



ABORIGINALITY POLICY

DOCUMENT CONTROL REGISTER

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

TITLE	VERSION	LINK/LOCATION
<i>Aboriginal Lands Act 1995</i>		https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/info%2Fcurrent/act-1995-098

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1. Introduction

The Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT) is the only statutory body representing the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community under the Aboriginal Lands Act 1995. ALCT's role is to manage, protect, and advocate for Aboriginal lands returned under the Act and to uphold the rights, culture, and heritage of the Aboriginal people of Lutruwita/Tasmania.

This policy outlines how Aboriginality is defined and verified in accordance with the Act and provides guidance on eligibility to access ALCT services, programs, and lands.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure consistent, fair, and culturally respectful recognition of Aboriginality.
- Provide clear guidance on what documentation is required to access ALCT programs, services, employment, and land.
- Maintain integrity in verifying Aboriginality while upholding self-determination and community recognition.

3. Legislative Context

Under **Section 3 of the Aboriginal Lands Act 1995**, an “*Aboriginal person*” means:

“a person who is descended from an Aboriginal inhabitant of Tasmania, who identifies as an Aboriginal person, and who is accepted as such by the Aboriginal community in Tasmania.”

This **three-part test** forms the basis of Aboriginality recognition across all ALCT operations.

4. Policy

The process for confirming Aboriginality is community-led and protects the self- ALCT is committed to ensuring that all recognition of Aboriginality is community-led, culturally safe, and based on integrity. It is based on the community preferred process that has been embedded within the *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995*.

Access to ALCT lands, programs, employment, or services requires individuals to demonstrate Aboriginality in accordance with one of the two pathways outlined below.

5. Evidence of Aboriginality

A. Tasmanian Aboriginal People

To meet the definition of an Aboriginal person under the *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995 (Tas)*, applicants must provide the following:

1. Aboriginal ancestry – Provide authentic evidence showing a direct line of ancestry linked to traditional Aboriginal society and Tasmanian Aboriginal families.
 - a. A verifiable family tree (can be obtained through Tasmanian Libraries, Archives Office).
2. Self-identification – Demonstrate genuine self-identification as an Aboriginal person. This requirement is generally satisfied when signing a declaration.

3. Communal recognition – recognition or acceptance by members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, meaning you must be known by other Aboriginal people and demonstrate your involvement with the community. It will help if:
 - a. You have three signatures from recognised members of the Aboriginal community.
 - b. The signatories acknowledge you or your family's identification as Aboriginal.
 - c. The signatories must not be from your immediate family group; they must be from family groups that are accepted members of the broader Aboriginal community.

Notes:

- No evidence is required if the applicant has existing recognition through an ALCT-approved membership or program record exists.
- Confirming communal recognition from an Aboriginal organisation would not be sufficient without separate support from local families and community members.
- DNA testing or genetic ancestry reports are not accepted on their own as evidence of Aboriginality.

6. Access to Services

Individuals who meet the above criteria may access ALCT services, programs, or opportunities such as:

- Cultural programs and training.
- Employment, including ranger positions.
- Land use requests or lease applications.
- Site access and accommodation (e.g., Larapuna Houses, Wybalenna).

ALCT's work is grounded in our responsibilities to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community. We recognise and welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from across Australia to connect, share, and participate in ways that honour cultural respect and collaboration.

7. Procedures

- **Application:** Individuals may be asked to provide proof of Aboriginality when requesting access to certain ALCT services or lands.
- **Verification:** ALCT will assess documentation against the three-part test of descent, self-identification, and community acceptance.
- **Outcome:** Applicants will be notified in writing if further information is required or if access is approved.
- **Confidentiality:** All personal and cultural information will be handled in line with ALCT's Privacy Policy.

8. Appeals

If an individual disagrees with a decision regarding Aboriginality verification, they may request a review by the Council or its delegated panel. The decision of the Council is final.

9. Confirmation of Aboriginality

ALCT acknowledges the importance of formal recognition of Aboriginal identity but does not issue letters of confirmation of Aboriginality.

Under the *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995 (Tas)*, ALCT's statutory responsibility is to manage Aboriginal land on behalf of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, not to determine or certify individual Aboriginal identity.

Individuals requiring confirmation of Aboriginality should contact a recognised Aboriginal organisation within Tasmania, or if applicable, their home Aboriginal organisation in another state or territory.

10. Responsibilities

Council

- Oversee determinations and uphold the intent and integrity of the *Aboriginal Lands Act 1995*.
- Ensure the policy is reviewed every two years or as required.
- Maintain confidentiality and compliance with legislation and ALCT policies.

Executive team

- Ensure that this policy is applied consistently and sensitively.
- Support and advise the Council in its determinations.
- Maintain confidentiality and compliance with legislation and ALCT policies.