

## **INTAKE**

### **Initial Inquiry and Notification**

At intake, including changes in custody or transfers from another branch/unit/division, ask all clients if they are identified with, or are a member of or enrolled in an Indian Tribe. Also inquire of any Indian heritage or if any of the child's ancestors are part Indian. Be sure to inquire of both parent's ancestry. When the responses are vague, gather as much information possible in identifying potential Tribe's through prior case records, other relatives, use of Indian Health Services, etc.

With any suspected Indian ancestry, complete the Verification of Native American Status and Family Tree, form cf 1270, with as much information as possible as this form is used for the diligent search process. When different bio fathers are involved with Indian ancestry, complete a separate form cf 1270 for the sibling(s).

If the parent or other legal guardian reports membership to one of Oregon's nine Tribes, notify the Tribe by telephone within 24 hours. Follow up this contact by mailing a written notice, "Registered Mail, Return Receipt" requested. The receipt will go in the DHS case records file. If an out-of-state Tribe is clearly identified, attempt a telephonic notification as well.

Once there is an indication or suspicion that a child is Indian, you are to handle this case as an ICWA case until ALL the Tribes notified respond that the child(ren) are not members nor eligible for membership to the Tribe (if case not likely to be ICWA, handle as non-ICWA). Be sure that the Tribe provides this ruling in writing, on Tribal letterhead, to our office; stress the importance of this for court proceedings.

Be sure to coordinate Tribal notification with the staff person in your branch that handles the diligent search process. When a Tribe has been identified, a formal written notice must be sent by "Registered Mail, Return Receipt" requested, as soon as possible. Include copies of the petition and any other paperwork filed with the court. Connecting with the Tribe at the earliest point possible allows the tribe enough time to respond with their expectations and level of involvement in the case, which will allow DHS to handle the case appropriately. When a Tribe has intervened, or entered into a formal agreement with DHS, be sure to send notices of any future hearings, including court records, in a timely manner. Most of the Oregon Tribes have requested to be notified of, and to be given the opportunity to participate in Family Decision-Making Meetings. By doing this DHS ensures that the Letter of Expectations and service plans meet the active efforts requirement.