

**YUULU?IL?ATH? GOVERNMENT**

**REFERENDUM ACT**

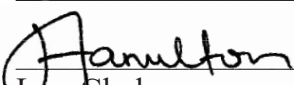
**YFNS 9/2011**



**OFFICIAL CONSOLIDATION – CURRENT TO JANUARY 23, 2023**

This is a certified true copy of the consolidated Referendum Act, YFNS 9/2011, current to January 23, 2023

Date: January 25, 2023

Signed:   
Law Clerk

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REFERENDUM ACT YFNS 9/2011  
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## PREAMBLE

Through our inherent right to self-government, Yuulu?il?ath has preserved and protected our territories and culture with the advice and counsel of our Ha'wiih. While embracing our past and relying on the guidance provided by our Ha'wiih, as a self-governing treaty first nation, Yuulu?il?ath also recognizes the importance of democracy and responsible government.

To encourage and honour the voices of our people, Yuulu?il?ath desires to give eligible voters the opportunity to take part directly in its political and legislative processes through referendums and other means on matters of public interest or concern. Yuulu?il?ath desires that referendums be conducted with honesty and integrity for the common good of all Yuulu?il?ath citizens.

Through the establishment of referendum rules and procedures, referendums and related processes will be conducted in a manner that promotes public confidence and trust in the integrity of Yuulu?il?ath officials, the Yuulu?il?ath government and the Yuulu?il?ath government legislative process.

Yuulu?il?ath adopts this Act based on these values.

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## PART 1 - INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS

### Short Title

1.1 This Act may be cited as the Referendum Act, YFNS 9/2011.

### Executive oversight

1.2 The President is responsible for the executive oversight of this Act.

### Application

1.3 This Act applies to the processes by which referendums or ratification meetings are held.

### Interpretation

- 1.4 (a) In this Act, words or expressions defined in the Elections Act that are also used in this Act will, except where the context requires otherwise or is otherwise indicated, have the same meaning as those words or expressions defined in the Elections Act, with necessary changes in the details.
- (b) For purposes of interpreting this Act and the Elections Act, a requirement in this Act to carry out a process, perform a duty or exercise a power in accordance with the Elections Act must be interpreted in the following manner:
- (i) a reference to an “election”, “by-election” or “regular election” in the Election Act is deemed to be a reference to a referendum or a ratification meeting;
  - (ii) a reference to “notice of election” in the Elections Act is deemed to be a reference to a notice of a referendum or a ratification meeting; and
  - (iii) with all other necessary changes in the details.

### Definitions

1.5 In this Act,

- (a) “Elections Act” means Elections Act, YFNS 42/2015.

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## **PART 2 - ORDERING A REFERENDUM**

### **As required by law**

- 2.1** The Legislature must, by Order, require that a referendum or a ratification meeting be held in the manner provided for in this Act when required by the Constitution or any other Act.

### **As ordered by the Legislature**

- 2.2** If the Legislature considers that an expression of public opinion is desirable on any matter of public interest or concern, the Legislature may, by Order, require that a referendum or a ratification meeting be held in the manner provided for in this Act.

### **As mandated by Yuulu?il?ath citizens**

- 2.3** Unless specifically required by the Constitution, the Legislature may, by Order, at the request of a majority of the eligible voters present and voting at a hitacu assembly, require that a referendum or a ratification meeting be held to determine public opinion on any matter of public interest or concern in the manner provided for in this Act.

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## PART 3 - PROCEDURES

### Ordering the referendum or a ratification meeting

- 3.1** An Order of the Legislature requiring that a referendum or a ratification meeting be held must
- (a) state the question that will be put to eligible voters,
  - (b) specify the date on which the referendum or ratification meeting will be held, and
  - (c) appoint an individual to act as the chief electoral officer.

### System electoral officer

- 3.1.1** (a) If the Legislature makes an Order under section 2.1, 2.2 or 2.3 requiring that a referendum be held, the Executive must, as soon as reasonably practicable, appoint a person to act as system electoral officer.
- (b) The Executive may, at any time, appoint a replacement system electoral officer if a system electoral officer resigns or is unable to perform its duties.

