

CENSUS OF TRIBAL COURT SYSTEMS OMB PACKAGE

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2026 CENSUS OF TRIBAL COURT SYSTEMS

The 2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) is a census of all tribal courts granted authority by federally recognized tribes, tribal constitution, tribal code, or the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Information collected as a part of this data collection effort will provide needed information to tribes, courts, federal agencies, and other partners working on tribal lands. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) greatly appreciates your assistance.

The information collected in this survey is vitally important for understanding the administrative and operational needs of your tribal court individually but also helps in the planning for tribal justice systems across Indian Country.

Instructions

1. Please answer all questions with a reference to the tribal court, NAME. Answer the questions as accurately as possible given the organization and structure of your court.
2. For all questions, the phrase “during calendar year 2026” refers to January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026. The phrase “during calendar year 2025” refers to January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. For questions that ask for fiscal year (FY), please use your agency’s fiscal year (FY) for the designated year.
3. For any series of yes or no questions, please select either “Yes” or “No” for each option. If you are unsure of an answer, you can leave it blank, but you will not be able to return to the question later to complete it.
4. Please use the question guide found here [LINK TO QUESTION GUIDE] to help with gathering information to complete some questions before starting the online survey.
5. Please consult with justice system, law enforcement, and finance department representatives as necessary to obtain information to complete the survey in its entirety.
6. Your tribe’s responses will not identify you individually. We ask for your name and contact information above in case any of the survey items need clarification.
7. If you have any questions or need assistance in completing the survey, please contact the BJS data collection agent NORC via email at CTCS@norc.org or call NUMBER. If you have questions about the CTCS program, please contact Steven W. Perry of BJS via email (Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov) or telephone (202-307-0777).

Burden Statement

The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended (34 USC 10132), authorizes this information collection. This request for information is in accordance with the clearance requirement of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, as amended (44 USC 3507). The burden of this data collection is estimated to average 40 minutes per response, including time to review instructions, gather the information needed, and enter and review the information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate, or any other aspect of this data collection, including suggestions on how to reduce this burden, to the Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 999 N. Capitol St., NE, Washington, D.C. 20531.

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under Title 34 United States Code Section 10132. By law, BJS will use the information you provide only for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person against unauthorized disclosure or misuse. [Title 34 U.S.C. Sections 10134 and 10231] Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Per the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please complete or correct your court's contact information below:

Official Tribe Name:

Tribal Court Name	CTNAME
Street Address	CTSTREET
City	CTCITY
State	CTSTATE
Zip	CTZIP
Tribal Court Website	CTWEBSITE

Please provide your contact information, name, and title:

Name	NAME
Title	TITLE
Telephone	PHONE
Fax	FAX
Email Address	EMAIL
Official Tribe Name for Reported Data	TRIBENAME

SECTION A. TRIBAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

This section gathers information on the various components of your tribal court. Please answer these questions regarding calendar year 2026.

A1. Does your tribe operate or participate in the following type(s) of system?

Source	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Western-style tribal court OPWEST	☐	☐
b. Peacemaking court OPPEACE	☐	☐
c. Elders panel OPELD	☐	☐
d. Circle sentencing system OPCIRC	☐	☐
e. Other traditional or indigenous justice system: <i>(Please describe)</i> OPTROTH 	☐	☐
f. Joint jurisdiction court (tribal-state court) OPTRJUD	☐	☐
g. Intertribal court system participant: <i>(Please provide the name of the intertribal court system)</i> OPINT 	☐	☐
h. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)/Court of Federal Regulation or Court of Indian Offenses (CFR) OPCFR	☐	☐
i. Tribal council serving as the judiciary OPTRCOUN	☐	☐
j. Other: <i>(Please describe)</i> OPOTH 	☐	☐

IF "NO" SELECTED FOR ALL ITEMS BETWEEN A AND I (ALL BUT 'OTHER' OPTION), END SURVEY AND RECORD AS SCREENED OUT. DISPLAY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this survey. Based on the response you provided, your court is not eligible to complete the survey. If you believe you received this message in error, please contact CTCS@norc.org or call us at NUMBER.

First, we will ask you some questions about courts in your tribal justice system and their jurisdiction.

[Programmer instruction: If A1f doesn't equal A2b, please prompt "The response you provided for Joint-jurisdiction court in A1 doesn't match the response you provided for Joint jurisdiction court in A2. Please review and update your responses if necessary."]

A2. Does your tribal court operate the following type(s) of specialty courts?

Source	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Drug court or Healing to Wellness court CTSPHEAL	☐	☐
b. Joint jurisdiction court (tribal-state court)* CTSPJJC	☐	☐
c. Veterans docket or court CTSPVET	☐	☐
d. Domestic violence docket or court CTSPDOM	☐	☐
e. Mental health court CTSMENT	☐	☐
f. Family court CTSFAM	☐	☐
g. DWI court CTSDWI	☐	☐
h. Teen or youth docket or court CTSPTEEN	☐	☐
i. Juvenile criminal court CTSJUV	☐	☐
j. Juvenile mental health court CTSJUVMEN	☐	☐
k. Other specialty court: (Please describe) CTSPOTH _____ CTSPOTHSPEC _____	☐	☐

* An agreement between tribal and state governments whereby both entities work collaboratively toward shared goals of improving access to justice, fostering public trust and increasing accountability.

CRIMJUR

A3. Does your tribal court exercise criminal jurisdiction?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No [GO TO A5]

CRIMJURRIGHT

[ASK A4 IF A3 = 1]

A4. Does your tribal code provide defendants with the right to trial by jury for criminal proceedings?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No

CIVILJUR

A5. Does your tribal court exercise civil jurisdiction?

- ☐ 1. Yes

- ☐ 2. No [\[GO TO A7\]](#)

CIVILJURRIGHT

[\[ASK A6 IF A5 = 1\]](#)

- A6. Does your tribal code provide **adult** defendants the right to a trial by jury for civil proceedings?
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No

CTCSPL280

- A7. Does the state currently exercise at least partial criminal jurisdiction on your tribe's lands?
- ☐ 1. YES, the state exercises criminal jurisdiction under Public Law 280
- ☐ 2. YES, the state exercises criminal jurisdiction under legislation similar to Public Law 280
- ☐ 3. YES, the state has begun exercising concurrent jurisdiction over crimes committed by non-American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) against Indians/AIAN or non-Indians/AIAN following the 2022 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta
- ☐ 4. YES, other (*please explain*):
- ☐ 5. NO [\[GO TO A9\]](#)

DISCRTNAME

[\[ASK A8 IF A7 = 1, 2, 3, or 4\]](#)

- A8. [\[IF A3 = 2 THEN INCLUDE RED TEXT IN PARENTHESES\]](#)
[\[IF A3 = 1 THEN INCLUDE BLUE TEXT IN PARENTHESES\]](#)

(Even though your court does not hear criminal cases, provide) (Provide) the name of the state or local District or Circuit court that prosecute crimes or felonies against non-Indian/AIAN, under which PL 280 operates. *If more than one court prosecutes these crimes or felonies, please include all court names.*

ENHACESENT

[\[ASK A9 IF A3 = 1\]](#)

- A9. As of December 31, 2026, does your tribal court exercise the enhanced sentencing authority provided under the Tribal Law and Order Act ([TLOA](#)) which includes the authority to sentence defendants to 3 years of incarceration and up to \$15,000 in fines?
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Not sure/Do not know

VAWA

[INCLUDE EMBEDDED LINK FOR VAWA]

[ASK A10 IF A3 = 1]

A10. As of December 31, 2026, does your tribal court exercise “Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction” over non-Indians/AIAN such as under the 2013* or 2022† reauthorizations of the Violence Against Women Act ([VAWA](#))?

** The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA 2013) included a historic provision that recognized the inherent authority of “participating Tribes” to exercise “special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction” (SDVCJ) over certain defendants, regardless of their Indian or non-Indian status, who commit acts of domestic violence or dating violence or violate certain protection orders in Indian country.*

† The Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA 2022) amended VAWA 2013 to recognize “special Tribal criminal jurisdiction” (STCJ) over an expanded list of “covered crimes” that includes, in addition to the VAWA 2013 crimes, assault of Tribal justice personnel, child violence, obstruction of justice, sexual violence, sex trafficking, and stalking.

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No
- ☐ 3. Not sure/Do not know

LAWSPUBLIC

A11. Are your tribal laws and codes made available to the public?

- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No

SECTION B. TRIBAL COURT BUDGET AND EMPLOYMENT

The next section will ask you questions about your tribal court’s budget, resources, and staffing. You may find it helpful to complete [LINK TO QUESTION GUIDE] before continuing with this section as it will ensure that you have answers to the questions in this section readily available.

For questions that ask for fiscal year (FY), please use your agency’s fiscal year (FY) for the designated year. For questions that ask for calendar year, “during calendar year 2026” refers to January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026. The phrase “during calendar year 2025” refers to January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

- B1. During fiscal years (FY) 2025 and 2026, what were the operational budgets of your tribal court excluding capital expenditures such as construction cost for new buildings, major repairs, and improvements?* (Enter whole numbers only. If you are unable to provide the actual number, please provide your best estimate. If there is no additional funding, enter 0.)

**Operating expenditures or budgets are defined as all recurring fixed and variable costs associated with the management and administration of your system. It does not include non-recurring fixed capital costs such as building construction and major equipment purchases.*

Refer to Question B1 of the question guide.

[Programmer instruction: Base funding provided at b. should not exceed total funding at a. for calendar year. If b. exceeds a., display message "The amount provided for base funding exceeds the amount provided for total funding. Please review these amounts." User should be able to advance after prompt is displayed once.]

[ALL DOLLAR AMOUNTS SHOULD BE MIN 0 AND MAX 1,000,000,000. DO NOT ALLOW DECIMAL ENTRIES. DO NOT ADD OR ALLOW COMMAS. INCLUDE WHOLE NUMBERS ONLY.]

	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
a. Total funding (includes annual base funding and grants or funding available for a limited period)	\$ TOTALFUND25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	\$ TOTALFUND26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide
b. Base funding only (annual funding such as tribal funding or BIA funding)	\$ BASEFUND25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	\$ BASEFUND26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide

CFISCYEAR

- B2. Please indicate the month and day on which your agency's fiscal year begins:

____/____

MM DD

- B3. During fiscal year 2026, did your tribal court receive funding from the following sources?

