

**Annual Powwow Committee Policies & Procedures**  
**Tribal Council approved: 2-21-2023**  
**TC Revised: 10-3-23, 2-6-24, 4-9-24, 7-30-24, 2/15/25**

**Purpose:**

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Powwow Committee is in place to plan, organize, prepare for, facilitate, and host the Annual Ponca Powwow, which will take place the second weekend of August. A Powwow is a time to bring people together to learn the Ponca Culture through songs, dances, and fellowship. The Powwow will be a non-competition Powwow with the exception of honorary competition specials, which will be sponsored by individuals and/or families. Money will also be paid to the attending drums and day-money will be paid to the dancers.

**Committee Composition and Committee Conduct:**

The Committee will consist of seven (7) tribal members appointed by Tribal Council from submitted letters of interest. Committee appointments are staggered three-year-terms, which expire on September 30th. The Committee will be responsible for nominating and selecting the offices of Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer on an annual basis.

Members are expected to attend all Powwow Committee meetings. There are ten (10) meetings per fiscal year. Every other meeting beginning with March will be expected to be held in Niobrara in-person to assist with preparing the grounds. If a Committee member misses three consecutive meetings for any reason, they will be removed from the Committee.

A quorum of four (4) members must be present at properly scheduled meetings for official action (a vote) to be taken. A lack of quorum will result in no-action being taken.

- Lodging will no longer be provided for committee meetings. Lodging will only be provided during special events that have been approved by Tribal Council Executive Committee and is within the approved budget. If you do have a room reserved, you are responsible for cancelling by the hotel cancellation time. If there are charges for no shows or if you have incidental charges, you will be responsible for paying those charges. It will not come out of the committee budget.
- Committee members will be responsible for reserving their own hotel room when attending approved conferences and trainings outside the service delivery area, not to exceed the gsa rate. If a travel advance is needed, the paperwork must be submitted three weeks in advance to receive 90% and the remainder will be issued on the settlement when you return.

Members will be paid a \$250.00 stipend per meeting and associated travel costs at the government rate, not to exceed 410 miles roundtrip. Committee members will be paid a one-time (1) Payment of \$1,000 to cover their expenses and labor for the five (5) days of the Powwow, reporting on Wednesday at 10 AM.

### **Director of Cultural Affairs' Responsibilities:**

The Powwow Committee will report directly to the Director of Cultural Affairs who will act as advisor and assist in administrative requests prior to, during, and after the Powwow, including submitting appropriate paperwork on behalf of the Powwow Committee to the Finance Department. The Director of Cultural Affairs will also be responsible for relaying Committee needs and desires to relevant PTN entities and departments.

The Director of Cultural Affairs will be responsible for ensuring that Committee Members are assigned to complete key tasks by their due dates. As part of their monthly report, the Director of Cultural Affairs will submit updates on the Powwow Committee to the EDTA and DDTA to keep them apprised of their progress.

### **Committee and Planning Responsibilities:**

Prior to the Powwow, members are expected to fully participate in all Committee activities by undertaking the following:

- Act in good faith and in accordance with what they believe to be in the best interest of the Tribe as a whole.
- All donations received on behalf of the Powwow and/or Committee shall immediately be recorded and stored at the Community Building by the Director of Cultural Affairs. A photo will be taken of the item(s) to be included with the donations form. Monetary donations shall be submitted upon receipt to the Director of Cultural Affairs, who will record and submit them to the Finance Department. A thank-you-letter will be sent to all those donating to the Powwow.
- Conduct business with outside contractors, Powwow staff, and within the Committee by written communications.
- Complete the members' responsibilities and tasks listed within the tracking sheets by the respective due-dates.
- Keep accurate and up-to-date records and complete all appropriate forms, which will be turned into the Director of Cultural Affairs in a timely manner.
- Organize and prepare for non-dancing events to be held during the Powwow (e.g. horse shoe and/or com-hole tournaments).
- Set up contracts with outside vendors to complete the following tasks:
  1. Cleaning and trash services
  2. On-call electrician for the Powwow Grounds

3. On-call plumber for the shower house
4. Porta-potties and associated equipment
5. Security
  - Submit all spending requests, donations, invoices, meeting minutes, meeting agendas, and all other records to the Director of Cultural Affairs in a timely manner. Check requests will be prepared and approved by the Director of Cultural Affairs, and forwarded to the proper chain of command as utilized by PTN for procurement and purchasing reasons.
  - The Culture Director will be responsible for communicating with prospective vendors and creating a layout for vendors and PTN tables.

