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# TRADITIONAL TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS IN ONTARIO

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## INTRODUCTION

The following document lists which members work and offers the territorial acknowledgement appropriate for each local region. Ontario is covered by 46 treaties and other agreements, such as land purchases by the Crown signed between 1781 and 1930. Treaties are the legally binding agreements that set out the rights, responsibilities and relationships of First Nations and the federal and provincial governments.

The goal of this guide is to encourage the acknowledgement of the First Peoples on whose traditional territories we live and work. This acknowledgement appropriately takes place at the commencement of courses, meetings or conferences, and presentations.

Acknowledging territory shows recognition of and respect for First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples. It is recognition of their presence both in the past and the present. Recognition and respect are essential elements of establishing healthy, reciprocal relations. It is an act of reconciliation that involves making a statement recognizing the traditional territory of the Indigenous people who called the land home before settlers and, in many cases still call it home. It is an opportunity to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional and ongoing custodians of the land and serves to strengthen relationships. They are a way to insert awareness of Indigenous People and Inherent Land rights. It can be a simple way to recognize colonisation and a need for change in settler societies. These relationships are the key to reconciliation, a process to which the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) is committed.

For First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples acknowledging the land is not new but has been done since time immemorial. Acknowledging the relationships to the land is an ancient practice. When doing an Acknowledgement you must understand that a First Nations, Metis or Inuit will do the acknowledgement differently due to the differing cultures of their people.

However, acknowledging territory is only the beginning of cultivating strong relationships with Canada's First Peoples. The OFL encourages our affiliates to reach out to local First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities to open pathways for dialogue. All settlers, including recent arrivants, have the responsibility to consider what it means to acknowledge the history of colonialism. Land acknowledgements should not be just a checkmark on a list. Do your research and talk to the Indigenous communities that call this land their home. Ask those communities what they need, do not assume to know what their needs are. We will continue to be an active partner with our Indigenous allies across Canada, supporting their crucial work on the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, environmental degradation due to resource development policies, and the need for major public investments in Indigenous education, health care, social services, water infrastructure and housing.



Some of the organizations that we have worked with and will continue to support are Idle No More, Defenders of the Land, the Native Women's Association of Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis Nation, Families of Sisters in Spirit, and Tears4justice. We've also worked with Friendship Centres as well as First Nations communities who have been battling grave injustices, such as Grassy Narrows.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- We encourage you to take action on truth and reconciliation.
- Read the Truth and Reconciliation Final Report and consider how you can support the calls to action.
- Outreach to your local Native Friendship Centre.
- Invite a speaker to your next meeting to talk about truth and reconciliation.
- Make employment equity a bargaining priority. Ensure a workplace that welcomes Indigenous workers by bargaining collective agreement language that responds to their needs.
- Acknowledge Indigenous territory at all of your meetings, and reach out and forge partnerships with local Indigenous communities and organizations.
- Sponsor and promote Indigenous events and advocacy.

*This document has been reviewed by the OFL Aboriginal Circle and much effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in it is accurate. However, we would like to emphasize that this is a work-in-progress. We would very much appreciate suggested edits, if you note any inaccuracies. Please contact OFL at [info@ofl.ca](mailto:info@ofl.ca).*

## RESOURCES:

Another interactive map that tells you which traditional territory a city/town sits on:  
[www.native-land.ca](http://www.native-land.ca)

The Museum of History put together this site to give more information on Indigenous names for different areas: [www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/fp/fpz2d\\_1e.shtml](http://www.historymuseum.ca/cmhc/exhibitions/aborig/fp/fpz2d_1e.shtml)

Haudenosaunee – This name refers to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy comprising of these Nations: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora.

Anishinaabeg/Anishinaabek/Anishnabek/Anishnaabeg – this name covers Ojibway, Odawa, Algonquin, Potawatomi, Nipissing, Mississaugas, Saulteau, etc. – all the Algonkian/Ojibwa Nations.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We [I] will begin this event [**Name of the Event**] by acknowledging that we are meeting on aboriginal land that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning.

As settlers, we're grateful for the opportunity to meet here and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land - for thousands of years.

Long before today, as we gather here, there have been aboriginal peoples who have been the stewards of this place.

In particular, we acknowledge [**Identify the appropriate territory**].

We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place. We also recognize the contributions of Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole.

As settlers, this recognition of the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities, and in particular to bring justice for murdered and missing indigenous women and girls across our country.

**Barrie** – the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa and Anishnabek. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Brantford** – the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabeg. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and directly adjacent to Haldimand Treaty territory.

**Cornwall** – the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Mohawk, Huron-Wendat. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Durham** – the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Grey-Bruce** – the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa and Anishnabek. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

*Note: **Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation** formerly “Cape Croker” is an Ojibway First Nations reserve on unceded territory in the Bruce Peninsula. Along with the Saugeen First Nation, they form the Chippewas of Saugeen Ojibway Territory. Chippewas of Nawash currently has a population of 700 individuals living on the reserve; however, the band roll has approximately 2080 registered in total.*

**Guelph** – the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral). This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

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**Hamilton** – the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabeg. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and directly adjacent to Haldimand Treaty territory.

**Huron** – the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa and Anishnabek. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Kapuskasing** – we are in Treaty 9 territory and the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of Cree, Moose Cree.

**Kenora** – we are in Treaty 3 territory and the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of Ojibway/Chippewa.

**Kingston** – the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Lanark** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee (St Lawrence Iroquois) peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Leeds and Grenville** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Oneida and Haudenosaunee (St Lawrence Iroquois) peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**London** – the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Attawandaron (Neutral), and Wendat peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Niagara Region** – the traditional territory of Anishinaabeg, Ojibway/Chippewa and Haudenosaunee peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**North Bay** – the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Nipissing First Nation Anishnabe. This territory is covered by the Robinson-Huron and Upper Canada Treaties.