Source	2026	
	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Tribal council or tribal government FUNDA26	☐	☐
b. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) 638 contract (e.g. Public Law 93-638 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act) FUNDB26	☐	☐

c. Other Bureau of Indian Affairs funding FUNDD26	☐	☐
d. Self-governance compacts FUNDC26	☐	☐
e. U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) FUNDE26	☐	☐
f. DOJ grants, other than CTAS funding FUNDF26	☐	☐
g. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FUNDG26	☐	☐
h. Other federal grants FUNDH26	☐	☐
i. State funding FUNDI26	☐	☐
j. Private foundations FUNDJ26	☐	☐
k. Private donations FUNDK26	☐	☐
l. Filing fees, fines and other court costs FUNDL26	☐	☐
m. Tribal business enterprise FUNDM26	☐	☐
n. Other: <i>(Please describe)</i> FUNDN25, FUNDNOTH	☐	☐

B4. Enter your tribal court's total number of full and part-time personnel for the pay period that included December 31, 2026. Please include all full-time staff **paid by the court or tribe**, including judges, clerks, administrative and support staff, public defenders, and prosecutors.

NOTE: Count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as part-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0.

Refer to Questions B4, B5 and B6 of the question guide. **[MIN 0, MAX 100,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]**

	Full-time paid by court or tribe	Part-time paid by court or tribe
a. Total Employees	FTTOT ☐ Estimate	PTTOT ☐ Estimate

B5. Enter your tribal court's total number of full-time personnel by race and Hispanic origin for the pay period that included December 31, 2026.

NOTE: Count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as part-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0.

Refer to Questions B4, B5 and B6 of the question guide.

[MIN 0, MAX 100,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Full-time paid by court or tribe	
		Estimate
a. American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	FTAIAN	☐

b. White, non-Hispanic	FTWHITE	☐
c. Black or African American, non-Hispanic	FTBLACK	☐
a. Hispanic or Latino	FTHISP	☐
b. Asian, non-Hispanic	FTASIAN	☐
c. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	FTHAPI	☐
d. Two or more races	FTMULTI	☐
e. Race/Hispanic origin not known	FTOTH	☐

B6. Enter your tribal court's total number of full-time personnel by sex for the pay period that included December 31, 2026?

NOTE: Do not count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as full-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0."

Refer to Questions B4, B5 and B6 of the question guide.

[PROGRAMMER NOTE: Sum should not exceed number of full time employees in B4a Full time staff if estimate option isn't selected at either question. If it exceeds, display message "The total number of employees listed is higher than the number of full time employees provided in question B4. Please review your entry or go back and correct this number if necessary."]

[MIN 0, MAX 100,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Full-time paid by court or tribe	
		Estimate
a. Male	MSEXFT	☐
b. Female	FSEXFT	☐

B7. How many of the following types of personnel were employed or worked in your tribal court for the pay period that included December 31, 2026?

NOTE: Count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as part-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0. If a particular position does not exist in your court, select "Not applicable."

Refer to Question B7 of the question guide.

[PROGRAMMER NOTE: For each part, number provided at full-time (first option) should not exceed number of full-time employees in B4a and number provided at part-time (second option) should not exceed the number of part-time employees provided at B4b. If estimate option isn't selected at either question. If it exceeds, display message "The number of employees listed is greater than the number of [full/part] time employees provided in question B4. Please review your entry or correct the number provided in B4a and/or B4b."

[MIN 0, MAX 100,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

Position	2026 Counts				
	Full-time paid by court or tribe	Part-time paid by court or tribe	Contract paid by court or tribe	Paid by stipend	Pro bono*
a. Trial/Appellate court judge	FTJUDG ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	PTJUDG ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	CONJUDG ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	STIPJUDG ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	VOLJUDG ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable
b. Prosecution/prosecutor	FTPROS ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	PTPROS ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	CONPROS ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	NOT APPLICABLE	VOLPROS ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable
c. Indigent defense services/public defender	FTDEF ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	PTDEF ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	CONDEF ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable	NOT APPLICABLE	VOLDEF ☐ Estimate ☐ Not applicable

* Pro bono refers to any volunteers and personnel funded by or provided through other agencies at no cost to your tribal court.

B8. Does your tribal court have the following positions? Positions can be full-time, part-time, and contracts, paid for by the tribe or other agencies, or volunteers. Please indicate yes even if one person performs more than one position described below.

Position	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Bailiff POSBAIL	☐	☐
b. Parole officer POSPAR	☐	☐
c. Probation officer POSPROB	☐	☐
d. Pretrial services staff POSPRE	☐	☐
e. Community resources staff/court liaison POSCOM	☐	☐
f. Court administrator/director POSCADM	☐	☐
g. Court clerk POSCLERK	☐	☐
h. Court reporter POSREP	☐	☐
i. Staff attorney (does not include prosecutor or public defender)/judicial law clerk POSSATT	☐	☐
j. Tribal elder/peacemaker/other traditional forum staff POSTRUB	☐	☐
k. Child welfare working (including Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) staff) POSCHIL	☐	☐
l. Support staff POSSUPP	☐	☐
m. Civil legal services staff POSCIV	☐	☐
n. Lay advocate/Spokesperson POSLAY	☐	☐
o. Presenting officer POSPRES	☐	☐
p. Victim service provider POSVICT	☐	☐
q. Other: (Please describe) POSOTH, POSSPEC	☐	☐

SECTION C. REPRESENTATION IN TRIBAL COURT

The next section will ask you questions about providing free services in your tribal court.

[ASK C1 IF A3 = 1]

C1. Does your tribe or tribal court provide free criminal defense services to the following people?

	Yes, all = 1	Yes, only indigent* = 2	No = 3
a. Tribal Members CRIMTRIB	☐	☐	☐
b. Nonmember Indians/AIAN CRIMMEM	☐	☐	☐
c. Non-Indians/AIAN CRIMNON	☐	☐	☐

** Indigent refers to individuals who are impoverished, or not financially able to employ counsel. A defendant who is indigent has a constitutional right to court-appointed representation, according to a 1963 Supreme Court decision, Gideon v. Wainwright*

[IF C1a = NO AND C1b = NO AND C1c = NO (NO FREE SERVICES PROVIDED), GO TO ITEM C3. ELSE GO TO C2]

[ASK C2 IF ANY "YES" IN C1]

C2. Do any of the following provide your tribe or tribal members with free criminal defense services?

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Tribal public defender program (fixed staff) CRIMDFIX	☐	☐
b. Assigned defender (appointed from a list who accept cases on a judge-by-judge basis, court-by-court basis, or case-by-case basis) CRIMDASG	☐	☐
c. Contract counsel (private bar members who contract to provide court appointed representation in a jurisdiction) CRIMDCONT	☐	☐
d. A neighboring tribal legal services program and/or law school clinics CRIMDNHB	☐	☐
e. A non-profit legal services program, including Indian Legal Services CRIMDIND	☐	☐
f. A private law firm or office pro bono program CRIMDPRIV	☐	☐
g. Other: (Please describe) CRIMDOTH, CRIMDSPEC	☐	☐

CIVCRIT

[ASK C3 IF A5 = 1]

C3. Does your tribe or tribal court provide free civil legal services for any tribal court appearance?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No **[GO TO SECTION D]**

CIVDEL

[ASK C4 IF C3 = 1]

C4. Are free civil legal services provided based on income scale and ability to pay?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No

[IF C3 = NO (2), GO TO SECTION D. OTHERWISE, GO TO C5]

COURTFREE

C5. Do any of the following provide your tribe or tribal members free civil legal services?

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Tribal civil legal services (fixed staff) TRIBPFIX	☐	☐
b. Contract counsel (private bar members who contract to provide court appointed representation in a jurisdiction) TRIBPCONT	☐	☐
c. A neighboring tribal legal services program and/or law school clinic TRIBPNHB	☐	☐
d. A non-profit legal services program, including Indian Legal Services TRIBPIND	☐	☐
e. A private law firm or office pro bono program TRIBPPRIV	☐	☐
f. Other: (Please describe) TRIBPOTH, TRIBPSPEC	☐	☐

SECTION D. JUVENILE JUSTICE, CHILD WELFARE AND DEPENDENCY MATTERS

The next section will ask you questions about cases pertaining to juveniles under the age of 18, child welfare or dependency matters, and Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). You may find it helpful to complete [LINK TO QUESTION GUIDE] before continuing with this section as it will ensure that you have answers to the questions in this section readily available.

- D1. Does your tribal court have the following code(s) or statute(s)? These can include standalone codes (statutes) or sub-codes of another code.

This should not include Memorandums of Understanding or other agreements that are not a part of a formal code.

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. A juvenile justice tribal code JLAWDEL	☐	☐
b. Code or statute for handling of ICWA matters JLAWICWA	☐	☐
c. Dependency and neglect code or statute JLAWSTAT	☐	☐
d. Code or statute regarding the reentry and repeat offenders (recidivism) of tribal youth or juveniles returning from local, state, or federal prison JLAWCHI	☐	☐

JUUVLIO

- D2. Does your tribal court currently handle juvenile law-violating cases or minors as defendants*?
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No (**GO TO ITEM D13**)

** Law-violating cases refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.*

[ASK D3 IF D2 = 1]

- D3. Does your tribal court handle the following type(s) of juvenile law-violating cases?

**Law-violating cases refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.*

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Juvenile delinquency [†] JLAWDEL	☐	☐
b. Status offense [‡] (for example: underage drinking, tobacco smoking, truancy, running away) and/or child in need of services [§] (CHINS) JLAWSTAT	☐	☐
c. Other: (Please describe) JLAWOTH, JLAWSPEC	☐	☐

[†] Acts committed by a juvenile that would be considered a criminal offense if committed by an adult.

[‡] 25 CFR § 11.900(m) - Status offense means an offense which, if committed by an adult, would not be designated a crime under this part or under an ordinance of the tribe.

[§] This can include Family in need of services (FINS) or Minor in need of services (MINS).

JLAWCHIN

D3d. Does your tribal court handle all juvenile law-violating cases as juvenile dependency or child in need of service (CHINS) matters.

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No

D4. Does your tribe or tribal court provide free legal representation services in juvenile law-violating cases[†] to the following juveniles?

[†]Law-violating cases refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.

	Yes, all juveniles = 1	Yes, only indigent* juveniles = 2	No = 3
a. Tribal member juveniles FLGTRIB	☐	☐	☐
b. Nonmember Indian/AIAN juveniles FLGMIND	☐	☐	☐
c. Non-Indian/AIAN juveniles FLGNIND	☐	☐	☐

* Indigent refers to individuals who are impoverished, or not financially able to employ counsel. A defendant who is indigent has a constitutional right to court-appointed representation, according to a 1963 Supreme Court decision, *Gideon v. Wainwright*

[ASK D5 IF ANY D4 = "YES"]

D5. Do any of the following provide **free criminal legal representation** in juvenile law-violating cases[†] if needed?