### Notice

- 3.2** At least 30 days before the day on which an information meeting or a special hitacu assembly for a referendum or ratification meeting is to be held, and at least 60 days before the day of the referendum or ratification meeting, the chief electoral officer must
- (a) post and publish a notice of the referendum or ratification meeting in accordance with Yuulu?il?ath law,
  - (b) post the voters list in accordance with section 5.5 of the Elections Act, and
  - (c) deliver in accordance with Yuulu?il?ath law to every eligible voter for whom an address has been provided to the chief electoral officer,
    - (i) a copy of the notice posted under subsection (a),
    - (ii) in the case of a referendum,
      - (A) instructions for general voting and advance voting,
      - (B) if applicable, a mail-in ballot with instructions on how to vote by mail-in ballot,
      - (C) if applicable, a PIN and instructions on how to vote by electronic voting, and

- (D) any other information that the chief electoral officer considers necessary or advisable for the better administration of the referendum, and
- (iii) an information package regarding the question in the referendum or ratification meeting.

**Content of notice**

- 3.3** A notice under section 3.2(a) must include the following:
- (a) a copy of the Order of the Legislature under section 3.2(a) relating to that ratification meeting or referendum;
  - (b) the time, date and place of the information meeting, special hitacu assembly or ratification meeting, as applicable;
  - (c) the question to be submitted to eligible voters; and
  - (d) the place where and the times and dates when information concerning the matter to be determined by a vote at the ratification meeting or referendum may be inspected in advance of the information meeting or ratification meeting.

**Individuals entitled to vote**

- 3.4** For certainty, only eligible voters are entitled to vote in a referendum or at a ratification meeting.

## **PART 4 - DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

### **Duties and powers**

- 4.1** For certainty, in relation to a referendum or ratification meeting, the chief electoral officer must perform the applicable duties and exercise the applicable powers of the chief electoral officer in accordance with the Elections Act.

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## **PART 5 - VOTING**

### **Referendum voting**

- 5.1** An eligible voter may vote in a referendum in accordance with section 5.1 of the Elections Act.

### **Voting at ratification meeting**

- 5.2** An eligible voter may vote at a ratification meeting in accordance with Part 6.

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## PART 5.1 - SPECIAL HITACU ASSEMBLY

### General

**5.1.1** This Part applies to a referendum held for the purpose of a Constitutional amendment.

### Special hitacu assembly

- 5.1.2** (a) Prior to conducting a referendum on a proposed Constitutional amendment, the Legislature must:
- (i) conduct a special hitacu assembly in order to seek the views of Yuulu?il?ath citizens on the proposed amendment, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Government Act, YFNS 2/2011;
  - (ii) seek the advice of the Ha'wiih Advisory Council on the proposed amendment; and
  - (iii) make any changes to the wording of the proposed amendment that the Legislature deems appropriate in light of the advice received from the hitacu assembly and the Ha'wiih Advisory Council.
- (b) The Legislature must conduct a referendum on the proposed Constitutional amendment within 30 days of a special hitacu assembly.

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## PART 6 - INFORMATION AND RATIFICATION MEETINGS

### General

- 6.1** (a) This Part applies if a Yuulu?il?ath enactment provides that
- (i) information must be given or a matter must be publicized at an information meeting, or
  - (ii) a matter must be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting.
- (a.1) For certainty, this Part does not apply to a special hitacu assembly held for the purpose of a Constitutional amendment.
- (b) Every eligible voter is entitled to attend an information meeting and a ratification meeting.
- (c) A person who is not an eligible voter may attend an information meeting or a ratification meeting only if the person is
- (i) a Yuulu?il?ath official or a member of the Yuulu?il?ath administration,
  - (ii) invited to attend by the director of operations, or
  - (iii) permitted to attend by the chair of the meeting.

### Information meetings

- 6.2** (a) If a referendum is held under this Act for a purpose other than a Constitutional amendment or a Yuulu?il?ath enactment requires a matter to be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting, the Legislature must hold at least one information meeting prior to the ratification meeting or referendum for the purpose of allowing eligible voters an opportunity to be provided information concerning the matter to be determined by a vote at the ratification meeting or referendum and to make representations to the Legislature respecting the matter.
- (b) The information meeting must be held at least 14 days prior to the ratification meeting or referendum and if more than one information meeting is required by a Yuulu?il?ath enactment, the first information meeting must be held at least seven days prior to the second information meeting.
- (c) An eligible voter at the information meeting must be afforded a reasonable opportunity to receive the information necessary for him or her to make an informed decision on the matter to be determined by a vote at a ratification meeting or referendum and to be heard or to present written submissions respecting the matter to be determined by a vote at a ratification meeting or referendum.

