

Cherokee One Feather Policies

Ethics Policies

Note: Adopted on Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2009; amended July 18, 2024

The Preamble to the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics states:

“Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and foundation of democracy. The journalist must further those ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues. Conscientious journalists from all media and specialties strive to serve the public with thoroughness and honesty. Professional integrity is the cornerstone of a journalist’s credibility.”

1. The staff of *The Cherokee One Feather* will strive for the highest journalistic ethics while fulfilling our obligation to the public trust.
2. The goal of the *One Feather* is to cover the news impartially and to try to avoid conflicts of interest, real or apparent, that may arise while covering the news. Our fundamental purpose is to protect the impartiality and neutrality of the paper and the integrity of the news reports.
3. We agree to treat our readers as fairly and openly as possible and tell them the complete, unvarnished truth to the best of our ability. We will correct all errors when those are identified and will publish corrections.
4. Plagiarism will not be tolerated by staff members or outside contributors, neither false information nor doctored images for publication.
5. News images for publication will not be altered in any way, shape, or form other than standard cropping, sizing, and formatting. Images for advertisements (i.e. display ads, birthday ads, etc.) may be altered as per the customer unless the reason is to create a false impression of the product or service.
6. News sources must be treated fairly and professionally. Staff will not threaten to damage uncooperative sources nor promise favorable coverage. We do not pay for interviews or sources.
7. Staff members must disclose their identity when on assignment and may not pose as someone they are not (i.e. police officers, lawyers, doctors).
8. If a staff member has a close relationship (family, friend, romantic) who is a source or subject, they may recuse themselves from covering topics involving that person as a source. They

must disclose their relationship so that reassignment may occur. The Editor will be the final determiner on assignments involving close relationships.

9. Staff members are required to obey all laws while on assignment gathering news.
10. It is at the staff member's discretion whether they advise an interviewee that they are being recorded. A staff member may not secretly record a conversation they are not engaged in.
11. Staff members may accept press passes or free tickets to cover specific events (i.e. athletic events, cultural festivals, etc), but no one may accept anything that could be construed as payment. They may not accept gifts, tickets, discounts, reimbursements, etc. from individuals or organizations being covered by the paper.
12. Staff members are not allowed to take part in politics. They may vote but must refrain from behavior that might raise questions about their professional neutrality or that of the paper. Staff members may not campaign for, demonstrate for, or endorse candidates, ballot causes or pieces of legislation. Staff members may not wear apparel, or accessories, or display body art that may align with a certain candidate or political position while representing the *One Feather*.
13. Staff members are not allowed to seek public office. If they do (seek office), they must resign from their position.
14. Staff members are not allowed to march/rally in support of public causes or movements or sign petitions taking a position on public issues while representing *The Cherokee One Feather*.
15. Exacting journalistic standards are expected to be upheld by staff members and outside contributors.
16. Staff members must diligently seek out subjects of news stories for their response to allegations of wrongdoing.
17. Sources used in news articles must be identified unless the Editorial Board determines that circumstances make it a danger to the source.
18. Clear lines must be established between news, commentary/opinion, and advertising. Also, commentary must not be a part of a news story unless attributed to a source and quoted. Otherwise, commentary must remain in the Opinions section of the paper.
19. Juvenile criminal suspects and victims of domestic violence and/or victims of crimes of a sexual nature are not to be identified. Good taste must be shown in all news reporting.

Editorial Content Policy

Note: Adopted on Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2009; amended July 18, 2024

A. **News Articles**

1. All news articles must conform to the ethics policies as established by the Editorial Board of the paper and the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics.
2. All news articles must be attributed with a byline or a source line.
3. News articles must be written in the third person.
4. Community standards of good taste on the Qualla Boundary in North Carolina must be employed when selecting news articles for print.

B. **News Images**

1. All news articles must conform to the ethics policies as established by the Editorial Board of *The Cherokee One Feather* and the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics.
2. All images must be identified with a cutline and byline unless part of a collage in which case the entire project should be labeled.
3. Permission must be granted before reprinting any image from another news organization and said organization must be credited in the reprint.
4. Digital images must be at least 300 dpi to ensure the highest quality printing. Photographic images that are submitted must either be digital or glossy prints. No images printed on regular, non-photo paper will be accepted.
5. Community standards of good taste must be employed when selecting news images for print.