[†]Law-violating cases refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Tribal public defender program (fixed staff) FREPFIX	☐	☐
b. Assigned defender (appointed from a list of those who accept cases on a judge-by-judge basis, court-by-court basis, or case-by-case basis) FREPASD	☐	☐
c. Contract counsel (private bar members who contract to provide court appointed representation in a jurisdiction) FREPCON	☐	☐
d. A neighboring tribal legal services program and/or law school clinic FREPNUB	☐	☐
e. A non-profit legal services program, including Indian Legal Services FREPIND	☐	☐
f. A private law firm or office pro bono program FREPPRIV	☐	☐
g. Other: (Please describe) FREPOTH, FREESPEC	☐	☐

ALTJUVE

D6. Excluding detention, does your tribal court currently provide alternative disposition orders for **juvenile** criminal law violations (e.g., drug or alcohol rehabilitation, community service, electronic monitoring, etc.)?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No

PROBJUVE

D7. Does your tribal court maintain a probation function for juveniles?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No

PARJUVE

D8. Does your tribal court maintain a parole function for juveniles?

- ☐ 1. Yes
☐ 2. No

D9. How many juvenile law-violating cases* were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

**Law-violating cases refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.*

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the "Do not track these case numbers" box.*

Refer to Question D9 of the question guide.

[MIN 0, MAX 1,000,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Cases filed in 2025	Cases filed in 2026
a. Juvenile delinquency [†] cases	JFDEL25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	JFDEL26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
b. Juvenile status offense [‡] cases (for example: underage drinking, tobacco smoking, truancy, running away)	JFSTA26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	JFSTA26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

[†] Acts committed by a juvenile that would be considered a criminal offense if committed by an adult.

[‡] 25 CFR § 11.900(m) - Status offense means an offense which, if committed by an adult, would not be designated a crime under this part or under an ordinance of the tribe.

TRJREENT

D10. Does your tribe or tribal court have or provide access to a reentry program for tribal juveniles who have been in detention? *Please select all that apply.*

- ☐ a. Yes, tribe/tribal court provides reentry program,
☐ b. Yes, tribe/tribal court has access to reentry program
☐ c. No

The next items pertain to child welfare or dependency matters only.

D11. Does your tribal court handle the following Indian/AIAN child welfare or dependency matters*?

** For example: Child in Need of Protection or Child in Need of Aid cases.*

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Child abuse or neglect INDCHAB	☐	☐
b. Foster care placements INDFOST	☐	☐
c. Suspension of parental rights INDSUSP	☐	☐
d. Termination of parental rights INDTERM	☐	☐
e. Pre-adoptive placements INDPREA	☐	☐
f. Adoptive placements INDADOP	☐	☐
g. Guardianship INDGUARD	☐	☐
h. Emancipation INDEMAN	☐	☐
i. Other: <i>(Please describe)</i> INDOTH, INDSPEC	☐	☐

[IF ALL D11 = "NO", SKIP TO SECTION E]

D12. Do children in child welfare or dependency cases currently have access to advocacy or representation from the following?

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Guardian ad Litem (GAL) CHIGAL	☐	☐
b. Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) CHICASA	☐	☐
c. Attorney or presenting officer CHIATT	☐	☐

D13. How many child welfare or dependency cases were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.*

Refer to Questions D13 of the question guide.

[MIN 0, MAX 1,000,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Cases filed in 2025	Cases filed in 2026
a. Child welfare and dependency cases	CHFDEP25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	CHFDEP26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

D14. How many Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) cases were transferred to the tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.*

Refer to Question D14 of the question guide.

[MIN 0, MAX 1,000,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Transferred in 2025	Transferred in 2026
a. Cases transferred from a state court	ICWAST25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	ICWAST26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
b. Cases transferred from another tribal court	ICWATB25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	ICWATB26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

SECTION E. CASE FILINGS, SENTENCING/DISPOSITION, AND OTHER TOPICS

DIRECTIONS: For survey items requesting case count information, please provide the total number of cases filed by your tribal court during the calendar years 2025 and 2026. You may find it helpful to complete [LINK TO QUESTION GUIDE] before continuing with this section as it will ensure that you have answers to the questions in this section readily available. Use the following definition to determine case numbers:

A filed case is a set of all charges against a single defendant filed with the court on a single day. A case with three defendants should be counted as three cases, but a case with one defendant with multiple charges should be counted as one case.

E1. Does your tribal court use the following methods to manage cases?

Method	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Paper files TMETPAP	☐	☐
b. Basic spreadsheets (for example: Excel, Access) TMETSPR	☐	☐
c. Basic text files (for example: Word, WordPerfect) TMETTXT	☐	☐
d. An automated case management system TMETCMS	☐	☐
e. Other: (Please describe) TMETOTH, TMETSPEC _____ _____	☐	☐

E2. As of December 31, 2026, does your tribal court issue restraining orders and/or protective orders to safeguard someone from another person for any of the following reasons?

	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Sexual violence RESTSEX	☐	☐
b. Violent or physical act RESTVIO	☐	☐
c. Threatening act RESTACT	☐	☐
d. Harassment RETHAR	☐	☐
e. Contact or communication with the victim RESTCON	☐	☐
f. Physical proximity to another person RESTPROX	☐	☐
g. Stalking RESTSTK	☐	☐
h. Vulnerable adult RESTVULN (e.g., elderly, physically disabled, mentally incapacitated, etc.)	☐	☐
i. Economic abuse (e.g. exerting control over income, spending, or bank accounts) RESTECON	☐	☐
j. Technological abuse (e.g. cyberstalking, online harassment, recording, spying) RESTTECH	☐	☐

[IF ALL E2 = "NO", SKIP TO E4]

RESTREC

E3. Does the state(s) in which your tribe is located recognize restraining orders and/or protective orders issued from the tribal court as if it were the state court's own order?

- ☐ a. Yes
☐ b. No
☐ c. Not sure/do not know

[ASK E4 IF A3 = 1]

E4. How many of the following types of criminal cases were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026? Please include all misdemeanors and felonies as appropriate.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide the actual case count number, please provide your best estimate.
 If the case count is none, enter "0" as your answer.
 If you do not track this information, please check the "Do not track these case numbers" checkbox.

A criminal case is any incident, action, or activity to which your office dedicates resources at any point of the process, including an investigation, that may lead to a case filing. Cases filed "involve" a certain offense type if that case included at least one count of that charge.

[†] Involving means the case included at least one count of the charge.

^{*} Domestic violence refers to violence between married or cohabiting couples, as well as violence against other members of the offender's household, such as children, siblings, parents, elderly relatives, or other family members of current or past intimate partners.

[‡] Human trafficking includes sex and labor trafficking. Sex trafficking is defined as: A commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion OR in which the person induced to perform such an act is younger than age 18. Labor trafficking is defined as: Recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services using force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

[§] Drug cases include possession, sales, and paraphernalia/equipment.

[Programmer note: For parts b through f, if any one exceeds the total number provided for that year in E4a, display the note "The amount provided is higher than what was entered at E4a for the total number of criminal cases filed, Please go back and revise this number if necessary."]

	Criminal Cases Filed in 2025	Criminal Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Criminal Cases Filed	CMFTOT25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	CMFTOT26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
b. Cases Filed Involving [†] Violation of Protection Orders	CMFPO25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	CMFPO26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
c. Cases Filed Involving [†] Human Trafficking [‡]	CMFST25	CMFST26

	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
d. Cases Filed Involving [†] Drugs [§]	CMFDRG25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	CMFDRG26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
e. Cases Filed Involving [†] Neglect, Abuse, or Financial Exploitation of the Elderly	CMFNAF25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	CMFNAF26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
f. Cases Filed Involving [†] Rape or Sexual Assault	CMFSEX25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	CMFSEX26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

E5. How many criminal cases against/over non-Indians/AIAN were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

A criminal case is any incident, action, or activity to which your office dedicates resources at any point of the process, including an investigation, that may lead to a case filing.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0.

Refer to Question E5 in the question guide.

[Programmer note: amount provided in E5 for calendar year shouldn't exceed amount provided in E4a for same calendar year. If amount exceeds, display "The number of criminal cases provided for this question exceeds the total number provided at E4a. Please review this number and correct E4a if necessary."]

[MIN 0, MAX 1,000,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Criminal Cases Filed in 2025	Criminal Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Criminal Cases with Non-Indians/AIAN Filed	TOTCRIMNON25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure	TOTCRIMNON26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure

[ASK E6 IF A5 = 1]

E6. How many civil cases were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

Civil cases are noncriminal matters—such as contract disputes or damages for destruction of personal property or divorce—involving individuals or organizations. It is brought to enforce a right or redress.

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.*

Refer to question E6 the question guide.

[MIN 0, MAX 1,000,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Civil Cases Filed in 2025	Civil Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Civil Cases Filed	CIVFIL25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure	CIVFIL26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure

E7. How many civil cases against/over non-Indian/AIAN s were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

Civil cases are noncriminal matters—such as contract disputes or damages for destruction of personal property—involving individuals or organizations. It is brought to enforce a right or redress.

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0.*

Refer to Question E7 of the question guide.

[Programmer note: If the number here exceeds the total number provided in E6 for the calendar year, please display “The amount provided is higher than what was entered at E6 for the total number of civil cases filed, Please go back and revise this number if necessary.”]

[MIN 0, MAX 1,000,000 FOR ALL NUMERIC ENTRIES]

	Civil Cases Filed in 2025	Civil Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Civil Cases with Non-Indians/AIAN Filed	TOTCIVNON25 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure	TOTCIVNON26 ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure

CIVTRIAL

E8. Did your court conduct any civil jury trials in calendar year 2026?

- ☐ a. Yes
☐ b. No

TCALTSENT

- E9. Does your tribal court currently provide alternative criminal sentencing for **adults** outside of incarceration (e.g., drug or alcohol rehabilitation, community service, electronic monitoring, etc.)?
- ☐ a. Yes
☐ b. No

TCREENTRY

- E10. Does your tribal court or your tribe have or provide access to a reentry program or initiative for **adults** returning to the community?
- ☐ a. Yes, tribe/tribal court provides reentry program
☐ b. Yes, tribe/tribal court has access to reentry program
☐ c. No

- E11. Does your tribal court oversee the following types of environmental cases within your jurisdiction?

Environmental case type	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Cases related to wildlife such as fish and game. EVFSH	☐	☐
b. Cases related to trust lands. EVTRST	☐	☐
c. Cases related to minerals and land use, not including trust lands. EVLAND	☐	☐
d. Other: <i>(Please describe)</i> EVOTH, EVSPEC 	☐	☐

- E12. Does your tribal court track repeat criminal offenders (recidivism) for the following categories?

	Yes = 1	No = 2	Not sure = 3
a. Adults RECADLT	☐	☐	☐
b. Juveniles RECJUV	☐	☐	☐



The survey is now complete. Thank you for taking part in the 2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems.

If you have questions or would like to speak with someone about your experience, please call toll free and leave a message at 1-877-xxx-xxxx or send an email message to CTCS@norc.org. A member of our survey administration team will respond promptly.

