

# WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD KNOW WHEN WORKING WITH TRIBES

Office of Child Support Enforcement  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## Child Support Employer Outreach

There are more than 560 federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native tribes in the U.S. In addition, there are 51 tribal organizations (each comprising several tribes) and 275 tribal courts. According to the 2000 census, more than 30 percent of all Native American children under the age of 18 live with one parent.

### Do tribes have their own child support programs?

Forty-three tribes operate federally funded child support programs with 11 more in the development stage. We call these tribal IV-D agencies. "IV-D" refers to the section of the Social Security Act that authorized federal funding for the child support program in 1975.

### Do tribes have their own laws?

Yes. Tribes are sovereign nations and have their own governments with the authority to make and enforce laws, to adjudicate civil and criminal disputes, and to tax and license. A tribal IV-D agency is similar to a state IV-D agency and should be responded to accordingly.

### Do tribal IV-D agencies use the OMB-approved Income Withholding for Support form (IWO)?

Yes. Tribal IV-D agencies are required to use the Income Withholding for Support form (IWO) approved by OMB.

### Must I honor an IWO from a tribe if I am not a tribal employer or located on tribal land?

Yes. You are required to honor an IWO from a tribal IV-D agency just as you would honor one from a state IV-D agency.

### Where should I send payments for an IWO that comes from a tribe?

Send payments to the address indicated on the IWO. This may be the tribe's accounting office, the tribal court, or it may be the tribal IV-D agency. When a tribe has an intergovernmental service agreement with a state for collecting child support, the payments would go to a state disbursement unit. It is important to follow the instructions on the IWO.

### Must I honor a request for verification of employment (VOE) from a tribe if I am not a tribal employer or located on tribal land?

Yes. Please complete all VOEs sent by a state or tribal IV-D child support agency.

### If a noncustodial parent/employee leaves my employment, where should I send the notification of termination?

Send it to the address on the IWO.

### Should I expect to receive a National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) from a tribe?

Probably not. Although a tribe could use the NMSN to seek health coverage for a child, tribes are not required to seek health insurance for tribal children.

**Questions?** Contact Paige Hausburg, Tribal Coordinator, federal Office of Child Support Enforcement at [paige.hausburg@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:paige.hausburg@acf.hhs.gov) or 202-401-5635. Thank you for helping tribal children!

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