



41ST ANNUAL SAGINAW CHIPPEWA  
**POW W O W**  
July 25, 26, & 27, 2025



# UNDERSTANDING THE PATH

A list of powwow guidelines from the SCIT Powwow Committee

1. **Be on time.** The SCIT Powwow Committee is doing everything possible to ensure that activities begin and run smoothly. Please cooperate in this regard.
2. **Appropriate dress and behavior are required in the arena.** Anyone unwilling to abide by this rule will be asked to leave by the arena director. (If you are going to dance, try to wear dance clothes.)
3. **Pointing with fingers is considered poor manners by some nations.** If you must point, use your head and nod in the direction you wish to indicate.
4. **The seating around the arena is reserved for dancers in regalia.** Seats with blankets, shawls or regalia items on them are taken and should not be bothered. Do NOT sit on someone else's blanket unless invited. Uncovered seats are considered available.
5. **No pets allowed; they should be left at home.** The arena is a sacred place from the time it is blessed until the powwow is over. At no time should pets be allowed in the arena.
6. **Respect the head male and female dancers.** Their role entitles them to start each song or set of songs. Please wait until they have started to dance before you join in. In some traditions, it is considered improper to pass the head male or female dancer within the arena.
7. **Some songs require you to be familiar with the routine or have special eligibility rules in order to participate.** Trot dances, snake, buffalo, etc. require particular steps or routines. Veteran dances may be restricted to veterans, combat veterans or, in some cases, the relations of veterans. If you are not familiar with a particular dance, observe and learn. Watch the head dancers to learn the procedures.
8. **Most powwows are nonprofit and depend upon donations, raffles, blanket dances, etc. for support.** Donations are encouraged as a way to honor someone. Any participant can drop money onto the blanket to aid with the powwow expenses.
9. **Certain items of religious significance should be worn only by those qualified to do so.** Respect the traditions. Never intentionally touch another dancer's regalia, personal property without permission.
10. **Giveaways, attributes of Indian generosity, are held at many dances.** They are acknowledgments of appreciation to recipients for honor or service given to the people. When receiving a gift, the recipient thanks everyone involved in the giving.
11. **If you wish to ask for a special song from a drum, talk to the arena director first and make sure the master of ceremonies is informed.** It is traditional to make a gift (monetary or otherwise) to the drum for special requests.
12. **Before sitting at a drum, ask permission from the head singer.** Do not touch a drum without permission. The drums are sacred, and it is believed that anyone who takes a place behind the drums has been selected by the Creator to be there. No one drums without special permission, and no one sits in the drumming area without special permission. Great offense is taken if you choose to sit in this area. You should never turn down an invitation by anyone, especially elders, during a powwow.
13. **Ask permission before taking pictures of dancers.** Pictures may be taken with the permission of the dancers but not during dedication dances (veterans songs, flag songs or prayers). These special songs will be announced by the emcee. Under no circumstances may you enter the arena to take photos.
14. **If at any time you are uncertain of procedure, etc., please check with the emcee, arena director or head singer.** They will be glad to help you with your questions.
15. **Unless you are sure spectator seating will be provided, bring a chair.** Remember that the seating immediately around the arena is for dancers only.
16. **Be aware that someone standing behind you may not be able to see over you.** Make room, step aside, sit or kneel if someone is behind you.
17. **Alcohol, recreational drugs and firearms are prohibited at all powwows.**
18. **If you see a lost feather, or you yourself drop a feather, do not pick it up.** Notify the nearest veteran, the head veteran, head male dancer or arena director immediately.
19. **In some places it is okay for adults to dance while carrying infants or small children.** In other places this is considered contrary to local etiquette. Ask before doing so.
20. **Always stand during special songs.** This includes grand entry, flag songs, veteran songs, memorial songs, prayer songs or any other song that the emcee designates. It is also customary to remove hats for the duration of that song.
21. **Always listen to the emcee. The emcee will give all of the information you need as well as entertain you and keep you posted about news.** Any questions you have can be answered by the emcee, whom will let you know when you need to stand and when you may sit after honor songs. The emcee will also announce intertribal dances and other invitations for guests to participate.
22. **Supervise your children so that all may enjoy the event without distraction.**
23. **If you have a question, ask.** Most dancers, singers, elders and staff are happy to help. Offer a cold drink or other small, symbolic gifts to those who help you.



**Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan**  
*"Working Together for Our Future"*

7500 Soaring Eagle Blvd.  
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858  
989-775-4000  
[www.sagchip.org](http://www.sagchip.org)