Reports using this data will be made available to tribal courts, tribes, and other interested parties through the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Again, thank you for your cooperation in this important data collection effort. Your responses are critically important to the success of this survey.



2025 Census of Tribal Court Systems

OMB No. 1121-0339 Approval Expires 01/31/2028

Thank you for completing the 2025 Census of Tribal Court Systems. To continue, please enter your PIN below. This PIN can be found on the letter that was sent to you. If you do not have this PIN, please contact CTCS@norc.org.

The information collected will help tribes and the courts and law enforcement agencies that support them address public safety challenges, as well as provide empirical data to support resource and program planning by tribes. For more information on past collections, visit <https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/tribal-crime-and-justice/tribal-courts> and <https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/tribal-crime-and-justice/tribal-law-enforcement>.

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under Title 34 United States Code Section 10132. By law, BJS will use the information you provide only for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person against unauthorized disclosure or misuse. [Title 34 U.S.C. Sections 10134 and 10231] Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Per the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact Steven W. Perry, BJS Tribal Justice Statistics Program Manager, at 202-307-0777 or Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov.

NORC at the University of Chicago

55 East Monroe Street, 19th Floor

Chicago, IL 60603

CTCS@norc.org

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

[OMB Number 1121-0350]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed eCollection eComments Requested;

Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired: Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)

AGENCY: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice

ACTION: 60-Day Notice

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice (DOJ) will be submitting the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Comments are encouraged and will be accepted for 60 days until **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have comments especially on the estimated public burden or associated response time, suggestions, or need a copy of the proposed information collection instrument with instructions or additional information, please contact

Steven W. Perry (email: bjspra.comments@ojp.usdoj.gov; telephone: 202-307-0765), Bureau of Justice Statistics, 999 North Capital Street, NE, Washington, DC 20531.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Written comments and suggestions from the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information are encouraged. Your comments should address one or more of the following four points:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Evaluate whether and if so, how the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected can be enhanced; and
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including using appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Abstract: The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has previously conducted the Census of Tribal Courts (CTCS), formerly known as the National Survey of Tribal Court Systems (NSTCS), through a survey that collects data on the staffing, functions, caseloads, civil and juvenile justice matters, and operations of tribal law courts serving tribal lands. The 2026 CTCS will be the second administration of this collection. It will provide insight on emerging issues and challenges facing tribal law courts since it was last conducted in 2014 and establish a time series of the data collection. BJS uses the information gathered in the CTCS in published reports and statistics. The reports will be made available to the U.S. Congress, Executive Office of the President, practitioners, researchers, students, the media, others interested in criminal justice statistics, and the general public via the BJS website.

Overview of this information collection:

1. *Type of Information Collection:* Reinstatement, with changes, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.
2. *Title of the Form/Collection:* 2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)
3. *Agency form number, if any, and the applicable component of the Department of Justice sponsoring the collection:* The form number is CTCS-26. The applicable component within the Department of Justice is the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in the Office of Justice Programs.
4. *Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as the obligation to respond:* Affected public are tribal courts. The 2026 CTCS is revised from the 2014 National Survey of Tribal Court Systems (NSTCS-14). BJS plans to field the 2026 CTCS from January 2027 through April 2027. Respondents will be the staff at tribal courts. The obligation to respond is voluntary.
5. *An estimate of the total number of respondents and the amount of time estimated for an average respondent to respond:* A projected 378 respondents from tribal courts will take an average of 65 minutes (1.08 hours) each to complete form CTCS-26, including time to research or find information not readily available. In addition, an estimated 39 respondents will be contacted for data quality follow-up at 15 minutes (.25 hours) per respondent.
6. *An estimate of the total public burden (in hours) associated with the collection:* The total burden hours for this collection is 417 hours.
7. *An estimate of the total annual cost burden associated with the collection, if applicable:*
\$10,537.86

Total Burden Hours

Activity	Number of Respondents	Frequency	Total Annual Responses	Time Per Survey (Mins)	Total Annual Burden (Hours)	Hourly Rate*	Monetized Value of Respondent Time
CTCS Invitation Materials	378	1	378	5	31.5	\$25.15	\$792.23
CTCS Question Guide	378	1	378	20	126	\$25.15	\$3,168.90
CTCS Web Survey	378	1	378	40	252	\$25.15	\$6,337.80
Data Quality Follow-Up	38	1	38	15	9.5	\$25.15	\$238.93
Total	378				419		\$10,537.86

If additional information is required, contact: **Darwin Arceo, Department Clearance Officer**,
United States Department of Justice, Justice Management Division, Policy and Planning Staff,
Two Constitution Square, 145 N Street, NE, 4W-218, Washington, DC.

Dated:

Darwin Arceo,

Department Clearance Officer for PRA,

U.S. Department of Justice.



The Navajo Nation **DR. BUU NYGREN** *PRESIDENT*

Yideeskáądi Nitsáhákees | *Think for the Future*

Submitted via email to: bjspra.comments@ojp.usdoj.gov

August 28, 2026

Mr. Steven Perry
Bureau of Justice Statistics
999 North Capital Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20531

Dear Mr. Perry,

On behalf of the Navajo Nation, I offer the following comments to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) regarding the Reinstatement of the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) in response to the Federal Register Notice published on June 29, 2026.

The Navajo Nation (Nation) is the largest tribal nation in the United States, with over 400,000 enrolled members and a land base of more than 27,000 square miles with three states spanning our lands – Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah – comprising a total land area larger than the state of West Virginia.

In 1868, the United States entered into a treaty with the Navajo Nation, pledging to provide healthcare, education, agricultural support, and to promote the general welfare of the Navajo people. Consequently, the United States Government is both legally and morally obligated by this treaty – and the sacred trust responsibility – to assist the Navajo Nation in confronting the numerous difficulties our people encounter, including safeguarding our people and the land held in trust for them.

It is in the spirit of our government-to-government relationship with the United States, rooted in the Treaty of 1868, that the Nation provides BJS with the following comments regarding the CTCS.

Tribal courts in Indian Country are generally funded or operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Justice Services (OJS). On the Navajo Nation, the tribal court system is operated by the Nation under a contract with OJS authorized by P.L. 93- 638, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. These contracts are known as "638 contracts."

OJS is underfunded by more than \$3.5 billion as of FY21 (the most recent year the BIA has released data for). Of that \$3.5 billion in unmet needs, \$1.5 billion is determined to be the unmet need for tribal courts. The remaining \$2 billion in unmet needs is calculated for tribal law enforcement and corrections services. These are all critical program areas that are vital to the safety and well-being of tribal members, visitors, and the strength of the United States – not to mention a trust obligation of the United States.

Funding is appropriated to the BIA and then allocated to OJS, split between these critical program areas, and then finally trickles down to the 638 contracts for tribal courts. At this point, the available funding becomes unsustainable to operate a comprehensive civil and criminal court system.

The underfunding of tribal courts means fewer personnel, including judges, and this understaffing results in large backlogs of cases. Equally as important, the underfunding of all these public safety and justice programs under the BIA means that limited funding is available for operations and maintenance – or replacement – of judicial facilities. Underfunding operations and maintenance directly results in derelict buildings that must be replaced. On the Navajo Nation, the Window Rock District Court – the district court of our Nation’s capital community – had been operating out of the conference room of a modular office facility for close to a decade after the circa-1950 BIA-owned building it was housed in was declared unsafe for work in 2018 and condemned. Luckily, the Navajo Nation built a new facility for the Window Rock District Court, which opened at the beginning of 2026, but similar stories exist for tribal courts across Navajo and across Indian Country.

The Navajo Nation appreciates that BJS is working to compile data on the staffing, functions, caseloads, civil and juvenile justice matters, and operations of tribal courts. This data collection will help ensure that lawmakers and federal agencies are making informed, data-driven decisions that will help support the fulfillment of the federal government’s treaty and trust responsibilities to tribes. The Navajo Nation recommends that BJS also include questions designed to collect data on the status and condition of tribal court facilities to help lawmakers understand the challenges with the facilities these courts occupy, and how those challenges impact the staffing and operations of tribal courts, and in turn, case backlogs.

It is critical that BJS continue to conduct the CTCS regularly to help convey trends in tribal court systems. As noted above, the CTCS helps support informed decision-making, and regularly conducting this census will help demonstrate if reforms instituted at the federal level are resulting in real change in Indian Country. The Nation also encourages BJS to disseminate reports on tribal matters, like the CTCS, to all tribal leaders when they are

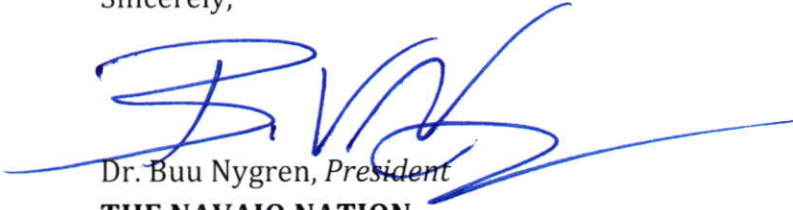
approved for public release.

In closing, the Navajo Nation offers the following recommendations:

1. Inclusion in the CTCS of questions on court facilities to ascertain the impacts on the staffing and operations of respondent tribal courts.
2. Regularly conducting the CTCS.
3. Direct dissemination to all federally recognized tribal leaders of tribally focused BJS reports.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mr. Ammon Ranger, Acting Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Washington Office, at (202) 682-7390 or via email to ARanger@NNWO.org. *Ahéhee'* (thank you).

Sincerely,



Dr. Buu Nygren, *President*
THE NAVAJO NATION

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

[OMB Number 1121-0350]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed eCollection eComments Requested;

Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired: Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)

AGENCY: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice

ACTION: 30-day Notice

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), Department of Justice (DOJ), will be submitting the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The proposed information collection was previously published in the Federal Register XXX, allowing a 60-day comment period. BJS received no comments under the 60-day notice.

DATES: Comments are encouraged and will be accepted for 30 days until **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have comments especially on the estimated public burden or associated response time, suggestions, or need a copy of the proposed information collection instrument with instructions or additional information, please contact:

Steven W. Perry (email: bjspra.comments@ojp.usdoj.gov; telephone: 202-307-0765), Bureau of Justice Statistics, 999 North Capital Street, NE, Washington, DC 20531.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Written comments and suggestions from the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information are encouraged. Your comments should address one or more of the following four points:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the tribal court, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the tribal courts' estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and/or
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Written comments and recommendations for this information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the information collection or the OMB Control Number 1121-0350. This information collection request may be viewed at www.reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Justice, information collections currently under review by OMB.

DOJ seeks PRA authorization for this information collection for three (3) years. OMB authorization for an ICR cannot be for more than three (3) years without renewal. The DOJ notes that information collection requirements submitted to the OMB for existing ICRs receive a month-to-month extension while they undergo review.

