



CONSTITUTION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What is the purpose of the Citizen Outreach Meetings?**

Citizen Outreach Meetings are considered “listening sessions” and are a way for the Caddo Constitution Commission to document the comments, feedback, concerns, and opinions of Caddo Citizens related to the Caddo Constitution. Caddo citizens will be allotted time to make a statement or share their feedback about the Constitution or any aspects of the Constitution that they believe need to be addressed. All meetings will be recorded by the Commission so that the information from all Citizen Outreach Meetings can be collected, analyzed, and taken into consideration when it makes its final report and recommendations to the Caddo Nation Tribal Council.

2. **Where can I find a copy of the current Caddo Constitution?**

The *Constitution and Bylaws of the Caddo Indian Tribe of Oklahoma* are available on the Caddo Nation website. On the main website, under the Government tab, select the Caddo Constitution Commission link. There, you will find a downloadable PDF copy of the Caddo Constitution. Here is a direct link to the Caddo Constitution Commission webpage: <https://mycaddonation.com/constitution-commission>

3. **Can you describe the process that established the Caddo Constitution?**

The Caddo Constitution is a living, breathing document that is a part of the history of the Caddo Nation. From its origins in 1938 to the most recent amendment in 2002, the Caddo Constitution has changed over time, yet it remains. The *Constitution and Bylaws of the Caddo Nation*, as adopted in 1976, represented a major revision of the tribe's 1938 Constitution. The 1976 Constitution contained a new Preamble and new articles setting forth the purpose, defining membership, and providing for the organization of the Tribal Council, and council and officer powers and duties. The new Constitution also added new procedures for elections and removals, and for initiative and referendum. The 1976 Constitution also contained revised bylaws, which added an oath of office for Tribal Council members and new meeting procedures, and it also provided for a hearing board. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs entered an order dated April 13, 1976, submitting the draft of the revised Constitution for ratification by the eligible voters of the Nation on June 26, 1976. The revised Constitution was ratified by a vote of 87 in favor, and 65 against.

***Note on the origins of the wording and structure of the original 1938 Caddo Constitution.**

Constitution. During the Indian Reorganization Act of 1936 (IRA) Era, federal agencies compelled the installation of one-size-fits-all tribal constitutions to standardize how decisions were made. This approach shifted power to small federally overseen councils and disrupted traditional decision-making processes (Wilkins, 2011).

4. What is the role of the Caddo Constitution Commission?

The Caddo Constitution Commission was appointed by the Caddo Nation Tribal Council in 2025 by Tribal Resolution. Information about the Commission can be found here <https://mycaddonation.com/constitution-commission>. The Commission is charged with gathering feedback from Caddo Tribal Citizens related to the Caddo Constitution using a fair and transparent process. They will hold citizen outreach meetings and issue surveys as a way to reach Caddo citizens and gather feedback and input. Citizen Outreach Meetings will include larger regional meetings, virtual meetings, and smaller community meetings. Citizen Outreach Meetings will take place through the spring of 2026. The Commission will submit a final report to the Caddo Nation Tribal Council by July 01, 2026, which will include all findings and recommendations for potential constitutional revision.

5. Why would we consider revising the Caddo Constitution at this time?

Outside of amendments made to the Caddo Constitution in 1986 and 2002, the Constitution has remained essentially the same since 1976. The Caddo Nation Tribal Council believes it is time for Caddo Citizens to review the current constitution to ensure it reflects the values and needs of the Caddo Nation in the 21st Century and that it creates a strong foundation to sustain the Caddo Nation for generations into the future.

To better understand the amendments to the Caddo Constitution, please see Constitutional Amendments.pdf found at https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/2dc7a2b6-16b1-4bf6-9fba-14c9d27b132b/downloads/1cil4ambo_236757.pdf?ver=1762198426036.

6. What elements does the current Caddo Constitution include?

The Caddo Constitution includes the following elements:

Preamble

Article I - Definition of Terms

Article II - Purpose

Article III - Tribal Membership

Article IV - Governing Body

Article V - Powers of the Tribal Council

Article VI - Duties of Tribal Officers

Article VII - Elections

Article VIII - Filling Vacancies

Article IX - Initiative and Referendum

Article X - Bill of Rights

Article XI - Amendments

Article XII - Recall and Removal

By-Laws

Article I - Oath of Office

Article II - Meetings

Article III - Compensation

Article IV - Hearing Board

Article V - Adoption

7. **What type of Government does the Caddo Nation currently have?**

The Caddo Nation currently operates in a one-branch system consisting of the Tribal Council. As stated in the Constitution under Article IV - Governing Body, “*the Caddo Tribe shall be represented by a Tribal Council*”. Article V - Powers of the Tribal Council, those powers are enumerated. Article VI - Duties of Tribal Officers states, “*the executive function of the Government shall be vested in a Tribal Chairman*”.