C. **Request to Reprint**

1. The material in each issue of *The Cherokee One Feather* is copyrighted and may be reprinted only with express permission granted by the Editor or a majority of the sitting Editorial Board.
2. Permissions to reprint are granted on a one-time basis only with the understanding that ownership remains with *The Cherokee One Feather*. Reprint permission requests will be reviewed and will be granted or denied by the Editor or a majority of the sitting Editorial Board.
3. Articles or photos reprinted with permission must include credit for the writer/photographer as well as the tagline "Reprinted with permission from *The Cherokee One Feather*" or similar accreditation as approved by the Editor or a majority of the sitting Editorial Board.

Note: Request to Reprint section added and approved on Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2012; amended July 18, 2024

D. Letters Policy

1. *The Cherokee One Feather* is available as a forum for opinions or points of view concerning issues of general interest. Letters should be typed and preferred in a digital form (for example a Microsoft Word file), exclusive to the *One Feather*. Letters must be authenticated and should include a name, address, email, and phone number. Letters should not exceed 250 words. Commentary submissions should not exceed 750 words. Letters and commentaries exceeding the word limit will be published at the discretion of the Editor or a majority of the sitting Editorial Board. Only the name and town/community will be printed. Letters critical of specifically named minor children will not be published.
2. Unsigned letters will not be considered for publication. The *One Feather* will not accept requests for pen pals or “Lonely Hearts”-type classified material.
3. Opinion material is subject to approval by the Editor who may deny publication without specified cause at their discretion. Submitters may appeal the Editor’s denial to the Editorial Board. A majority of the Editorial Board may overturn an editor’s decision. The decision of the Editorial Board is final.

Note: Letters policy amended on Thursday, Feb. 16, 2012; amended July 18, 2024

E. Policy on Usage of AI (Artificial Intelligence)

1. *The Cherokee One Feather* will not use AI (artificial intelligence) in any of our work products (articles, photos, graphics, etc.).

Note: AI policy adopted on June 18, 2026

F. Event Flyers and Listings

1. The *One Feather* will accept event announcements and flyers from anyone. They do not have to come from an established group, entity, program, etc.
2. Flyers will be posted, upon editorial review and approval, to *The Cherokee One Feather* Facebook page in a group listing once a week - every Sunday morning.

3. There is no charge for a simple event listing (main information only), which will appear in both the print newspaper and online at theonefeather.com
4. Each announcement and/or flyer must contain contact information.

G. Political Commentary Rebuttal

1. Letters to the editor or commentaries addressing a specific political candidate or issue will not be printed the week of an election or referendum.

H. Sports Coverage Policy

(Adopted on Jan. 28, 2015; amended on July 16, 2026)

1. The focus for sports coverage in the Cherokee One Feather will be Cherokee Central Schools sports.
2. EBCI (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) tribal member athletes at other schools will be highlighted as such: end-of-season awards, college signings, listings of area statistic leaders, and any other special awards received.
3. Game coverage will be provided as staffing and time permits.
4. Coverage will also be provided for Cherokee High School playoff games when staffing and time permits and subject to travel funds being available if applicable.
5. Game coverage can be provided for other sporting events (i.e. NASA and NAYO tournaments), Cracker Bowl, fishing tournaments, etc.) when staffing and time permits.
6. If live game coverage is not possible, all efforts will be made to include a game summary and statistics.
7. Cherokee One Feather staff should carry or wear an officially-issued North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) media pass and EBCI employee badge when covering sports.
8. Cherokee One Feather staff will adhere to all NCHSAA media policies for covering sports.
9. Prior to interviewing student-athletes, Cherokee One Feather staff will clear the interview request with a coach or parent.
10. Cherokee One Feather staff will refrain from harsh criticism in articles or photo cutlines.

Advertising Policy

(Adopted on Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2009; amended July 16, 2026)

A. General Advertising

1. The deadline for advertisements will be Friday at noon before the week of print publication. If a deadline is to change, notification should be given to the readership in the form of an announcement in *The Cherokee One Feather* media at least two weeks before said change.
2. Advertisements must be paid for in advance.
3. *The Cherokee One Feather* will bill tribal programs or businesses, in good standing with the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, for display advertisements and inserts.
4. The *One Feather* office should only accept check and bank card payments. Cash payments should be taken at the EBCI Budget & Finance Office. Per Capita monies will not be garnished as payment.
5. The following types of advertising will not be accepted:
 - a) Ads that are or contain explicit content; the definition of explicit content will be obtained by applying common, community standards on the Qualla Boundary in North Carolina.
 - b) Personal ads or requests for pen pals
 - c) Advertisements for illegal activities or products
 - d) Ads that are knowingly fraudulent, deceptive, misleading, or predatory
 - e) Ads that contain personal attacks
 - f) Ads that refer abusively to the goods or services of others
 - g) Ads that do not comply with state or federal discrimination laws
6. It shall be the policy of the Cherokee One Feather to disable the comment feature for advertising posts on any of its electronic media (unless the advertiser specifically requests comments). All content is subject to editing, inclusion, and exclusion of the editor, or, in their absence, the assistant editor. Anyone who objects to a decision of the editorial staff may appeal to the Editorial Board in writing. No official appeal may be made verbally. (*Adopted on May 15, 2025*)