Overview of this information collection:

1. *Type of Information Collection:* Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.
2. *Title of the Form/Collection:* 2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)
3. Agency form number, if any, and the applicable component of the Department of Justice sponsoring the collection: The form number is CTCS-26. The applicable component within the Department of Justice is the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in the Office of Justice Programs.
4. *Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as a brief abstract:*
Affected Public: Affected public are tribal courts. The 2026 CTCS is revised from the 2014 National Survey of Tribal Court Systems (NSTCS-14). BJS plans to field the 2026 CTCS from January 2027 through April 2027. Respondents will be the staff at tribal courts. The obligation to respond is voluntary.
5. *Abstract:* The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has previously conducted the Census of Tribal Courts (CTCS) through a survey that collects data on the staffing, functions, case loads, training, civil and juvenile justice matters, and operations of tribal law courts serving tribal lands. The 2026 CTCS will be the second administration of this collection. It will provide insight on emerging issues and challenges facing tribal law courts since it was last conducted in 2014 and establish a time series of the data collection. BJS uses the information gathered in the CTCS in published reports and statistics. The reports will be made available to the U.S. Congress, Executive Office of the President, practitioners, researchers, students, the media, others interested in criminal justice statistics, and the general public via the BJS website.

6. *Obligation to Respond*: The obligation to respond is voluntary.
7. *Total Estimated Number of Respondents*: A projected 378 respondents from tribal courts.
8. *Estimated Time per Respondent*: Tribal courts will take an average of 65 minutes (1.08 hours) each to complete form CTCS-26, including time to research or find information not readily available. In addition, an estimated 39 respondents will be contacted for data quality follow-up at 15 minutes (.25 hours) per respondent.
9. *Frequency*: Each respondent will complete the CTCS-26 once.
10. *Total Estimated Annual Time Burden*: The total burden hours for this collection is 417 hours.
11. *Total Estimated Annual Other Costs Burden*: \$ 10,537.86.

Total Burden Hours

Activity	Number of Respondents	Frequency	Total Annual Responses	Time Per Survey (Mins)	Total Annual Burden (Hours)	Hourly Rate*	Monetized Value of Respondent Time
CTCS Invitation Materials	378	1	378	5	31.5	\$25.15	\$792.23
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Total	378				419		\$10,537.86

If additional information is required, contact: Darwin Arceo, Department Clearance Officer,
Policy and Planning Staff, Justice Management Division, United States Department of Justice,
Two Constitution Square, 145 N Street NE, 4W-218 Washington, DC 20530.

Dated: [Date].

Darwin Arceo,

Department Clearance Officer for PRA,

U.S. Department of Justice.

2026 CENSUS OF TRIBAL COURT SYSTEMS QUESTION GUIDE

Instructions: Please use this question guide to gather the information you'll need to complete the online version of the CTLEA web survey. Please try to gather all information necessary before starting the online web survey. Responses can be written directly on this hardcopy form. The web survey will prompt you to refer to this form as needed and will reference specific question numbers.

*For terms and phrases marked with *, §, †, or ‡, please see the 2025 Census of Tribal Court Systems Glossary located at the end of this question guide for more details.*

Burden Statement

The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended (34 USC 10132), authorizes this information collection. This request for information is in accordance with the clearance requirement of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, as amended (44 USC 3507). The burden of this data collection is estimated to average **20 minutes** per response, including time to review instructions, gather the information needed, and enter and review the information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate, or any other aspect of this data collection, including suggestions on how to reduce this burden, to the Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 999 North Capitol Street, NE, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20531. Do NOT send your completed survey to this address.

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under Title 34 United States Code Section 10132. By law, BJS will use the information you provide only for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person against unauthorized disclosure or misuse. [Title 34 U.S.C. Sections 10134 and 10231] Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Per the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data.

SECTION B. TRIBAL COURT BUDGET AND EMPLOYMENT

- B1. During fiscal years (FY) 2025 and 2026, what were the operational budgets of your tribal court excluding capital expenditures such as construction cost for new buildings, major repairs, and improvements?* (Enter whole numbers only. If you are unable to provide the actual number, please provide your best estimate. If no additional funding, enter 0.)
- ¹Operating expenditures or budgets are defined as all recurring fixed and variable costs associated with the management and administration of your system. It does not include non-recurring fixed capital costs such as building construction and major equipment purchases.*

	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
a. Total funding (includes annual base funding and grants or funding available for a limited period)	\$ _____ ☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Not authorized to provide</i>	\$ _____ ☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Not authorized to provide</i>
b. Base funding only (annual funding such as tribal funding or BIA funding)	\$ _____ ☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Not authorized to provide</i>	\$ _____ ☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Not authorized to provide</i>

B3. During fiscal year 2026, did your tribal court receive funding from the following sources?

Source	2026	
	Yes = 1	No = 2
a. Tribal council or tribal government	☐	☐
b. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) 638 contract (e.g. Public Law 93-638 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act)	☐	☐
c. Other Bureau of Indian Affairs funding	☐	☐
d. Self-governance compacts	☐	☐
e. U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS)	☐	☐
f. DOJ grants, other than CTAS funding	☐	☐
g. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	☐	☐
h. Other federal grants	☐	☐
i. State funding	☐	☐
j. Private foundations	☐	☐
k. Private donations	☐	☐
l. Filing fees, fines and other court costs	☐	☐
m. Tribal business enterprise	☐	☐
n. Other: <i>(Please describe)</i>	☐	☐

B4. Enter your tribal court's total number of full and part-time personnel for the pay period that included December 31, 2026

NOTE: Count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as part-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0.

	Full-time paid by court or tribe	Part-time paid by court or tribe
a. Total Employees	_____ ☐ <i>Estimate</i>	_____ ☐ <i>Estimate</i>

- B5.** Enter your tribal court's total number of full-time and part-time personnel by race and Hispanic origin for the pay period that included December 31, 2026.

NOTE: Count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as part-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0.

	Full-time paid by court or tribe	
		Estimate
a. American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic		☐
b. White, non-Hispanic		☐
c. Black or African American, non-Hispanic		☐
a. Hispanic or Latino		☐
b. Asian, non-Hispanic		☐
c. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic		☐
d. Two or more races		☐
e. Race/Hispanic origin not known		☐

- B6.** Enter your tribal court's total number of full-time personnel by sex for the pay period that included December 31, 2026?

NOTE: Do not count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as full-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the "Estimate" box. If none, enter 0."

	Full-time paid by court or tribe	
		Estimate
a. Male		☐
b. Female		☐

- B7.** How many of the following types of personnel were employed or worked in your tribal court for the pay period that included December 31, 2026?

NOTE: Count personnel who are regularly scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week as part-time. If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the

“Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If a particular position does not exist in your court, select “Not applicable.”

Position	2026 Counts				
	Full-time paid by court or tribe	Part-time paid by court or tribe	Contract paid by court or tribe	Paid by stipend	Pro bono*
a. Trial/Appellate court judge	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide
c. Prosecution/prosecutor	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	NOT APPLICABLE	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide
c. Indigent defense services/public defender	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide	NOT APPLICABLE	☐ Estimate ☐ Not authorized to provide

* Pro bono refers to any volunteers and personnel funded by or provided through other agencies at no cost to your tribal court.

SECTION D. JUVENILE JUSTICE, CHILD WELFARE AND DEPENDENCY MATTERS

D9. How many juvenile law-violating cases* were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

**Law-violating cases refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.*

NOTE: If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.

	Cases filed in 2025	Cases filed in 2026
a. Juvenile delinquency* cases	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

b. Juvenile status offense [‡] cases (for example: underage drinking, tobacco smoking, truancy, running away)	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>
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[†] Acts committed by a juvenile that would be considered a criminal offense if committed by an adult.

[‡] 25 CFR § 11.900(m) - Status offense means an offense which, if committed by an adult, would not be designated a crime under this part or under an ordinance of the tribe.

D13. How many child welfare or dependency cases were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.*

	Cases filed in 2025	Cases filed in 2026
a. Child welfare and dependency cases	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>

D14. How many Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) cases were transferred to the tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.*

	Transferred in 2025	Transferred in 2026
a. Cases transferred from a state court	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>
b. Cases transferred from another tribal court	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>	☐ <i>Estimate</i> ☐ <i>Do not track these case numbers</i>

- E4. How many of the following types of criminal cases were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026? Please include all misdemeanors and felonies as appropriate.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide the actual case count number, please provide your best estimate.

If the case count is none, enter “0” as your answer.

If you do not track this information, please check the “Do not track these case numbers” checkbox.

A criminal case is any incident, action, or activity to which your office dedicates resources at any point of the process, including an investigation, that may lead to a case filing. Cases filed “involve” a certain offense type if that case included at least one count of that charge.

[†] Involving means the case included at least one count of the charge.

^{*} Domestic violence refers to violence between married or cohabiting couples, as well as violence against other members of the offender’s household, such as children, siblings, parents, elderly relatives, or other family members of current or past intimate partners.

[‡] Human trafficking includes sex and labor trafficking. Sex trafficking is defined as: A commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion OR in which the person induced to perform such an act is younger than age 18. Labor trafficking is defined as: Recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services using force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

[§] Drug cases include possession, sales, and paraphernalia/equipment.

	Criminal Cases Filed in 2025	Criminal Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Criminal Cases Filed	_____ ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	_____ ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
b. Cases Filed Involving [†] Violation of Protective Orders	_____ ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	_____ ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
c. Cases Filed Involving [†] Human Trafficking [‡]	_____ ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	_____ ☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

d. Cases Filed Involving [†] Drugs [§]	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
e. Cases Filed Involving [†] Neglect, Abuse, or Financial Exploitation of the Elderly	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers
f. Cases Filed Involving [†] Rape or Sexual Assault	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers

E5. How many criminal cases against/over non-Indians/AIAN were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

A criminal case is any incident, action, or activity to which your office dedicates resources at any point of the process, including an investigation, that may lead to a case filing.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0.

	Cases Filed in 2025	Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Criminal Cases Over Non-Indians Filed	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure

E6. How many civil cases were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

Civil cases are noncriminal matters—such as contract disputes or damages for destruction of personal property or divorce—involving individuals or organizations. It is brought to enforce a right or redress.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0. If you do not track these numbers, check the “Do not track these case numbers” box.

	Civil Cases Filed in 2025	Civil Cases Filed in 2026
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a. Total Civil Cases Filed	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure
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E7. How many civil cases against/over non-Indian/AIAN s were **filed** in your tribal court in calendar years 2025 and 2026?

Civil cases are noncriminal matters—such as contract disputes or damages for destruction of personal property—involving individuals or organizations. It is brought to enforce a right or redress.