### **Responsibilities during Powwow:**

In addition to normal meetings and preparatory duties, the Powwow Committee will be expected to be present and responsible for the five (5) days of the Powwow. The five (5) days of the Powwow are defined as Wednesday through Sunday, until all duties and responsibilities are completed; which includes contract work. **Failure to show up will cause the Committee payment to be prorated.**

### **Responsibilities during Powwow include:**

- Ensure that the Speaker Stand is staffed with at least two (2) Committee members at all times during the Powwow. Of these two (2) Committee members, one (1) needs to be readily available to the Master of Ceremonies and the Arena Director. Responsibilities inside the Speaker Stand include but are not limited to: Cleaning and organizing the Speaker Stand, assisting the MC with honor dances and agenda additions, collecting dancer registrations and issuing dancer numbers, receiving and reviewing princess applications.
- Only Committee members, Director of Cultural Affairs, and MC are permitted inside the Speaker Stand. All paperwork collected will be submitted to Director of Cultural Affairs at the end of each day.
- It is strongly recommended that Committee members do not dance during the annual Powwow. If a Committee member chooses to dance, duties and responsibilities of the Powwow Committee are top priority. Committee members that dance will not be paid day money; they will only receive their Committee payment.
- The Committee will be responsible for food, raffle, and T-shirt sales in appropriate locations.

### **Pay-outs:**

The Director of Cultural Affairs and two (2) designated Committee members, preferably the Chairperson and Treasurer, will be responsible for the delivery of pay-outs.

- Powwow Committee will refer to Currency Control for procedures related to currency verification and distribution.

- Dancers-all dancers are required to register at the Speaker Stand for each day prior to Grand Entry of the session he/she starts dancing. Pay-outs for dancers will be handed out at the end of each day, prior to the closing of the Powwow. The Director of Cultural Affairs and the two (2) Committee members will work together to verify dancer registration, check-off dancer numbers as they proceed through the line, ensure proper measures are taken so all dancers receive appropriate pay and to prevent dancers from receiving double payments.
- Drum groups-Monies allocated for participating drum groups are set at a fixed rate. The Committee does not pay drum groups based on the number of singers. Drum hopping is strongly discouraged. Drum groups will receive pay at the end of each day.
- Head staff-Head Staff will comply with the expectations of their positions and the requests from the Committee throughout the Powwow. Head Staff will receive pay-out money at the end of each day.
- Contest-the Committee may elect to conduct friendly contest dances (i.e. potato dance). Winners of these contest dances will receive pay immediately following the dance.
- Committee sales table start-up money-Before the start of the Powwow each day, the Culture Director, along with at least one (1) Committee member (preferably the Chairperson or the Treasurer) will meet in the Community Building to count out \$100.00 for T-shirts, \$20.00 for 50/50 raffles, and \$20 for prize raffles for that day. The start-up money will be kept in a money bag along with inventory sheets.

Money Collection:

- Money for shirt and raffle sales will be collected by the Director of Cultural Affairs and one Committee member (preferably the Chairman or Treasurer), at the midpoint and end of each session.
- The Committee will be responsible for collecting, organizing and tracking any and all money transactions pertaining to the Powwow.
- Powwow Committee will refer to currency control section for guidance on currency verification, collection, and reconciliation.

**Princesses:**

Every year the Powwow the Committee holds a princess contest for female dancers. There are three (3) different princess categories: Senior Princess Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Junior Miss Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, and Little Miss Ponca Tribe of Nebraska. Each category of princess has a select age-range that a dancer must fall in to be considered a princess contestant:

Senior Princess-Ages 13-19

Junior Princess-Ages 7-12

Little Miss-Ages 4-6

- Each princess contestant must submit her completed application to the Powwow Committee along with proof of enrollment in the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska. Princess information is due to the Committee before 12:00 PM on Friday of the Powwow. The contestant can also submit an application online up to one month prior to the Friday deadline. All online applicants will be notified of verification at least one day prior to start of the powwow. If applicant was not verified for any reason a staff designee will follow up with the applicant to inform them of reasoning and means to rectify if possible. All contestants have until the deadline on Friday of Powwow to get registered.
- Prior to the start of the princess contests, the Committee as a whole, will select and approve three (3) individuals to serve as judges of the princess contests. These judges will be responsible for watching the dance contests.

### **Head Staff Selection:**

- Committee members will discuss Head Staff selections for the next year's Powwow during their meeting after the last session on Sunday of the Powwow. During this discussion, the Secretary will be responsible for tracking all conversations and decisions made at this meeting. As a group, the Committee will identify and select two (2) individuals (a first choice and a second choice) for each Head Staff position. The second choice will only be asked if the first choice turns down the offer.
- The Committee will also identify one Committee member who will be responsible for making the offer to the individuals. This Committee member will be responsible for reporting back to the full Committee at the next scheduled meeting. In any case where both individuals refuse the head staff offer, the Committee will identify two (2) additional individuals to offer the Head Staff position.