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- (d) If the information meeting relates to the granting of an interest in, or licence in relation to, Yuulu?i?ath lands or an amendment to an interest in, or licence in relation to, Yuulu?i?ath lands, the lands manager must ensure that
- (i) a report, to the satisfaction of the lands manager, providing a general description of the interest in, or licence in relation to, Yuulu?i?ath lands or its amendment, and
  - (ii) if required for the granting of the interest in, or licence in relation to, Yuulu?i?ath lands or its amendment, the appraisal of the fair market value of the appurtenant lands,
- is included in the information provided under subsection (c).
- (e) More than one matter may be included in a notice for an information meeting and more than one matter may be considered at an information meeting.
- (f) The Legislature must appoint an individual to chair an information meeting.
- (g) The chair of the information meeting may establish procedural rules for the conduct of the information meeting.
- (h) A written report of each information meeting containing a summary of the views expressed at the information meeting and the nature of the representations respecting the matter to be determined by a vote at the ratification meeting or referendum that were made at the information meeting must be prepared under the direction of the chair of the information meeting and maintained by the Legislature as a public record.
- (i) A report under subsection (h) must be certified as being fair and accurate by the person preparing the report and, if applicable, by the person to whom the information meeting was delegated under section 6.4.
- (j) An information meeting may be adjourned and no further notice of the information meeting is necessary if the time and place for the resumption of the information meeting is stated to those present at the time the information meeting is adjourned.

### **Ratification meetings**

- 6.3** (a) In order for a matter to be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting, a ratification meeting must be held in accordance with this Part.
- (b) The Legislature must appoint an individual to chair a ratification meeting.

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- (c) The chief electoral officer appointed under section 3.1 must attend a ratification meeting and conduct the vote on the matter to be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting.
  - (d) The chair of a ratification meeting must ensure that any information provided under sections 6.2(c) and 6.2(d) at an information meeting relating to the ratification meeting is available to the eligible voters at the ratification meeting.
  - (e) Subject to this Act, the chair of a ratification meeting may establish procedural rules for the conduct of the ratification meeting and, in so doing, must be guided by the Legislature Rules of Order and Procedure Act, YFNS 3/2011.
  - (f) The chair of a ratification meeting must conduct the meeting so as to allow
    - (i) time for Yuulu?il?ath officials and Yuulu?il?ath administration and their advisors to comment on the matter to be approved by a vote at the ratification meeting,
    - (ii) time for eligible voters to comment on the matter to be approved by a vote at the ratification meeting, and
    - (iii) time for the chief electoral officer to conduct a vote on the matter to be approved by a vote at the ratification meeting.
  - (g) Despite any other provision of this section, the chair of the ratification meeting may, by directive during the meeting, make any rules necessary to maintain order, including excluding any person from the ratification meeting, including an eligible voter who is disruptive or threatens the safety or security of anyone in attendance.
  - (h) Subject to subsections (i) and (j), the chief electoral officer may conduct the vote at a ratification meeting by a show of hands of eligible voters present and voting at the ratification meeting.
  - (i) Where it is not clear to the chief electoral officer in a vote held under subsection (h) whether the matter to be approved by the vote at the ratification meeting has been approved or rejected, the chief electoral officer must immediately conduct a second vote on the matter by secret ballot.
  - (j) Where it is clear to the chief electoral officer that a consensus of all eligible voters present at the ratification meeting has been reached, subject to subsection (k), the chief electoral officer may waive a formal vote on the matter to be approved by the vote at the ratification meeting by asking the eligible voters present if there is any objection to the matter being approved and if no objection is raised, the matter is approved.

- (k) If an eligible voter raises an objection as contemplated in subsection (j), the chief electoral officer must put the matter to a formal vote of the eligible voters present in accordance with subsections (h) and (i).
- (l) Only an eligible voter may vote at a ratification meeting.
- (m) The chief electoral officer must certify a vote held under this section.
- (n) A ratification meeting may not be adjourned.
- (o) A decision reached by a majority of the eligible voters present and voting at a ratification meeting is final.

### Delegating authority

- 6.4** (a) The Legislature may, by resolution, delegate the holding of
- (i) an information meeting for a matter that must be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting,
  - (ii) the information meeting and the ratification meeting for a matter that must be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting, or
  - (iii) the information meeting for a matter that must be approved by a referendum,
- to any person in accordance with this section.
- (b) If the Legislature makes a delegation under subsection (a),
- (i) that delegation does not apply unless the notice of the meeting under section 3.2 includes notice that the meeting is to be held by a delegate, and
  - (ii) the resolution making the delegation must be posted in accordance with Yuulu?il?ath law.
- (c) If the holding of an information meeting for a matter that must be approved by a vote at a ratification meeting is delegated under this section, that ratification meeting must not be held until the delegate reports to the Legislature in accordance with sections 6.2(h) and 6.2(i).
- (d) Despite the delegation of any duties or powers under subsection (a), the Legislature remains responsible for ensuring that the duties are carried out properly and the powers are exercised appropriately by the delegate under this Part.

