

# Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

## Terms of Reference for the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs

Enacted by MCED #111 / 2021 - 2022  
Approved on: 7, Enníska / February 2022

### Purpose

- 1.1 This document establishes and describes the position of the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs (formerly referred to as the “Grand Chief”) of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke as an elected representative of the community of Kahnawà:ke and as a member of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Ratitsénhaienhs (formerly referred to as the “Council of Chiefs”).

### Appointment and Authority

- 2.1 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is elected according to the *Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Election Law*. This document and all provisions contained within it are superseded by the *Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Election Law* and are subject to consistency with the Law as it may be amended.
- 2.2 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is a member of the Ratitsénhaienhs, and in addition to the authorities set out in the *Terms of Reference for Ietsénhaienhs/Ratsénhaienhs*, is the leader and spokesperson for both the Ratitsénhaienhs and the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke as an organization.
- 2.3 At the start of each term of office, the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs shall select a Ietsénhaienhs/Ratsénhaienhs to serve as Assistant Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs, who, subject to approval by the Ratitsénhaienhs, will exercise the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs authority in the event of their extended absence, incapacitation, or if the position is vacated.
- 2.4 The Assistant Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs will fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the position of Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs when the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is temporarily unavailable.
- 2.5 Subject to periodic review and revision, the Ratitsénhaienhs may designate Ietsénhaienhs/Ratsénhaienhs to fulfil duties and responsibilities of the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs when both the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs and Assistant Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs are unavailable or if their positions are vacated.

### Accountability

- 3.1 In the exercise of the position’s authority, the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is accountable to all Kahnawà:kehró:ron, to the Ratitsénhaienhs, and to the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke as an organization. The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is expected to exhibit conduct and make decisions in a manner that respects the principles of fairness, dignity of persons, compassion and consensus consistent with the traditions, philosophies and customs of the Kanien’kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke.

- 3.2 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs shall respect and uphold all laws applicable within the Territory.
- 3.3 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs shall perform the duties and responsibilities of the position faithfully, conscientiously, loyally, diligently, respecting their Oath of Office and Code of Conduct, and in accordance with the administration guidelines and operations regulations for the Ratitsénhaienhs, and all other applicable MCK policies and regulations.

### **Role of the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs**

- 4.1 The role of the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is to lead the Ratitsénhaienhs in protecting and defending the rights and interests of the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke, promoting the overall well-being of Kahnawà'kehró:non, protecting the jurisdiction and integrity of the Territory, and contributing to the effective governance of the community.
- 4.2 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs will ensure that all practices, activities, decisions, and organizational circumstances of the Ratitsénhaienhs and the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke are lawful, prudent, and consistent with Indigenous governance principles and accepted business and professional ethics.
- 4.3 Accordingly, the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs is expected to:
- a) Ensure the effective operation of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke;
  - b) Create a climate of trust and collaboration among the Ratitsénhaienhs;
  - c) Ensure that Council Chiefs are fully informed on all matters affecting Kahnawà:ke as a community and which are within the purview of the Ratitsénhaienhs;
  - d) Contribute to the protection and advancement of Kanien'kehá:ka nationhood;
  - e) Foster economic self-sufficiency for Kahnawà:ke;
  - f) Foster social development and the well-being of all Kahnawà'kehró:non;
  - g) Ensure community development and service provision;
  - h) Revitalize Kanien'kéha and protect Kanien'kehá:ka culture and traditions;
  - i) Assert and defend Kahnawà:ke's jurisdiction;
  - j) Protect the environment and territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke; and,
  - k) Defend the principles of the Kahswéntha, the Two Row Wampum.
- 4.4 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs shall be cognizant of their position as a leader and ensure that their actions, whether personal or within their professional capacity, are taken so that they do not tarnish the public image or credibility of the Ratitsénhaienhs or of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke as an organization.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs has all the duties and responsibilities of a letsénhaienhs/Ratsénhaienhs in accordance with the *Terms of Reference for letsénhaienhs/Ratsénhaienhs*, the *Declaration of Office*, the *Framework for Relationship: MCK Ratitsénhaienhs & MCK Executive Director*, and all other applicable policies and regulations of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke.

- 5.2 In addition, on their sole authority and own discretion, the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs has the following duties and responsibilities:
- a) Chairing all duly convened Council meetings, and in collaboration with the Chief Political Advisor and with the support of the Executive Assistant to the Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs, carry out the following:
    - Approve Council Meeting package requests
    - Approve final Council Meeting agendas
    - Facilitate decision making among letsénhaienhs/Ratsénhaienhs
    - Oversee and manage digital Chairing responsibilities
    - Facilitate conflict resolution
    - Manage conflicts of interest
    - Call special Council Meetings or *in camera* sessions
    - Direct logistical coordination of meetings in accordance with pandemic restrictions and associated safety measures
    - Review all proposed resolutions and directives
    - Review, prioritize, and schedule Strategic Discussion items
    - Approve the weekly schedule of Strategic Discussions
    - Schedule follow up discussions on behalf of the Ratitsénhaienhs
    - Direct Memorandums to the Executive Office and key leadership regarding meeting format changes & changes to scheduling criteria
  - b) Calling meetings of the Ratitsénhaienhs and Public Meetings;
  - c) Serving as line supervisor of the Executive Director and Chief Political Advisor;
  - d) Issuing correspondence, providing signatures and approving press releases in accordance with directions from or decisions taken by the Ratitsénhaienhs;
  - e) Acting as the administrative intake and responsible authority on administrative and personnel matters pertaining to the Ratitsénhaienhs; and,
  - f) Serving in supervisory and administrative roles and functions related to Office of the Ratitsénhaienhs support and administrative staff, as may be required.

### **Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Attributes**

- 6.1 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs should possess a sound knowledge of the principles and practice of Indigenous leadership, Kahnawà:ke legislation, policies, programs, procedures, regulations and jurisdiction, a thorough understanding of community issues, an awareness of external political environments, and a strong grasp of the community's present and future needs.
- 6.2 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs should possess the skills necessary to be effective in the role, including:
- a) Verbal and written communications
  - b) Conflict resolution and mediation
  - c) Leadership, representation and advocacy
  - d) Negotiations
  - e) Critical thinking
  - f) Problem solving
  - g) Interpersonal relations and diplomacy
  - h) Coping and stress management

- 6.3 The Ohén:ton Í:iente/Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs must be committed to continually improving their ability to speak Kanien'kéha and continuing to advance their knowledge of Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten.

### **Coming Into Force of This Policy**

- 7.1 This document shall come into force upon the passing of a Mohawk Council Executive Directive to this effect.