

## **Language and Culture Committee Policies and Procedures**

**Tribal Council Approved 11/16/20. Revised 3/5/24,  
2/15/25**

### **Purpose**

The unifying aspect of the different departments of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska is Ponca culture. Language and culture are intrinsically intertwined, and it is necessary to learn one to learn the other. In 2018, the importance of the Ponca language and culture were the Tribe declared a State of Emergency for the Ponca language and culture. To address this State of Emergency, the Language and Culture Committee (herein the Committee) will help coordinate and facilitate cultural-based events and activities to increase community knowledge of and participation in Ponca culture, traditions, history, beliefs and language.

### **Committee Composition**

The Committee will consist of (seven) 7 representatives; a representative from the surrounding communities of each PTN office site and an at-large member within the Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) and a representative from outside of the SDAs. Committee members will be selected according to their knowledge of Ponca language, culture, and traditional ways. If a representative who meets the above qualification is not available from each site, any qualifying member may be appointed to the committee.

Committee appointments are staggered three-year terms, which expire on March 1.

### **Membership Responsibilities**

Committee members of the Committee will be responsible for the following as it relates to the Committee:

- Committee members are expected to attend all Committee meetings scheduled monthly either in person or via video conference. If a committee member misses three meetings in a row for any reason, they will be removed from the Committee.
- 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 committee 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.
- The Committee shall elect from among its members a Chairperson to preside over meetings and a Secretary to record all meetings. The Culture Director will assist with any administrative requests.
- Committee members will be paid a stipend of \$250 per meeting and claim associated travel

at the government rate, not to exceed a total of 410 total miles.

- Culture Committee will be a separate committee from Pow Wow Committee. Culture Committee representatives are encouraged to attend the Pow Wow. Attendance would only be as a courtesy and no additional stipends will be paid out for the Pow Wow unless a regularly scheduled meeting occurs during a Pow Wow.

### **Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee will be responsible for the following activities as they pertain to language and culture:

- To provide guidance to the Culture Department and Language Program with long-term planning, programming, and the use of traditional knowledge.
- To generate culturally appropriate programming to increase tribal involvement on culture and language activities and create a sustainable culture and language program for tribal members inside and outside the SDAs.
- To act as a resource for Tribal departments to create culturally based programming by providing guidance, knowledge, wisdom, and expertise on Ponca culture, traditions, history, and beliefs.
- To assist the Ponca Tribal government in the formulation of policies and procedures pertaining to the Ponca Language, culture, and history.
- To create a criteria for the selection of Eminent Scholars, identify individuals who meet said criteria, and make recommendations to Tribal Council for the recognition of those individuals.
- To identify and screen qualified individuals to hire or contract with to teach topics including but not limited to, the Ponca language, culture, history, cross-cultural educational practices; trauma- informed practices.
- To review and approve language curriculums developed by the Language Coordinator.
- To review and determine the criteria for Ponca language competencies and fluency and to develop and plan screening procedures.
- To review and approve all Ponca culturally related educational material, such as instructional materials and modern communication media productions, to be used to provide instruction to the Ponca people in the Ponca language, history, and culture.
- To review and approve all Ponca language, history, and culture-related research studies and proposals submitted by outside entities, colleges, universities, private groups, and individuals.
- To review and reserve approval on all other activities and tasks related to the Ponca language, history, and culture as may be referred the Committee.
- To periodically assess and review the Language Program and provide such assessments to the Tribal Council.

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