

# Bylaws for The Gathering of Tribes & Indigenous Cultures

*“Protecting the Inherent Rights to Ancestral & Sacred Medicines”*

## Article I – Name

The name of this organization is **The Gathering of Tribes & Indigenous Cultures**.

We are a **508(c)(1)(a) Indigenous Nonprofit Church** based in Yanaguana, Tejas (San Antonio, Texas), a sacred place central to Indigenous creation, emergence, and continuity.

---

## Article II – Mission Statement

*“Until All Have Gathered.”*

This mission reflects our unwavering commitment to ensuring that all people may access, honor, and sit in ceremony with ancestral and sacred medicines, in accordance with Indigenous spiritual law, free from interference, suppression, or infringement.

---

## Article III – Purpose and Jurisdiction

### Purpose

The Gathering of Tribes & Indigenous Cultures exists to provide a sanctuary for the practice, preservation, and transmission of Indigenous spiritual and healing traditions, including ceremonial rites involving ancestral and sacred medicines, as practiced by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial.

### Jurisdiction

These bylaws are founded upon rights that pre-exist the United States and arise from the Creator, natural law, and Indigenous sovereignty. These rights are further recognized and protected by, but not dependent upon:

- The First Amendment of the United States Constitution

- The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb et seq.
- The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA)
- Longstanding religious exemptions recognized under the Controlled Substances Act
- Judicial precedent, including:
  - Gonzales v. O Centro Espírita Beneficente União do Vegetal (2006)
  - Church of the Holy Light of the Queen v. Mukasey (2009)
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

*These rights are inherent, continuous, and inalienable, and are beyond the authority of any temporal government to revoke.*

---

## **Article IV – Membership**

### **Eligibility**

Membership is open to all who approach with respect, sincerity, and reverence for Indigenous spiritual traditions and ancestral sacred medicines.

### **Equal Standing**

All members are accorded equal spiritual standing and ceremonial access, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or cultural background.

---

## **Article V – Ancestral and Sacred Medicines Recognized**

The Organization affirms that ancestral and sacred medicines are living sacraments, not substances, commodities, or recreational agents. Recognition is not a request for permission, but an affirmation of Creator-bestowed & Ancestral Rights.

**The following ancestral and sacred medicines are recognized for ceremonial use:**

1. Peyote (*Lophophora williamsii*)
2. Psilocybin-containing mushrooms
3. Ayahuasca (including its traditional botanical components)
4. San Pedro / Huachuma
5. Cannabis
6. Sacred Tobacco (*Nicotiana rustica* and related ceremonial forms)
7. Cacao
8. Bufo (sacred amphibian medicine)
9. Kambo (traditional Amazonian frog medicine)
10. Iboga
11. Any other traditionally used Indigenous plant, animal, fungal, or mineral medicines, as affirmed through internal spiritual review and Indigenous guidance

---

## **Article VI – Ceremonial Use and Conduct**

All ancestral and sacred medicines are approached with reverence, intention, and accountability.

Ceremonies are conducted exclusively within intentional, prayerful, and ceremonial contexts.

Participants are expected to engage in ceremony with appropriate spiritual preparation, humility, and respect.

---

## **Article VII – Legal Foundations and Advocacy**

### **Legal Protection**

The ceremonial use of ancestral and sacred medicines constitutes a central religious practice protected under RFRA, AIRFA, and binding federal precedent.

Any governmental action that restricts, criminalizes, surveils, conditions, or interferes with these practices constitutes a substantial burden on religious exercise, triggering strict scrutiny under RFRA.

### **Advocacy and Defense**

The Organization actively engages in education, advocacy, and lawful defense to protect Indigenous religious freedom and reserves the right to pursue judicial rulings, rather than private settlements, where such rulings may establish precedent protecting Indigenous spiritual practice for future generations.

---

### **Article VIII – Leadership**

A Council of Elders, recognized for wisdom, integrity, and lived spiritual experience, safeguards the spiritual and ceremonial integrity of the Organization.

---

### **Article IX – Ceremonial Participation**

Regular ceremonies are convened, with additional gatherings held as spiritually appropriate.

All members possess equal inherent rights to participate, subject to ceremonial readiness and protocol.

---

### **Article X – Amendments**

Amendments require a two-thirds consensus of the Council of Elders and must remain consistent with Indigenous spiritual law and Creator-bestowed rights.

---

### **Article XI – Assertion of Inherent Rights**

Engagement with ancestral and sacred medicines in ceremonial context is an inherent right, not a privilege.

The Organization stands firmly against any attempt to suppress, criminalize, or erase Indigenous spiritual practice.

---

## **Article XII – Location**

The Gathering of Tribes & Indigenous Cultures operates from Yanaguana, Tejas (San Antonio, Texas).

---

## **Closing Declaration**

*These bylaws affirm that ancestral and sacred medicines are inseparable from Indigenous spirituality, identity, and survival. The Gathering of Tribes & Indigenous Cultures remains steadfast in protecting these traditions for present and future generations.*