

Cherokees of Orange County



TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN



Cherokees of Orange County offers a program designed to provide assistance to Cherokee individuals, families, and groups in need, that are located in Southern California, called “Taking Care of Our Own”.

All funds raised through meeting and special event fundraisers, along with member and corporate donations, will be available to assist those in need in various areas, such as medical, educational, and special needs assistance.

Application and approval process is as follows. The Cherokees of Orange County council and its membership manage the program.

ARTICLE 1: COLLECTION OF FUNDS

All funds raised in excess of expenses, through events managed by or participated in, by Cherokees of Orange County, are automatically designated as contributions to the fund "Taking Care of Our Own (TCOO)", unless otherwise stated. Fund raising events include but are not limited to, general meeting raffles, special event raffles such as Nation sponsored events, craft and art faires, powwows, and any funds specifically donated by COC members, non-members, and corporations.

ARTICLE 2: MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS

All funds designated for TCOO will be managed by the council position that includes Treasurer, and will be deposited in the same account as membership dues, with all accounting managed by the treasurer. Funds designated for TCOO are to be included on a separate line item in the Treasurer's Report. The council may open a secondary account to separate dues and TCOO funds as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE 3: PURPOSES OF FUNDS

Funds are considered available to Cherokee individuals, families, and groups that are determined as in need of funding for medical, educational, or special needs. Availability of funds to members of other local Native American tribes may be considered at a later time as available funds grow. Preference will be given to those belonging to the Cherokee tribe.

- Medical needs include but are not limited to: Assistance in paying for or providing professional medical care, prescriptions, eye glasses, blood glucose monitors, etc, and basic supplies required for short or long term illness or conditions, where no other assistance is available and the recipient is in urgent need. All medical issue needs will be considered.

- Educational needs include but are not limited to: Assistance in paying for or providing required school supplies for minors including uniforms and basic supplies. Scholarships will also be considered upon request for vocational, job training and higher education needs, where no other assistance is available and the recipient is in need.

- Special needs include but are not limited to: Assistance in paying for or providing durable goods, for housing and household, funerals, emergency relief caused by fires, floods, and other acts of nature, and adopting families, nursing homes, etc., during times or events such as holidays.

ARTICLE 4: EXCLUSIONS

Funds may not be distributed for repayment of loans or non-essential expenses or luxury items. Funds may not be distributed to the same individual, family, or group on a repeat or ongoing basis, unless a true need is determined.

ARTICLE 5: APPLYING FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

COC members with a need are encouraged to reach out to this program for needed assistance. In the event a member of COC becomes aware of an individual, family, or group in need of assistance, they may advocate for relief on their behalf. Individuals, families, or groups contacting COC for assistance will also be considered.

ARTICLE 6: APPROVING DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

A simple application form must be submitted by the requestor or the advocate for bookkeeping purposes, and to ensure propriety in TCOO management. Before funding, information will be made available to the person(s) in need on agencies that are available to assist. When exhausted, funding will be considered for approval.

Applications will be reviewed and approved by all COC paid members in good standing that are present at the general meeting, as timeliness allows. Such review may also be conducted by email if the need is urgent. Investigation may be required to sufficiently satisfy the accuracy of the need and application of funds. Approval of fund distribution requires an affirmative vote of 70% or greater by show of hands or written response. Applications meeting approval will be signed by at least two members that were present at and participated in the vote to confirm and validate approval. If approval is performed via email, prints will be made of at least two voting members to act as confirmation and validation.

ARTICLE 7: LIMITS OF FUND DISTRIBUTION

No single distribution may exhaust the funds available for TCOO.

ARTICLE 8: METHOD OF FUND DISTRIBUTION

Upon approval, funds will be immediately paid to recipient or to an agent of recipient, or directly to an entity that is to receive the funds, such as a school or utility. Payments are to be made via check.

ARTICLE 9: EMERGENCY PROVISION

In the event emergency relief is required by an applicant, and due to the nature of the situation time can not be afforded to convene a general or email meeting, the council may elect to distribute funds with a 100% affirmative vote. All attempts to involve members will be made prior, and emergency distribution is to only be used as a last resort. Proper applications and review notes will be made available to members for post distribution review.

ARTICLE 10: INVESTIGATION

If a reasonable belief of the applicant's need or Cherokee heritage come into question, a committee will be formed to investigate the matter to a satisfactory end. The number of participants and individual members of the committee will be determined by those participating in the review and approval process on a case-by-case basis. Investigation may include request for proof from or interviews with the applicant(s).

ARTICLE 11: RECORD KEEPING

All applications with review notations and reason for approval or denial will be maintained by the council and will be made available for review upon request. Provisions will be made to protect the privacy of the applicant(s) especially in the case of medical disclosures.