

Contact: Georgiana Ausan
Indian Center Inc.
Phone (531) 500-5717
glee@icindn.org

1100 Military Road
Lincoln, NE 68508

Indian Center Inc.

Press Release

Indian Center Inc. has moved to a reduced-service model

Struggling agency will remain open only for essential community events

LINCOLN, Nebraska, January 8, 2019: Indian Center Inc. leaders say they will move to a reduced-service model for the struggling agency at 1100 Military Road as a result of financial problems.

The Indian Center has been struggling in recent months to regain financial stability, and the center's Board of Directors has decided the center can no longer remain open full-time. Board members plan to keep the building open on a limited basis for community events such as funerals and paid building rental activities.

They also plan to lay off part-time staff, reduce the interim Executive Director Georgiana Ausan to part-time status, consider releasing several National Able employees and cancel AA meetings, the Community Diner, Foodnet and the Emergency Food Pantry.

The changes will take effect immediately and are expected to last until the Indian Center can generate enough revenue to justify reopening the building on a full-time basis.

The Native Connections for Life Youth Program will remain active and host programming activities at the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska's Lincoln office location at 1701 E Street. The program serves youth and young adults ages 8 to 24.

At the December 9, 2018 public forum at the center, Ausan said the center is facing significant past debt and back taxes owed, lost grants, reluctant funders and loss of trust from the community. She said the cost of keeping the center open full-time exceeds the center's current income.

The most recent program loss came when the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) notified Ausan that it would no longer use the center to distribute commodities. CSFP said the Lincoln Food Bank would take over the commodities distribution program from the Indian Center. CSFP is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program which provides foods purchased, and distributed by the USDA.

The commodities program's funding helped pay for indirect costs related to the center hosting the program in its building. The commodities program also funded a full-time employee, who had to be laid off as a result of the loss of program funding.

In order to generate revenue for the center, the Board of Directors is considering a variety of possibilities, including selling property held by Indian Center Trust, liquidating unneeded assets, hosting fundraising events, and applying for grants and developing a new funding model.

For Release January 8, 2019

On Tuesday, Ausan touted the center's efforts in recent months to restore public trust and keep the center open, including establishing a new accounting system, creating financial oversight by an independent CPA, establishing a Community Advisory Committee to help guide the board and updating the center's website.

A list of programs no longer available at the center include:

- Foodnet/ Perishable Food Distribution Program- A full list of Lincoln/ Lancaster County Pantry and Meal Sites can be found at www.lincolnfoodbank.org
- AA Happy Hour meetings- Moved to The Bridge at 721 K Street - 3rd floor.
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) - Contact the CSFP - DHHS Food Distribution coordinator at 402-471-0189.
- Emergency Food Pantry – Contact Food Bank at 402-466-8170.

The next Community Advisory Committee meeting will be at the center on Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 6pm. The Board of Directors meeting will be at the center on Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 6pm. Both meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.