-le-nay C'ow-way-doe Kay

- *Has overall responsibility for administering the DGG*
- *Makes laws and rules about how the DGG will operate*
- *Has 8-12 members, including the ʔekw'ahtjđá and the ʔqhda representative*
- *May create an Executive Committee, which will be made up of the ʔekw'ahtjđá and up to five (5) members of the Déljñę K'owədó Kə*
- *The Executive Committee would be assigned its duties by the Déljñę K'owədó Kə*

The ʔqhda K'áowə Kə (Elders Council)

Pronounced: Own(h)-da C'ow-way Kay

- *Ensures that Déljñę Elders continue to play a strong role in the DGG*
- *Provide advice to the DGG*
- *A member of the ʔqhda K'áowə Kə will be selected by the Elders to sit as an advisor to the K'owədó Kə*

Dene K'a Dats'eredi Kə (Justice Council)

Pronounced: Dene Kay Da-ts-ay-ray-dee-kay

- *An arm's length branch of the DGG that makes sure the DGG follows its own rules and respects the rights of all citizens*
- *Helps enforce DGG laws, including making decisions on the consequences for breaking DGG laws, providing alternative measures programs that deal with offenders based on Déljñę Got'jñę cultural practice*
- *Can hear appeals of DGG decisions*

Beneficiaries Board

- *Manages and gives direction with respect to land claim rights, lands, money and other assets*
 - *DGG can only make decisions about land claim rights and assets with the consent of the Beneficiaries Board*

- *All eligible Déljñę Sahtu Land Claim beneficiaries, no matter where they live, can run to be on the Beneficiaries Board and can vote for the Beneficiary Board members*
- *The DGG will pass a law that describes the Beneficiary Board, its responsibilities and how it will function. All beneficiaries must be consulted about this law.*

Accountability of the DGG

The DGG is required to have laws, policies and procedures that ensure accountability. The DGG will be required be accountable for how it manages its finances in the same way as other governments in Canada.

Each year there will be a community gathering, called Łénnts'ehdé Dzené where the DGG reports to the community and beneficiaries and gets advice and direction from the people.

Under the FSGA, the DGG must make sure that people who are directly affected by a decision of the DGG can appeal the decision.

DGG elections

All residents of Déljñę who are Canadian citizens and meet age and residency requirements may run for office in the DGG and may vote in DGG elections for many of those offices.

Many elected positions in the DGG will be open for all residents to vote on. Some positions will be elected only by resident Déljñę First Nation Citizens.

The election of the Beneficiaries Board is different. All land claim beneficiaries, regardless of where they live can run for Beneficiaries Board and vote to elect the members of that Board.

The DGG's first election will take place before the Effective Date of self-government and will use the GNWT *Local Authorities Elections Act*. This is necessary so that the people elected are ready to take office in the DGG on the day self-government begins.

For the first election, anyone who is eligible to vote in elections for the Déłıne First Nation Band, Déłıne Land Corporation, or Charter Community elections will be eligible to vote in the first DGG election.

After the first election, the DGG will pass its own election law that describes who can vote, who can run for election, and how elections will be conducted. For example, the law may:

- *require that up to 75% of the councillors on the K'áowədó Kə (Main Council) are DFN Citizens*
- *require that the ʔekw'ahtıdédé (leader) and the representative of the ʔqhdá K'áowə Kə (Elders Council) who sits on the K'áowədó Kə must be DFN Citizens*
- *set the voting age as low as sixteen years old*
- *have voting for the ʔekw'ahtıdédé happen by traditional methods or by secret ballot*

The FSGA sets some criteria that must be met by the DGG election law. The law must ensure that DFN Citizens who are eighteen years old can vote for the Déłıne K'áowədó Kə and can nominate and vote for the ʔekw'ahtıdédé. The law must also provide a way for people to appeal the results of an election.

**** For an illustration of DGG structure and functions, see diagram #4 in this information kit.***