B. **Political Advertising**

1. Political advertisements must be pre-paid and are due by Friday at noon the week prior to print publication.
2. Political advertisements may not be placed anonymously. Photo identification (i.e. driver's license, Tribal ID, or other government-issued ID) will be required to place a political advertisement.

C. **Classified Advertising**

1. Submissions by individuals for sale of personal goods, lost and found, rentals and services will be published free of charge as long as the item(s) do not exceed \$25,000. Submissions longer than 30 words will not be accepted.
2. Businesses cannot advertise in the Classified Section. A “services” section will be available for businesses who wish to run a classified advertisement. Charges will be per column inch pricing (\$15 per column inch).
3. A business will be defined as an entity that is organized under a corporate structure, has a temporary or annual tribal business license, or is listed with the TERO Office as a business. Organized non-profits will be considered businesses under the classified advertisement policy.

D. **Online/social media advertising policy**

(Adopted on Dec. 1, 2022)

Rationale: One Feather needs to increase advertising revenue. With the increasing popularity of the Facebook page, there is an opportunity to leverage posts linked to client ad pages on the One Feather website.

Overview: The One Feather policy is to offer Facebook posts for clients for \$100 per post that provides an “advertisement” that is linked to an ad on one of our web pages. That ad may, in turn, be linked to the client’s website or other page of their choosing.

1. Effective this date, the One Feather will no longer post flyers to the Facebook page free of charge. The Cherokee One Feather staff will determine whether a flyer submission is community or non-profit status, which we could provide to the community as a public service or create a lesser “community pricing” for the promotion of the flyer. The flyer or PSA (public service announcement) would be placed in a section of our website dedicated to that purpose; Events page online (Events - The Cherokee One Feather (theonefeather.com)). One Feather would then routinely post a notice to the readership to check that area of the website for those announcements. The post would contain a link to the community and public service page. The post and the website flyer would not be subject to the \$100 per post fee.
2. Any flyer or PSA approved for publication on the Facebook page will be assessed a \$25 fee (per post) - one post per day. Any subsequent repost will be an additional \$25.
3. The advertising post on Facebook will have a rate of \$100 per post. One post of the advertisement per day is the maximum allowed. All advertisement posts will have a comment or tag that identifies the content of the post as paid advertising. The One Feather staff will be able to reduce the total number of

posts an individual advertiser may repeat in 24 hours depending on the volume of advertisers requesting post purchases.

4. All content must be approved by the editor or assistant editor, including flyers, PSAs, and paid advertisements.

5. Any changes to this policy must be approved by a majority (quorum) of the sitting Editorial Board.

6. Addendum: All ads must be sized to 1050 pixels x 1050 pixels. All ads will be marked to not share so that the ad can only be seen on the One Feather page. (Staff meeting on 12/1/2022).

Subscriptions Policy

Note: Adopted on Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2012; amended July 18, 2024

1. *The Cherokee One Feather*, the official newspaper of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, is printed 50 times a year, except for adjustments for emergencies and governmental work suspensions. The newspapers are mailed to subscribers through the United States Postal Service tentatively every Wednesday.
2. The subscription rate for *The Cherokee One Feather* is \$40 for one year and \$25 for six months. The subscription rate will not increase between the start and end date of a subscription. The subscription rate will be evaluated and, if necessary, adjusted annually, based on printing and postal costs. The subscription rate for international customers will be computed on a case-by-case basis.
3. The address to request a subscription is:

Cherokee One Feather

Attn: Subscription Clerk

P.O. Box 501

Cherokee, NC 28719

Regardless of the subscription start date, notification of expirations will be mailed to the customers at the beginning of each month. Contact: Subscription Clerk at (828) 554-6262.

4. *Cherokee One Feather* Editorial Board policy regarding contributed recurring content: It is the policy of *The Cherokee One Feather* to provide a complimentary subscription to individuals and entities who provide recurring content for the *One Feather* print and online outlets. The Editor or Assistant Editor will be responsible for determining which individuals or entities will be given complimentary subscriptions and the duration of those subscriptions.

