



# PONCA TRIBE OF NEBRASKA

## **Ponca Tribe to establish appellate court**

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska will officially welcome its first three Ponca Appellate Court judges during a ceremony Feb. 27 in Omaha.

Chief Justice Mary Jo Hunter and judges Eldena Bear Don't Walk and Richard McGee will be sworn in at the ceremony, which begins at 9 a.m. at the Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center at 2602 J Street in Omaha.

Although the court office is located in Norfolk, both the trial court and the appellate court can be held in any of the 15 counties that make up the tribe's service delivery area. Those counties are: Boyd, Burt, Douglas, Hall, Holt, Knox, Lancaster, Madison, Platte, Sarpy, Stanton and Wayne in Nebraska; Pottawattamie and Woodbury in Iowa; and Charles Mix in South Dakota.

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska previously had been utilizing the Northern Plains Intertribal Court of Appeals to hear appeals on decisions made in Ponca Tribal Court. The tribe, though, believed it was necessary to form its own appellate court.

"This will be a wonderful occasion for the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska," Tribal Court Administrator Ruthanne Gallup said. "I am honored to witness and be part of a Ponca Appellate Court being established. I am truly grateful that the Ponca tribal members will have another chance to obtain justice if the Ponca Trial Court judge did not follow the law. I look forward to working with the three new justices that the Tribal Council selected."

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