Note* Some variations on Government Structure that other Tribes have adopted include, for example, a Two-Branch Government with a Tribal Council and a Judiciary. A Three-Branch Government example includes Tribal Nations with Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches. The U.S. Government is another example of a Three-Branch Government.

8. **How does the Caddo Constitution impact me as a Caddo citizen?**

The Caddo Constitution affects every aspect of Tribal life. All services, business activities, and government-to-government interactions are governed by the Constitution. The Constitution dictates the type of Government we have, the makeup of the Tribal Council, the powers of the Tribal Council and the Executive Officers, the requirements for Tribal membership, the process for Elections, the voting districts of the Caddo Nation, and the powers of the membership. A specific responsibility of the Tribal Chairman under Article VI. Section Two (2) is that *the Tribal Chairman shall have the powers, duties, and responsibilities to carry out the plans and policies established by the Tribal Council* (among others). This power of the Tribal Council and the Chairman includes day-to-day management of all Caddo Nation Administration Programs and Services. Thus, the Constitution may impact Caddo citizens in many aspects. The Constitution is also the public-facing document that tells the world who the Caddo people are and how they may conduct business with us.

9. **According to the Constitution, who is considered Caddo?**

According to the Caddo Constitution, Article III - Membership, *The membership of the Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma shall be:*

- 9.1. *Section 1. All persons of the Caddo Indian blood who received an allotment of land as members of the Caddo Indian Tribe shall be hereby declared full blood (4/4) members of the tribe for the purpose of computing eligibility of their descendants for membership.*
- 9.2. *Section 2. All living lineal descendants of allottees eligible for membership under the provisions of Section 1 of this article born on or before the date of adoption of this Constitution.*
- 9.3. *Section 3. (a) All persons of at least one-sixteenth (1/16) degree Caddo Indian Blood who are descendants of enrolled ancestors, as defined and derived from Section 1, born after the date of the adoption of this constitution (June 26, 1976), except those persons otherwise entitled to enrollment with the Tribe who elect to*

be enrolled in another tribe.

Note* Please refer to the Caddo Nation Constitution for more information.

10. How can amendments be made to the Caddo Constitution?

According to the Caddo Constitution, Article XI - Amendments, “*Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by a majority vote of the Tribal Council or by a petition signed by fifty (50) of the registered voters of the tribe and, if approved by the Secretary of the Interior shall be submitted to a vote of the adult members of the Tribe in an election conducted pursuant to regulations of the Secretary of the Interior. Such amendments shall be effective if ratified by a majority of those who cast ballots. Copies of any proposed amendment shall be furnished to members upon request. Notice of a proposed amendment shall be given to the voting population at least thirty (30) days prior to an election on such proposal through appropriate publicity.*

11. How are Caddo citizens represented?

Under Article IV - Governing Body it is stated that *The Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma shall be represented by a Tribal Council.*

11.1. Section 1. Composition. The Tribal Council shall consist of four (4) officers

elected at large; Tribal Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and at least four (4), but no more than fifteen (15), District Representatives who shall be elected by districts.

11.2. Section 2. Apportionment. District Representatives shall represent voting districts containing substantially equal number of members in keeping with the one man, one vote concept. Adjustments needed to maintain apportionment shall be made pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of this constitution, Powers of the Tribal Council. For the first election under this constitution the four voting districts shall be, 1. Anadarko, 2. Binger, 3. Fort Cobb, 4. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma as specifically defined by the Superintendent of the Anadarko Agency with consultation and approval by the Executive Committee and in accordance with Article VII.

12. How will the Commission use the information it gathers?

During Citizen Outreach Meetings, whether virtual or in-person, large or small, the Commission will record and document all feedback and statements shared by Caddo citizens. All feedback gathered from Commission-sponsored surveys will also be collected and documented. All collected information will be reviewed, analyzed, and quantified by the Commission to inform its recommendations to the Caddo Nation Tribal Council related to the Caddo Nation Constitution or any proposed revisions.