### **Cook Selection:**

- Committee members will advertise for the Cook position five (5) months before the Powwow. Interested individuals will send their letters of intent to the Director of Cultural Affairs who will share them with the Committee.
- Committee members will review the applicants and select the most qualified individual. A member of the Committee will be tasked with making the offer to the selected individual and reporting back to the Committee.
- The Cook will be paid appropriately for their services; recognizing that family will be assisting, and their services acknowledged and honored. The cook will be paid half up front and the remaining payout will take place at completion of the powwow.
- The Cook will be invited to a meeting to discuss the menu and a list of items will be given to the Director of Cultural Affairs to order, preferably through tribal entities.
- The Cook will be responsible for keeping the kitchen closed to only invited parties to help

prepare the meals for powwow. Prior to utilizing the kitchen, a staff designee will review an inventory checklist with the cook and condition of all items. The staff and cook will sign and acknowledge the inventory list prior to use and once again upon completion of powwow.

**Tasks and Due Dates:** The Director of Cultural Affairs will keep a spreadsheet with all tasks and due-dates to be shared with Committee members at every meeting as well as Tribal Leadership upon request. It will be updated as necessary to allow for the growth of the Powwow.

#### Currency Control Policy

Ponca Tribe of Nebraska will assign Event Coordinators to be responsible for vendor and volunteer registration during Powwow. The Event Coordinator responsible for volunteers will be responsible for currency control throughout the Powwow.

The Powwow Committee will be responsible for requesting all currency required for day pay from the Director of Cultural Affairs one month prior to Powwow. The request will be broken out by denomination.

The Director of Cultural Affairs will submit a Request for Purchase (RFP) and check request to finance following approved AP process.

Finance will obtain currency from approved financial institution. Finance will verify total currency amounts and denominations with a minimum of 2 staff members. Finance will sort currency as requested by the Powwow Committee in envelopes, will mark each envelope indicating amount and intended recipient. Finance will seal all envelopes and initials on seal. Finance will transport all currency to Ponca agency grounds no later than one day prior to the beginning of Powwow. Finance may request 10-15 percent additional currency to have on hand for additional payouts that may be required. Excess currency will be retained by finance at the Ponca Headquarters in a secure location. Any requests for excess funding must contain a minimum of two signatures, one of which will be finance and the other will be a staff member of Tribal Affairs at director level or above.

The Powwow Committee Chair or Treasurer along with designated member of finance and assigned Event Coordinator will verify all envelopes are accounted for as requested. Each member will sign documentation confirming accuracy.

The Powwow Committee Chair or Treasurer with a designated member of finance will separate envelopes by day and secure each day's payouts within the safe located at the Crow's Nest.

Powwow Committee will provide Event Coordinator with dancer registration indicating number of dancers, drummers, and powwow staff within each category at least 30 minutes prior to payout occurring.

Event Coordinator will retrieve requested payout envelopes from the safe and provide to Powwow Committee. The Event Coordinator will maintain all dancer registration lists for reconciliation. The Powwow Committee and Event Coordinator will both sign each dancer registration list confirming distribution and receipt of payouts.

In the event payouts exceed what was prepared for each day's pay, the Event Coordinator will notify the Director of Cultural Affairs and request additional funding. The Director of Cultural Affairs will coordinate with finance for any excess funding that is needed.

The Powwow Committee will be responsible for all sales of T-shirts at the Crow's Nest. The Powwow Committee will track all sales at the end of each session and calculate total sales. The Powwow Committee will provide the Event Coordinator with a list of sales and all revenue from sales. The Powwow Committee will retain an adequate amount of currency to use for change. On the final day of Powwow, Powwow Committee will take an inventory of any remaining t-shirts and provide the list to Event Coordinator. The Powwow Committee will provide the Event Coordinator with any remaining revenue and all remaining currency used for change as well as any remaining T-shirts.

Vendor (Event) Coordinators will be responsible for collecting all vendor payments. The Vendor (Event) Coordinator will provide vendors with a receipt for payment and will maintain a duplicate copy of their records. Vendor (Event) Coordinator will provide receipts along with all currency collected to the other Event Coordinator. Both coordinators will verify receipts and currency match and sign confirming receipt. All currency will be secured in a safe located in Crow's Nest.

At the conclusion of Powwow, the Director of Cultural Affairs, Event Coordinator, and finance will verify all currency totals, document totals by demonization, and sign. Finance will take receipt of all currency and deposit at the approved financial institution.

All discrepancies will be investigated at may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or committee removal from the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska. All discrepancies will be immediately reported to the CEO of Tribal Affairs, Deputy Directors of Tribal Affairs, Deputy Director of Finance and CFO.