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be denied if there is insufficient evidence that it meets one or more of the criteria. A criterion shall be considered met if the available evidence establishes a reasonable likelihood of the validity of the facts relating to that criterion. Conclusive proof of the facts relating to a criterion shall not be required in order for the criterion to be considered met.

(e) Evaluation of petitions shall take into account historical situations and time periods for which evidence is demonstrably limited or not available. The limitations inherent in demonstrating the historical existence of community and political influence or authority shall also be taken into account. Existence of community and political influence or authority shall be demonstrated on a substantially continuous basis, but this demonstration does not require meeting these criteria at every point in time. Fluctuations in tribal activity during various years shall not in themselves be a cause for denial of acknowledgment under these criteria.

(f) The criteria in § 83.7 (a) through (g) shall be interpreted as applying to tribes or groups that have historically combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

(g) The specific forms of evidence stated in the criteria in § 83.7 (a) through (c) and § 83.7(e) are not mandatory requirements. The criteria may be met alternatively by any suitable evidence that demonstrates that the petitioner meets the requirements of the criterion statement and related definitions.

§ 83.7 Mandatory criteria for Federal acknowledgment.

The mandatory criteria are:

(a) The petitioner has been identified as an American Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900. Evidence that the group's character as an Indian entity has from time to time been denied shall not be considered to be conclusive evidence that this criterion has not been met. Evidence to be relied upon in determining a group's Indian identity may include one or a combination of the following, as well as other evidence of identification by

other than the petitioner itself or its members.

(1) Identification as an Indian entity by Federal authorities.

(2) Relationships with State governments based on identification of the group as Indian.

(3) Dealings with a county, parish, or other local government in a relationship based on the group's Indian identity.

(4) Identification as an Indian entity by anthropologists, historians, and/or other scholars.

(5) Identification as an Indian entity in newspapers and books.

(6) Identification as an Indian entity in relationships with Indian tribes or with national, regional, or state Indian organizations.

(b) A predominant portion of the petitioning group comprises a distinct community and has existed as a community from historical times until the present.

(1) This criterion may be demonstrated by some combination of the following evidence and/or other evidence that the petitioner meets the definition of *community* set forth in § 83.1:

(i) Significant rates of marriage within the group, and/or, as may be culturally required, patterned out-marriages with other Indian populations.

(ii) Significant social relationships connecting individual members.

(iii) Significant rates of informal social interaction which exist broadly among the members of a group.

(iv) A significant degree of shared or cooperative labor or other economic activity among the membership.

(v) Evidence of strong patterns of discrimination or other social distinctions by non-members.

(vi) Shared sacred or secular ritual activity encompassing most of the group.

(vii) Cultural patterns shared among a significant portion of the group that are different from those of the non-Indian populations with whom it interacts. These patterns must function as more than a symbolic identification of the group as Indian. They may include, but are not limited to, language, kinship organization, or religious beliefs and practices.

(viii) The persistence of a named, collective Indian identity continuously over a period of more than 50 years, notwithstanding changes in name.

(ix) A demonstration of historical political influence under the criterion in § 83.7(c) shall be evidence for demonstrating historical community.

(2) A petitioner shall be considered to have provided sufficient evidence of community at a given point in time if evidence is provided to demonstrate any one of the following:

(i) More than 50 percent of the members reside in a geographical area exclusively or almost exclusively composed of members of the group, and the balance of the group maintains consistent interaction with some members of the community;

(ii) At least 50 percent of the marriages in the group are between members of the group;

(iii) At least 50 percent of the group members maintain distinct cultural patterns such as, but not limited to, language, kinship organization, or religious beliefs and practices;

(iv) There are distinct community social institutions encompassing most of the members, such as kinship organizations, formal or informal economic cooperation, or religious organizations; or

(v) The group has met the criterion in § 83.7(c) using evidence described in § 83.7(c)(2).

(c) The petitioner has maintained political influence or authority over its members as an autonomous entity from historical times until the present.

(1) This criterion may be demonstrated by some combination of the evidence listed below and/or by other evidence that the petitioner meets the definition of political influence or authority in § 83.1.

(i) The group is able to mobilize significant numbers of members and significant resources from its members for group purposes.

(ii) Most of the membership considers issues acted upon or actions taken by group leaders or governing bodies to be of importance.

(iii) There is widespread knowledge, communication and involvement in political processes by most of the group's members.