NOTE: *If you are unable to provide the actual number, provide your best estimate and check the “Estimate” box. If none, enter 0.*

	Civil Cases Filed in 2025	Civil Cases Filed in 2026
a. Total Civil Cases with Non-Indians/AIAN Filed	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure	☐ Estimate ☐ Do not track these case numbers ☐ Do not know/not sure

2026 CENSUS OF TRIBAL COURT SYSTEMS GLOSSARY

Civil Case: Noncriminal matters—such as contract disputes or damages for destruction of personal property—involving individuals or organizations. It is brought to enforce a right or redress.

Child in Need of Services (CHINS): A juvenile who is beyond the control of his or her parent such that the child’s behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the child or other person. Cases involving child in need of services (CHINS) matters can also include Family in need of services (FINS) or Minor in need of services (MINS) matters.

Counts of Defendants Sentenced: Total number of defendants sentenced by your court. Count should include those that have been sentenced but did not serve.

Criminal Case: Any incident, action, or activity to which your office dedicates resources at any point of the process, including an investigation, that may lead to a case filing.

Dependency Matters: Cases that are filed with a court when there are reports that children have been abandoned, abused, or neglected by their parent(s) or legal guardian. Dependency cases are also filed

with a court when parents or legal guardians are unable or unwilling to care for their children. Examples include Child in Need of Protection or Child in Need of Aid cases.

Domestic Violence: Refers to violence between married or cohabiting couples, as well as violence against other members of the offender's household, such as children, siblings, parents, elderly relatives, or other family members of current or past intimate partners.

Dual Status: Defined as a child who has come into contact with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and occupies various statuses in terms of the individual's relationship to such systems.

Indigent: Refers to individuals who are impoverished, or not financially able to employ counsel. A defendant who is indigent has a constitutional right to court-appointed representation, according to a 1963 Supreme Court decision, *Gideon v. Wainwright*.

Involving: The case included at least one count of the charge listed. Do not include counts of charges if multiple charges of the same offense were included in the case.

Juveniles: Anyone under the age of adulthood of the court system. Counts of juveniles should include juveniles tried as adults.

Juvenile Delinquency: Acts committed by a juvenile that would be considered a criminal offense if committed by an adult.

Joint Jurisdiction Court (Tribal-State Court): An agreement between tribal and state governments whereby both entities work collaboratively toward shared goals of improving access to justice, fostering public trust and increasing accountability.

Labor Trafficking: Recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services using force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

Law-Violating Cases: Refers to both delinquency cases and status offense cases.

Operating Expenditures/Budgets: All recurring fixed and variable costs associated with the management and administration of your court system. This does not include non-recurring fixed capital costs such as building construction and major equipment purchases.

Pro Bono: Any volunteers and personnel funded by or provided through other agencies at no cost to your tribal court.

Sex Trafficking: A commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion OR in which the person induced to perform such an act is younger than age 18.

Status Offense: 25 CFR § 11.900(m) - Status offense means an offense which, if committed by an adult, would not be designated a crime under this part or under an ordinance of the tribe.



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Washington, D.C. 20531

DATE

[MAIN CONTACT]
[AGENCY NAME]
[ADDRESS]
[CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Dear <<FIRST_NAME_OF_CONTACT>> <<LAST_NAME_OF_CONTACT>>:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), I am writing to ask for your participation in the **2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)**. The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), which mandates that BJS establish and implement a tribal data collection system and report the data and findings to Congress annually in accordance with the act (P.L. 111-211, 124 Stat. 2258, § 251(b)).

To participate in the project, we ask that you complete the online web survey at https://ctcs26.norc.org and login using your unique PIN: <<PIN>>.
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It should take about 40 minutes to complete the form. The survey can be completed by any knowledgeable person at your agency. A Question Guide has been provided to help gather information from different personnel at your agency, if necessary. **Please complete the survey by <insert date 2 weeks from mailing>.**

For assistance with the questionnaire, please contact NORC toll-free at (877) 319-2459 or via e-mail at ctcs@norc.org. For questions about the CTCS project and survey activities, please contact Steven Perry, BJS Tribal Justice Data Collections Program Manager, at (202) 307-0765 or via e-mail at Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Scott, PhD
Acting Director
Bureau of Justice Statistics

Enclosures:
NAICJA Letter of Support
Sample questions
Question Guide

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under Title 34 United States Code Section 10132. By law, BJS will use the information you provide only for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person against unauthorized disclosure or misuse. [Title 34 U.S.C. Sections 10134 and 10231] Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Per the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data. The [BJS Data Protection Guidelines](#) provide more detailed information on how BJS and NORC will use and protect data collected under BJS's authority.

What kind of questions will you be asked to complete on the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)?

The CTCS asks questions that other tribal justice experts, tribal leaders, and law enforcement experts have identified as important to the operation of tribal courts just like yours. Some example questions include:

- What types of court systems does your tribe operate or participate in?
- What kind of specialty courts does your tribe operate?
- Does your court offer jury trials for criminal or civil matters?
- What kind of staff do you have available at your court and what types of positions do they hold?
- Does your tribal court provide free criminal or civil defense services?
- Does your tribal court have juvenile justice codes or statutes or handle juvenile law-violating cases?
- Does your tribal court provide free representation or alternative disposition orders to juveniles?
- Does your tribal court handle child welfare or dependency matters?
- Does your tribal court issue restraining or protective orders and are they recognized by the state(s) in which your tribe is located?
- Does your tribal court provide alternate criminal sentencing or provide reentry programs for adults?

The full web survey is available for you to complete at ctcs26.norc.org and can be accessed via your unique PIN. Don't have your PIN handy? Contact ctcs@norc.org or (877) 319-2459.



2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems

June 2026

The 2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS), conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the principal statistical agency for the U.S. Department of Justice, will collect information from all tribal court systems serving federally recognized tribes. This collection will provide tribal, federal, state, and local governments with current crime and justice data to inform policymaking and support safer communities.

BJS is working with National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago (NORC), the National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA), and the Tribal Law and Policy Institute (TLPI) on the CTCS.

Working with tribal communities to develop the CTCS

NORC, NAICJA, and TLPI hosted a series of webinars to hear from tribal leaders and the tribal justice community to seek valuable input on data gaps and needs. A panel of tribal justice experts, the tribal justice panel, also informed development of the CTCS and data collection protocols.

The goal of the CTCS is to provide information to tribal justice agencies, state and local agencies, policymakers, and the public about the different types of tribal court systems in operation and the services they provide.

What data will the CTCS collect?

The 2026 CTCS will collect information about tribal court systems on:

- administrative structure and jurisdiction
- staffing and budgets
- types of cases filed and closed
- juvenile delinquency and dependency
- programs and services.

The CTCS will help in understanding the different types of courts serving tribal communities. The survey will also ask questions recommended by tribal leaders and tribal justice experts, including a tribal justice panel.

Why is the CTCS important?

This CTCS data collection effort will allow tribes to share information on their tribal court systems, examine the impact of recent changes in legislation and measure emerging criminal justice issues. The results of the CTCS survey will provide valuable information by:

- filling in data needs identified by tribal leaders and tribal justice experts
- providing updated data to measure changes in tribal court systems and their program functions
- identifying the resources and training needs of tribal court systems.

When will data collection begin?

BJS anticipates that data collection for the tribal court systems will begin in early 2027, and participants will be asked questions pertaining to calendar years 2025 and 2026.

Where can I find the results from previous tribal courts collections?

This collection is a follow-up to the 2014 National Survey of Tribal Court Systems. *Tribal Court Systems in the United States, 2014*, was released in July 2021. The report from the 2014 CTCS is available on the BJS website at: <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/tribal-court-systems-united-states-2014-statistical-tables>.

How can you contact us?

If you have questions regarding CTCS data collection, please contact NORC at CTCS@norc.org or BJS at askbjs@ojp.usdoj.gov.

Dear Tribal Court Leader,

The National American Indian Court Judges Association, along with other tribal justice agencies, are working with the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) on the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) program. This national effort requests the participation of all tribal courts serving federally recognized tribes to contribute to this comprehensive understanding of tribal court operations.

The NAICJA supports this effort for several important reasons:

1. **Increasing recognition and filling data gaps.** The CTCS increases awareness of the capacity, professionalism, and vital role of tribal courts while addressing data needs identified by tribal leaders and tribal justice experts. By gathering information that reflects the unique structures, functions, and priorities of tribal courts, the CTCS helps fill longstanding gaps in national tribal justice data.
2. **Informing funding decisions.** The CTCS provides updated data that can be used to measure changes in tribal court systems over time. Because federal justice funding is often linked to crime data, and jurisdictional complexities can limit the availability of complete statistics, the CTCS offers policymakers and funders a more accurate understanding of tribal court services, operational capacities, and unmet needs.
3. **Identifying emerging public safety needs.** The CTCS helps identify emerging public safety issues while highlighting the resource and training needs of tribal court systems. By providing reliable information about court operations and challenges, the CTCS supports agencies, tribal leaders, and justice partners in strengthening tribal courts and responding to the evolving needs of communities across Indian Country.

All tribal courts are encouraged to participate. NAICJA is working with NORC at the University of Chicago, which is administering the survey process. Following completion, BJS will publish a report and make the findings and dataset available.

Please complete the web-based survey at <https://ctcs26.norc.org>. If you have questions or need assistance, NORC can be reached toll-free at **877-319-2459** or by email at **CTCS@norc.org**.

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued commitment to serving and protecting your community. We appreciate your support of this important effort.

Sincerely,

A. Nikki Borchardt Campbell

Executive Director

Hello <<CONTACT NAME>>,

By now you should have received an invitation packet from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) asking for your participation in the *2026 Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)*. BJS is working with the NORC at the University of Chicago and the National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA) to conduct the 2026 CTCS data collection.

The information from this data collection will provide tribal leaders and other stakeholders with data that inform policy making and support safer communities.

To participate in the project, we ask that you complete the online web survey at <https://ctcs26.norc.org> and login using your unique PIN: <<PIN>>.

It should take about 40 minutes to complete the form. The survey can be completed by any knowledgeable person at your agency. A Question Guide is attached to help gather information from different personnel at your agency, if necessary. **Please complete the form by <insert date>.**

For assistance with the questionnaire, please reply to this email or contact NORC toll-free at 1-(877) 319-2459. For questions about the CTCS project and survey activities, please contact Steven Perry, BJS Tribal Justice Data Collections Program Manager, at (202) 307-0765 or via e-mail at Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov.