**6.5** [Repealed]

## **PART 7 - COUNTING THE VOTE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS**

### **Counting the ballots**

- 7.1 (a) For certainty, Part 10 of the Elections Act applies to the counting of ballots in a referendum.
- (b) Despite section 10.6(b) of the Elections Act, Yuulu?il?ath government representatives may be present when the counting of ballots is being conducted.

### **Announcement**

- 7.2 The chief electoral officer must announce the results of a referendum in a timely manner.

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## PART 8 - EFFECT OF VOTE

### Binding results

- 8.1** Where the Constitution or any Act provides that a referendum or ratification vote is binding, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or that Act, if at least 50% plus one of the eligible voters who cast a valid vote in the referendum or at the ratification meeting vote the same way on the question, such results are binding on the Legislature.

### Implementing binding results

- 8.2** If the results of a referendum or ratification vote are binding, the Legislature must, as soon as practicable, take steps within the competence of the Legislature that the Legislature considers necessary or advisable to implement the results including
- (a) changing programs or policies or introducing new programs or policies, or
  - (b) enacting legislation.

### Non-binding votes

- 8.3** In the event that a referendum or ratification vote is held solely to obtain public opinion on a matter, the Legislature may utilize the results at its discretion.

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## **PART 9 - REVIEW PROCEDURE**

### **Procedure**

- 9.1** (a) An eligible voter may request a review of the referendum or ratification vote by the chief electoral officer on the grounds set out and in accordance with section 12.6 of the Elections Act.
- (b) A review under subsection (a) will be conducted in accordance with Part 12 of the Elections Act as if it were an application to set aside an election, with necessary changes in the details.

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## PART 10 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Regulations

- 10.1** (a) The Executive may make regulations that the Executive considers necessary or advisable for the purposes of this Act.
- (b) Without limiting subsection (a), the Executive may make regulations
- (i) respecting the manner by which a referendum or ratification meeting under this Act is to be held,
  - (ii) providing that specified provisions of the Elections Act apply to and in relation to a referendum or ratification meeting under this Act, and
  - (iii) adapting any provisions of the Elections Act with changes that the Executive considers appropriate.

### Offences

- 10.2** In relation to a referendum or a ratification meeting, a person who engages in an activity of the nature contemplated in Part 14 of the Elections Act commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 30 days.

### Commencement

- 10.3** This Act comes into force on the Maa-nulth Treaty effective date.

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## LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Referendum Act YFNS 9, 2011 enacted April 1, 2011

### Amendments

<b>Section</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>In Force</b>
2.1	YFNS 44/2015, s.4.10(a)	April 14, 2015
2.2	YFNS 44/2015, s.4.10(b)	April 14, 2015
2.3	YFNS 44/2015, s.4.10(c)	April 14, 2015
3.1 and 6.5(b)(i)	YFNS 44/2015, s.4.10(d)	April 14, 2015
6.3(g)	YFNS 44/2015, s.4.10(e)	April 14, 2015
8.3	YFNS 44/2015, s.4.10(f)	April 14, 2015
Preamble	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(a)	January 23, 2023
1.1	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(b)	January 23, 2023
1.5	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(c)	January 23, 2023
2.3	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(d)	January 23, 2023
3.1.1	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(e)	January 23, 2023
3.2	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(f)	January 23, 2023
3.3	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(g)	January 23, 2023
3.4	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(h)	January 23, 2023
5.1	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(i)	January 23, 2023
5.2	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(j)	January 23, 2023
Part 5.1	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(k)	January 23, 2023
6.1	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(l)	January 23, 2023
6.2(a)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(m)	January 23, 2023
6.3(d)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(n)	January 23, 2023
6.3(e)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(o)	January 23, 2023
6.4(b)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(p)	January 23, 2023
6.5	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(q)	January 23, 2023
7.1(a)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(r)	January 23, 2023
7.1(b)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(s)	January 23, 2023
7.2	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(t)	January 23, 2023
9.1(a)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(u)	January 23, 2023
9.1(b)	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(v)	January 23, 2023
10.2	YFNS 79/2023, s.3.1(w)	January 23, 2023

**Amending Acts:**

YFNS 44/2015            Enforcement Framework Amendment Act No. 2 enacted April 14, 2015  
 YFNS 79/2023            Voting Procedures Amendment Act enacted January 23, 2023

**Regulations enacted under this Act:**

**Orders:**