



## Native American Genealogical Research Tribal Enrollment Process [Examples – Cherokee Nation]

**Note:** All Native American Tribes have different criteria for tribal enrollment. The membership requirements are set forth in the Tribal Constitution, Articles of Incorporation or Ordinances.

**Common elements for enrollment include but are not limited to:**

- Lineal dependency from someone named on the Tribal Base Roll, or relationship to a tribal member who descended from an individual named on the roll.
- Some tribes require: Tribal Blood Quantum, Tribal Residency, and 'Continued Contact' with the specific tribe.

**This document gives an example of possible research and enrollment possibilities.**

**1) *An individuals lineage must be reconstructed before any tribal enrollment process:***

- Trace ancestry from living individual to a tribal individual alive before 1850.
- Primary sources must be used.
- Most tribes require *certified documents* of birth, marriage, and death records.
- Many tribes will not take photocopies, but require the certified documents with the enrollment application. (Which will be returned to you).
- Adopted individuals require a certified birth certificate to establish your connection to the natural parent with tribal enrollment.

**2) *Individuals looking at Tribal Enrollment connected to tribal benefits need to be aware that tribal benefits may not be connected to Tribal Enrollment.***

- Each tribe has criteria for benefits, which can include residency on tribal land.
- Educational benefits for upper education (college) generally require, in addition to tribal enrollment, the understanding that the individual will apply for items such as Federal Pell Grants.
- Tribes that offer tribal voting rights often have additional criteria.

**Note on the Dawes Roll:**

The following website can assist you in understanding how to use this roll:

<https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/dawes/tutorial/intro.html>

- These were lists of individuals accepted between 1898 and 1914 by the Dawes Commission as members of the following tribes:
  - Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole.
- Some individuals did not sign the Dawes Rolls for various reasons.

Note: There are several Cherokee tribes which include the Eastern Band of Cherokees [https://ebci.com] and the Keetoowah Band in Oklahoma [www.keetoowahcherokee.org]

**\*\* Note: Cherokees who settled in Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri were considered United States citizens and were unable to enroll in the Cherokee Nation. If you are a descendent from one of these individuals, you can not enroll even if heritage is proven.**

## Research Steps and Websites

**Completely documented research must be completed first using standard genealogical research procedures.**

### **Mesa County Public Library District**

- >e resources
- > by subject
- >Heritage Quest Online
- >U.S. Indian Census Rolls 1885-1940

See also 'Related Data Collections'

- Oklahoma and Indian Territory
- U.S. Indian Census and Rolls, 1851-1959

### **Tribal Enrollment Process U.S. Department of the Interior – General Information**

<https://www.doi.gov/tribes/enrollment>

### **To Contact individual Tribes**

#### **Tribal Leaders Directory**

<https://www.bia.gov/service/tribal-leaders-directory>

### **National Indian Law Library**

<https://www.narf.org/nill/>

### **Finding a Professional Genealogist with focus on Native American Lineage**

<https://www.apgen.org/>

### **Native American research websites: cyndislist.com > Native American > Enrollment and Tribal Membership**

<https://www.cyndislist.com/native-american/enrollment/>

### **Information on 'Blood Quantum' [\*\*note: no tribe will allow you to use DNA testing for enrollment]**

<https://nativegov.org/resources/blood-quantum-and-sovereignty-a-guide/>

Note on Blood Quantum as related to some tribal membership: This is just an example.

- Cherokee Eastern Band: Baker Roll of 1924, must be direct descendant with 1/16 Blood Quantum for membership.
- United Keetoowah Band: Blood Quantum of ¼ or higher.
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### **CDIB Form: (Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood)**

<https://www.bia.gov/online-form/certificate-degree-indian-or-alaska-native-blood-cdib-pdf>