(iv) The group meets the criterion in § 83.7(b) at more than a minimal level.

(v) There are internal conflicts which show controversy over valued group goals, properties, policies, processes and/or decisions.

(2) A petitioning group shall be considered to have provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate the exercise of political influence or authority at a given point in time by demonstrating that group leaders and/or other mechanisms exist or existed which:

(i) Allocate group resources such as land, residence rights and the like on a consistent basis.

(ii) Settle disputes between members or subgroups by mediation or other means on a regular basis;

(iii) Exert strong influence on the behavior of individual members, such as the establishment or maintenance of norms and the enforcement of sanctions to direct or control behavior;

(iv) Organize or influence economic subsistence activities among the members, including shared or cooperative labor.

(3) A group that has met the requirements in paragraph 83.7(b)(2) at a given point in time shall be considered to have provided sufficient evidence to meet this criterion at that point in time.

(d) A copy of the group's present governing document including its membership criteria. In the absence of a written document, the petitioner must provide a statement describing in full its membership criteria and current governing procedures.

(e) The petitioner's membership consists of individuals who descend from a historical Indian tribe or from historical Indian tribes which combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

(1) Evidence acceptable to the Secretary which can be used for this purpose includes but is not limited to:

(i) Rolls prepared by the Secretary on a descendency basis for purposes of distributing claims money, providing allotments, or other purposes;

(ii) State, Federal, or other official records or evidence identifying present members or ancestors of present members as being descendants of a historical tribe or tribes that combined and

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functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

(iii) Church, school, and other similar enrollment records identifying present members or ancestors of present members as being descendants of a historical tribe or tribes that combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

(iv) Affidavits of recognition by tribal elders, leaders, or the tribal governing body identifying present members or ancestors of present members as being descendants of a historical tribe or tribes that combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

(v) Other records or evidence identifying present members or ancestors of present members as being descendants of a historical tribe or tribes that combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity.

(2) The petitioner must provide an official membership list, separately certified by the group's governing body, of all known current members of the group. This list must include each member's full name (including maiden name), date of birth, and current residential address. The petitioner must also provide a copy of each available former list of members based on the group's own defined criteria, as well as a statement describing the circumstances surrounding the preparation of the current list and, insofar as possible, the circumstances surrounding the preparation of former lists.

(f) The membership of the petitioning group is composed principally of persons who are not members of any acknowledged North American Indian tribe. However, under certain conditions a petitioning group may be acknowledged even if its membership is composed principally of persons whose names have appeared on rolls of, or who have been otherwise associated with, an acknowledged Indian tribe. The conditions are that the group must establish that it has functioned throughout history until the present as a separate and autonomous Indian tribal entity, that its members do not maintain a bilateral political relationship with the acknowledged tribe, and that its members have provided writ-

ten confirmation of their membership in the petitioning group.

(g) Neither the petitioner nor its members are the subject of congressional legislation that has expressly terminated or forbidden the Federal relationship.

§ 83.8 Previous Federal acknowledgment.

(a) Unambiguous previous Federal acknowledgment is acceptable evidence of the tribal character of a petitioner to the date of the last such previous acknowledgment. If a petitioner provides substantial evidence of unambiguous Federal acknowledgment, the petitioner will then only be required to demonstrate that it meets the requirements of § 83.7 to the extent required by this section.

(b) A determination of the adequacy of the evidence of previous Federal action acknowledging tribal status shall be made during the technical assistance review of the documented petition conducted pursuant to § 83.10(b). If a petition is awaiting active consideration at the time of adoption of these regulations, this review will be conducted while the petition is under active consideration unless the petitioner requests in writing that this review be made in advance.

(c) Evidence to demonstrate previous Federal acknowledgment includes, but is not limited to:

(1) Evidence that the group has had treaty relations with the United States.

(2) Evidence that the group has been denominated a tribe by act of Congress or Executive Order.

(3) Evidence that the group has been treated by the Federal Government as having collective rights in tribal lands or funds.

(d) To be acknowledged, a petitioner that can demonstrate previous Federal acknowledgment must show that:

(1) The group meets the requirements of the criterion in § 83.7(a), except that such identification shall be demonstrated since the point of last Federal acknowledgment. The group must further have been identified by such sources as the same tribal entity that was previously acknowledged or as a