BJS is committed to supporting tribal law enforcement agencies by providing critical information about the challenges and obstacles you face in service to your communities. For more information on past collections, visit <https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/tribal-crime-and-justice/tribal-courts> and <https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/tribal-crime-and-justice/tribal-law-enforcement>. More information about Tribal Justice Data collected by NORC can be found at <https://www.norc.org/contact/study-participants/tribal-justice-data-hub.html>.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

The CTCS Project Team

Enclosures [HYPERLINKED]:

NAICJA Letter of Support

Sample Questions

Question Guide

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under Title 34 United States Code Section 10132. By law, BJS will use the information you provide only for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person against unauthorized disclosure or misuse. [Title 34 U.S.C. Sections 10134 and 10231] Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Per the

Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data. The [BJS Data Protection Guidelines](#) provide more detailed information on how BJS and NORC will use and protect data collected under BJSs authority.



Census of Tribal Court Systems c/o NORC at the
University of Chicago
Acting as collecting agent for the Bureau of Justice Statistics
Attention: Project G294

300 E Randolph, 47th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601

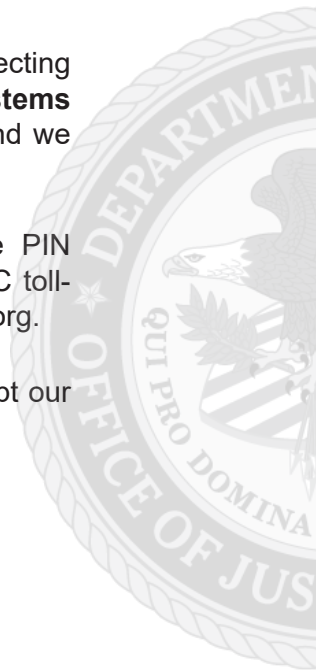
The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is collecting information for the **Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS)** from all tribal courts serving Indian Country and we need a response from your court.

Go to this link **<https://ctcs26.norc.org>** and use the PIN we've provided via email or the letter or contact NORC toll-free at 877-346-5693 or send an email to CTCS@norc.org.

If you have already completed the survey, please accept our thanks. If not, please do so today.

Again, thank you for your help.

Steven W. Perry
Statistician, Bureau of Justice Statistics



Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) Telephone Outreach and Voicemail Confirmation Scripts

Hello, may I please speak with (RESPONDENT/CONTACT).

INTERVIEWER: IF R NO LONGER WORKS THERE, ASK FOR THE HEAD JUDGE, COURT CLERK, OR THE PERSON WHO CURRENTLY HOLDS R's POSITION.

RECORD FIRST AND LAST NAME OF NEW R AND COMMUNICATE THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL.

Hello, this is _____. I work for NORC/NAICJA and am calling on behalf of the U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) regarding the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) survey. We recently mailed/emailed you an invitation to participate in the CTCS. Do you recall receiving this invitation?

If yes, skip to 'Yes, did receive below'.

If No, did not receive/does not recall materials:



The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of the administrative and operational characteristics of tribal court systems. The survey asks questions on topics such as staffing, civil and criminal court functions, juvenile justice, and caseloads. Can I confirm the email address we have on file? I want to be sure any future emails are being sent and received to the correct email address.

Record information in contact document.

I will plan to send the invitation to the email address you provided and will follow up at a later date if we have not received a response. For reference, you will be receiving an email from ctcs@norc.org so be sure to check your junk mail if you have not received the invitation in the next 24 hours. Thank you for your time. Have a great day.

If no contact does not want the survey materials sent to him/her:



Would it be best if we contacted a different staff member at your court to complete the survey?

If yes:



Thank you, what is the best phone number and email address to reach them?

Record information in contact document.

Thank you for your time. Your colleague can expect to hear from me soon. Have a great day.

Yes, did receive materials:



Great! Did you have any issues opening the survey or getting started? I'm happy to answer questions.

Answer questions as necessary.

We look forward to receiving your responses to the CTCS survey. Any knowledgeable staff person may complete the survey on behalf of your agency, though typically the head judge or court clerk at your tribal court would be the best person to complete the survey. The deadline to complete the survey is DATE.

If you have any questions as you complete the survey, please call us toll-free at (877) 319-2459 or email ctcs@norc.org. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Responses to frequently asked questions:

Why are you conducting this survey?

This survey is being conducted to better understand the unique functions of tribal justice systems; the complexity surrounding tribal, state, and federal jurisdictions; and the interrelationships that exist among the different tribal courts and tribal justice systems in Indian Country. Information collected from this survey will help inform funding and policy decisions to help tribes access the resources they need for public safety.

Your participation in the CTCS is critical and will help us gather the most accurate and comprehensive picture of the strengths, workload, and needs of tribal courts like yours.

Who else is it being sent to?

The survey is being sent to all civil and criminal tribal courts that serve federally recognized tribes. For the project to be successful and representative of all of Indian Country, it is important that we hear from all tribal courts.

How will these results be used?

The results will be used to develop an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the administration, operations, services, jurisdiction, and capabilities, as well as the challenges, resource gaps, and emerging concerns of tribal courts and the larger tribal justice community. With recent legislative changes through the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), this information will help us measure changes in tribal court jurisdiction and capacity. The information will help inform federal agencies, as they craft legislation, allocate resources, and develop funding programs that will better meet tribes' public safety needs.

How long will this take?

Completing the survey will take about 40 minutes of your time. You can start and stop the survey as many times as you need in order to complete it – your responses will be saved.

How will this survey benefit my court or tribe?

The survey will provide statistical information for tribes to demonstrate their capabilities and challenges when applying for funding and advocating on behalf of their needs. It will also alert tribes about emerging tribal justice and law enforcement trends in Indian Country, so tribes can be more proactive about safeguarding their tribal members from emerging threats. With increased understanding about the capacity and professionalism of tribal courts, the CTCS will also help raise the profile of tribal courts, which can assist tribes in forming stronger partnerships and gaining access to vital criminal justice resources.

CTCS - Telephone Voicemail Script

Respondent's Direct Telephone Line

Hello! My name is (NAME) and I am calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). BJS is conducting the Census of Tribal Court Systems, a data collection on administrative and operational characteristics of your tribal court. You should have received an invitation letter and email regarding the CTCS with a login to the web survey. I am following up to confirm that you received the survey invitation and see if you have any questions. If you have any questions about the survey, please call our toll free number (877) 319-2459. Please also contact us if you think that the survey does not apply to your tribal court or if we should contact someone else in your agency for survey completion. Again, our toll free number is (877) 319-2459 or you can email us at CTCS@NORC.org. Thank you!

Administrative Assistant or Secretary's Telephone Line

Hello! My name is (NAME) and I am calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). BJS is conducting the Census of Tribal Court Systems, a data collection on administrative and operational characteristics of your tribal court. (RESPONDENT'S TITLE_LAST NAME/COURT CLERK NAME) should have received an email containing the information about the Census of Tribal Court Systems and I am following up to confirm that they received the email and to see if (RESPONDENT TITLE_LAST NAME) has any questions about the survey. If you need assistance or would like us to resend the survey, please call our toll free number (877) 319-2459, or you can email us at CTCS@NORC.org. Please also contact us if you think that the survey does not apply to your agency. Again, our toll-free number is (877) 319-2459. Thank you!

CTCS Reminder Email Examples

Reminder 1:

Hello,

I am writing to follow up on my previous request for participation of <<COURTNAME>> in the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) and hope that you will consider this important request.

The CTCS is designed to collect information from tribal courts on staffing, civil and criminal court functions, juvenile justice, and caseloads, among other topics.

The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) expanded the role of BJS to establish and implement a tribal data collection system and requires that BJS report to Congress annually on the data collected and analyzed in accordance with the act (P.L. 111-211, 124 Stat. 2258, § 251(b)). The CTCS is part of these efforts.

To complete the CTCS survey, please go to <https://CTCS26.norc.org> and login using your unique PIN: <<PIN>>.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us directly at (877) 319-2459 or at ctcs@norc.org or Steven Perry at Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov. Thank you in advance for both your time and support of this important work.

Please confirm that you have received this message by responding to this email or contacting us at (877) 319-2459. Thank you in advance for both your time and support of this important work.

Sincerely,

The CTCS Project Team

Reminder 2

Hello <<HEAD JUDGE/COURT CLERK>>,

We are contacting you regarding the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) survey. We wanted to make sure that your court, <<COURT NAME>> has an opportunity to participate in this important work and contribute to our knowledge of how tribal courts and justice systems operate.

The CTCS will collect data on jurisdiction information, budget, staffing, court functions, juvenile justice, and caseloads and should take 40 minutes or less to complete.

Some questions asked on CTCS include:

- What types of court systems does your tribe operate or participate in?
- Does your court offer jury trials for criminal or civil matters?
- What kind of staff do you have available at your court and what types of positions do they hold?
- Does your tribal court provide free representation or alternative disposition orders to juveniles?
- Does your tribal court handle child welfare or dependency matters?
- Does your tribal court issue restraining or protective orders and are they recognized by the state(s) in which your tribe is located?

This information will provide a timely update to information last gathered in 2014. We believe this information will continue to provide tribal leaders and other stakeholders with data that inform policy making and support safer communities.

To complete the CTCS survey, please go to <https://ctcs26.norc.org> and login using your unique PIN: <<PIN>>.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us directly at NUMBER or at ctcs@norc.org or Steven Perry at Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov.

Census of Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies (CTLEA) Telephone Outreach and Voicemail Nonresponse Scripts

Hello, may I please speak with (RESPONDENT).

INTERVIEWER: IF R NO LONGER WORKS THERE, ASK FOR THE HEAD JUDGE, COURT CLERK, OR THE PERSON WHO CURRENTLY HOLDS R's POSITION.

RECORD FIRST AND LAST NAME OF NEW R AND COMMUNICATE THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL.

Hello, this is _____ calling on behalf of the U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) regarding the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) survey. We recently mailed and e-mailed you materials for a project called the CTCS. Do you recall receiving these materials?

If yes, skip to 'Yes, did receive below'.

If No, did not receive/does not recall materials:



The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of the administrative and operational characteristics of tribal court systems. The survey asks questions on topics such as staffing, caseloads, and jurisdiction. Can I mail or e-mail a link to the web survey to you? What is the best address/e-mail to send the invitation to?

Record information in contact document.

Thank you for your time. You can expect to receive that survey by **DATE**. The deadline to complete the survey is **DATE**. Have a great day.

If no contact does not want the survey materials sent to him/her:



Would it be best if we contacted a different staff member at your court to complete the survey?

If yes:



Thank you, what is the best phone number and address to reach them at?

Record information in contact document.

Thank you for your time. Your colleague can expect to hear from me soon. Have a great day.

Yes, Did receive materials:



Great! Do you have any questions about the survey or the purpose of the study?

IF RESPONDENT INDICATES THAT THEY HAVE THE MATERIALS AVAILABLE OR IF THEY HAVE TIME DURING THE CALL, OFFER TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY VIA THE TELEPHONE

This survey can be completed online at CTCS26.norc.org. I can provide you your unique login PIN right now – are you able to write this down or would you like me to email you the link and PIN?