**North Simcoe-Muskoka** – the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg, specifically Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by Lake Simcoe Treaty 16 and the J. Collins land purchase.

**Northumberland** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Williams Treaty.

**Oakville** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Orangeville** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and Haldimand Treaty.

**Ottawa** – the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people.

**Oxford** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

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**Peel Region** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples and home to the Métis. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Peterborough** – we respectfully acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinaabeg. We offer our gratitude to the First Nations for their care for, and teachings about, our earth and our relations. May we honour those teachings. This territory is covered by Treaty 20.

**Quinte** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee. This territory is covered by the Williams and Upper Canada Treaties.

**Renfrew** – the traditional territory of the Algonquin, and Anishnabek. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Sarnia** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Sault Ste. Marie** – we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land on which we are gathered is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg.

**St. Thomas** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Stratford** – the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

**Sudbury** – we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg.

**Thunder Bay** – we are in Robinson-Superior Treaty territory and the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg.

**Timmins** – we are in Treaty 9 territory and the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of Ojibway/Chippewa, Oji-Cree, Mushkegowuk (Cree), Algonquin.

**Toronto** – we wish to acknowledge this land on which we gather. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations. This land is governed by the Dish with one spoon covenant between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Confederacy of Ojibway and Allied Nations. This covenant is an agreement to share, work and protect this land together in harmony. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and live on this land.

**Waterloo** – the Haldimand Tract, traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada and Haldimand Treaties.

**Windsor** – the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

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## FIRST NATIONS ELDER PROTOCOL

Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples:

Let This Blog Be Your Guide [www.ictinc.ca/blog/first-nation-elder-protocol](http://www.ictinc.ca/blog/first-nation-elder-protocol)

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The following terminology is intended to provide a general understanding of some terms generally used by Indigenous, Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Métis, Inuit).

### Indigenous peoples

A collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. Often, 'Aboriginal peoples' is also used. The Canadian *Constitution* recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people — Indians, Métis and Inuit. These are three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

### Aboriginal peoples

The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people — Indians, Métis and Inuit. These are three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

### Indian

This is a legal term. Indian people are one of three cultural groups, along with Inuit and Métis, recognized as Aboriginal people under section 35 of the *Constitution Act*. There are legal reasons for the continued use of the term "Indian." Such terminology is recognized in the Indian Act and is used by the Government of Canada when referring to this particular group of Aboriginal people.

### Treaty Indian

A Status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown, or a person of Aboriginal ancestry who holds treaty status under the Federal *Indian Act*, as identified through the municipality codes indicating the registered reserve.

### Unceded Territory

In Canada, this means that it has not "relinquished title to its land to the government by treaty or otherwise."

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## First Nation

A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian,” which is found by many Aboriginal people to be offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term “First Nations peoples” refers to people in Canada, both Status and non-Status. Many Indian peoples have also adopted the term “First Nation” to replace the word “band” in the name of their community.

## Band

A body of Aboriginal people for whose collective use and benefit lands have been set apart or monies is held by the Crown, or declared to be a band for the purposes of the *Indian Act*. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of one chief and several councillors. Community members choose the chief and councillors by election, or sometimes through custom. The members of a band generally share common values, traditions and practices rooted in their ancestral heritage. Today, many bands prefer to be known as First Nations.

## Status Indian

A person who is registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act*. The act sets out the requirements for determining who is an Indian for the purposes of the *Indian Act*.

## Non-Status Indian

An Indian person who is not registered as an Indian under the *Indian Act*.

A Status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown.

## Indian Act

Canadian federal legislation, first passed in 1876, and amended several times since. It sets out certain federal government obligations and regulates the management of Indian reserve lands, Indian monies and other resources. Among its many provisions, the *Indian Act* currently requires the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to manage certain monies belonging to First Nations and Indian lands and to approve or disallow First Nations by-laws.

## Innu

Naskapi and Montagnais First Nations peoples who live in Northern Quebec and Labrador.

## Inuvialuit

Inuit who live in the Western Arctic.

## Inuit

An Aboriginal people in Northern Canada, who live in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador. The word means “people” in the Inuit language — Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

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## Land claims

In 1973, the federal government recognized two broad classes of claims — comprehensive and specific. Comprehensive claims are based on the assessment that there may be continuing Aboriginal rights to lands and natural resources. These kinds of claims come up in those parts of Canada where Aboriginal title has not previously been dealt with by treaty and other legal means. The claims are called “comprehensive” because of their wide scope.

They include such things as land title, fishing and trapping rights and financial compensation. Specific claims deal with specific grievances that First Nations may have regarding the fulfilment of treaties. Specific claims also cover grievances relating to the administration of First Nations lands and assets under the *Indian Act*.

## Métis

People of mixed First Nation and European ancestry who identify themselves as Métis, as distinct from First Nations people, Inuit or non-Aboriginal people. The Métis have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, French, Ojibway and Cree.

## The North

Land in Canada located north of the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel. AANDC’s responsibilities for land and resources in the Canadian North relate only to Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon.

## Nunavut

The territory created in the Canadian North on April 1, 1999 when the former Northwest Territories was divided in two. Nunavut means “our land” in Inuktitut. Inuit, whose ancestors inhabited these lands for thousands of years, make up 85 percent of the population of Nunavut. The territory has its own public government.

## Off-reserve

A term used to describe people, services or objects that are not part of a reserve but relate to First Nations.

## Reserve

Tract of land, the legal title to which is held by the Crown, set apart for the use and benefit of an Indian band.

## Tribal council

A regional group of First Nations members that delivers common services to a group of First Nations.