Any knowledgeable staff person may complete the survey on behalf of your court, though typically the chief judge or court clerk at your court would be the best person to complete the survey. We are hoping to receive responses by **DATE**. About how soon can we expect to receive your responses?

Record information in contact document.

If you have any questions as you complete the survey, please call us toll-free at (877) 319-2459 or email ctcs@norc.org. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Responses to frequently asked questions:

Why are you conducting this survey?

This survey is being conducted to better understand the unique functions of tribal justice systems; the complexity surrounding tribal, state, and federal jurisdictions; and the interrelationships that exist among the different tribal courts and tribal justice systems in Indian Country. Information collected from this survey will help inform funding and policy decisions to help tribes access the resources they need for public safety.

Your participation in the CTCS is critical and will help us gather the most accurate and comprehensive picture of the strengths, workload, and needs of tribal courts like yours.

Who else is it being sent to?

The survey is being sent to all civil and criminal tribal courts that serve federally recognized tribes. For the project to be successful and representative of all of Indian Country, it is important that we hear from all tribal courts.

How will these results be used?

The results will be used to develop an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the administration, operations, services, jurisdiction, and capabilities, as well as the challenges, resource gaps, and emerging concerns of tribal courts and the larger tribal justice community. With recent legislative changes through the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), this information will help us measure changes in tribal court jurisdiction and capacity. The information will help inform federal agencies, as they craft legislation, allocate resources, and develop funding programs that will better meet tribes' public safety needs.

How long will this take?

Completing the survey will take about 40 minutes of your time. You can start and stop the survey as many times as you need in order to complete it – your responses will be saved.

How will this survey benefit my court or tribe?

The survey will provide statistical information for tribes to demonstrate their capabilities and challenges when applying for funding and advocating on behalf of their needs. It will also alert tribes about emerging tribal justice and law enforcement trends in Indian Country, so tribes can be more proactive about safeguarding their tribal members from emerging threats. With increased understanding about the capacity and professionalism of tribal courts, the CTCS will also help raise the profile of tribal courts, which can assist tribes in forming stronger partnerships and gaining access to vital criminal justice resources.

CTCS - Telephone Voicemail Script

Respondent's Direct Telephone Line

Hello! My name is (NAME) and I am calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). BJS is conducting the Census of Tribal Court Systems, a data collection on administrative and operational

characteristics of your tribal court. You should have received an invitation letter and email regarding the CTCS with a login to the web survey. I am following up to confirm that you received the survey invitation and see if you have any questions. If you have any questions about the survey, please call our toll free number (877) 319-2459. Please also contact us if you think that the survey does not apply to your tribal court or if we should contact someone else in your agency for survey completion. Again, our toll free number is (877) 319-2459 or you can email us at CTCS@NORC.org. Thank you!

Administrative Assistant or Secretary's Telephone Line

Hello! My name is (NAME) and I am calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). BJS is conducting the Census of Tribal Court Systems, a data collection on administrative and operational characteristics of your tribal court. (RESPONDENT'S TITLE_LAST NAME/COURT CLERK NAME) should have received an email containing the information about the Census of Tribal Court Systems and I am following up to confirm that they received the email and to see if (RESPONDENT TITLE_LAST NAME) has any questions about the survey. If you need assistance or would like us to resend the survey, please call our toll free number (877) 319-2459, or you can email us at CTCS@NORC.org. Please also contact us if you think that the survey does not apply to your agency. Again, our toll-free number is (877) 319-2459. Thank you!



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Washington, D.C. 20531

DATE

[HEAD JUDGE/COURT CLERK NAME]

[AGENCY NAME]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Dear <<FIRST_NAME_OF_CONTACT>> <<LAST_NAME_OF_CONTACT>>:

We need your help! This is your last chance to have your court's unique characteristics included to help inform data-driven decisions on improving crime and safety issues concerning Indian country.

The Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) is the only Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) study to focus solely on tribal justice systems to better understand the administrative and operational characteristics of courts like yours. The goal of the project is to develop an accurate, comprehensive picture of the workloads, staffing, resource utilization, and needs of tribal courts. Only your court can provide this information.

To participate in the project, we ask that you complete the online web survey at <https://ctcs26.norc.org> and login using your unique PIN: <<PIN>>.

It should take about 40 minutes to complete the form. The survey can be completed by any knowledgeable person at your court and we are asking for a response by **DATE**.

The CTCS has been developed in response to The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), which mandates that BJS establish and implement a tribal data collection system and report the data and findings to Congress annually in accordance with the act (P.L. 111-211, 124 Stat. 2258, § 251(b)). The CTCS has been vetted extensively by other tribal court judges, tribal leadership, and subject matter experts, and organizations like the National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA) and Tribal Law and Policy Institute (TLPI) to ensure that the information gathered by the CTCS is relevant and timely.

For assistance with the questionnaire, please contact NORC toll-free at (877) 319-2459 or via e-mail at ctcs@norc.org. For questions about the CTCS project and survey activities, please contact Steven Perry, BJS Tribal Justice Data Collections Program Manager, at (202) 307-0765 or via e-mail at Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov.

BJS is committed to supporting tribal law enforcement agencies by providing critical information about the challenges and obstacles you face in service to your communities. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Perry
Statistician
Bureau of Justice Statistics

Attachment Q: Last Chance Email

Hello,

We need your help! This is your last chance to have your court's unique characteristics included to help inform data-driven decisions on improving crime and safety issues concerning Indian country. We hope that you will consider this important request.

The Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) is the only Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) study to focus solely on tribal justice systems to better understand the administrative and operational characteristics of courts like yours. The goal of the project is to develop an accurate, comprehensive picture of the workloads, staffing, resource utilization, and needs of tribal courts. Only your court can provide this information.

To complete the CTCS survey, please go to <https://ctcs26.norc.org> and login using your unique PIN: <<PIN>>.

It should take about 40 minutes to complete the form. The survey can be completed by any knowledgeable person at your agency and we are asking for a response by **DATE**.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us directly at (877) 319-2459 or at ctcs@norc.org or Steven Perry at Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov. Thank you in advance for both your time and support of this important work.

Sincerely,

The CTCS Project Team

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under Title 34 United States Code Section 10132. By law, BJS will use the information you provide only for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person against unauthorized disclosure or misuse. [Title 34 U.S.C. Sections 10134 and 10231] Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Per the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data. The [BJS Data Protection Guidelines](#) provide more detailed information on how BJS and NORC will use and protect data collected under BJS's authority.



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Washington, D.C. 20531

DATE

[CHIEF OF POLICE]

[AGENCY NAME]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Dear <<FIRST_NAME_OF_TRIBAL_LE_CHIEF>> <<LAST_NAME_OF_TRIBAL_LE_CHIEF>>:

Thank you for your participation in the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS). The CTCS is the only Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) study to focus solely on tribal justice systems to better understand the administrative and operational characteristics of tribal courts. This collection could not succeed without your input and unique perspective.

For more information on the CTCS and other tribal justice collections, please visit
<https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/tribal-crime-and-justice/tribal-courts>.

The CTCS was been developed in response to The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), which mandates that BJS establish and implement a tribal data collection system and report the data and findings to Congress annually in accordance with the act (P.L. 111-211, 124 Stat. 2258, § 251(b)). The CTCS has been vetted extensively by other tribal court judges, tribal leadership, and subject matter experts, and organizations like the National American Indian Court Judges Association (NAICJA) and the Tribal Law and Policy Institute (TLPI) to ensure that the information gathered by the CTCS is relevant and timely.

BJS is committed to supporting tribal courts by providing critical information about the successes, challenges, and obstacles you face in service to your communities. Thank you for your time and participation in this important project.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Perry
Statistician
Bureau of Justice Statistic

Attachment S: Data Quality Email

Hello,

We are following up on responses you submitted for the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) on or around DATE. There are a few items that need additional clarification and we were hoping you might be able to assist with this request. Please respond to this email or reach out to us at NUMBER regarding the following items:

INCLUDE BULLETED LIST OF ITEMS REQUIRING CLARIFICATION. DO NOT SEND EMAIL IF LIST CONTAINS MORE THAN FIVE ITEMS TOTAL.

Please do not hesitate to contact us directly at NUMBER or at ctcs@norc.org with any questions. Thank you in advance for both your time and support of this important work.

Sincerely,

The CTCS Project Team

Attachment T: Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) Telephone Data Quality Follow Up Script

Hello, may I please speak with (RESPONDENT).

INTERVIEWER: IF R NO LONGER WORKS THERE, ASK FOR THE HEAD JUDGE, COURT CLERK, OR THE PERSON WHO CURRENTLY HOLDS R's POSITION.

RECORD FIRST AND LAST NAME OF NEW R AND COMMUNICATE THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL.

Hello, this is _____ calling on behalf of the U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) regarding the Census of Tribal Court Systems (CTCS) survey. We received a completed CTCS survey. Do you recall completing this survey on DATE?

If yes, skip to 'Yes, did complete CTCS.

If No, did not receive/does not recall materials:



I am following up on a survey that was completed on DATE and submitted to us. I need to clarify a few items. What is the best address/e-mail to send this follow up to?

Record information in contact document.

If no contact does not want to clarify responses:



Would it be best if we contacted a different staff member at your court to get clarification on these items?

If yes:



Thank you, what is the best phone number and address to reach them at?

Record information in contact document.

Thank you for your time. Your colleague can expect to hear from me soon. Have a great day.

Yes, Did complete CTCS, willing to speak:



Great! I have a few items that need some additional clarification.

PROCEED TO REASK QUESTIONS OR SEEK CLARIFICATION AS NECESSARY DEPENDENT ON RESPONSES PROVIDED. RECORD RESPONSES IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT, TO BE USED DURING DATA CLEANING STEP.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions about this project, please call us toll-free at (877) 319-2459 or email ctcs@norc.org.

CTLEA - Law Enforcement Telephone Voicemail Script

IF REQUEST IS STRAIGHTFORWARD/ONE ITEM, MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO LEAVE ITEM TO BE CLARIFIED AS A PART OF VOICEMAIL; OTHERWISE, FOLLOW UP AT LATER DATE AFTER LEAVING MESSAGE.

Respondent's Direct Telephone Line

Hello! My name is (NAME) and I am calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). BJS is conducting data collection for the Census of Tribal Court Systems program. I am following up on a survey you completed to clarify a few items. I will reach out again, but please call our toll free number (877) 319-2459 if you have a moment or email us at ctcs@norc.org.

Administrative Assistant or Secretary's Telephone Line

Hello! My name is (NAME) and I am calling on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). BJS is conducting data collection for the Census of Tribal Court Systems program. I was hoping to speak with (RESPONDENT'S TITLE_LAST NAME) to clarify a few responses that were included on the CTCS. I will reach back out, but if NAME could please call our toll free number (877) 319-2459, or you can email us at ctcs@NORC.org that would be appreciated.