



Department of Justice

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF PROGRAM TO ENHANCE TRIBAL ACCESS TO NATIONAL CRIME INFORMATION DATABASES

Department of Justice Tribal Access Program Will Continue to Improve the Exchange of Critical Data

WASHINGTON—The Department of Justice is expanding the Tribal Access Program (TAP) for National Crime Information which provides federally-recognized tribes access to national crime information databases for both civil and criminal purposes. Tribes interested in participating in TAP must submit a letter or resolution from the tribe’s governing body by Dec. 2. TAP allows tribes to more effectively serve and protect their communities by ensuring the exchange of critical data.

In the fall of 2015, the Department of Justice selected tribes to participate in the initial User Feedback Phase of TAP. This partnership focused on testing the department’s technology solution and training support; it also enabled tribes to identify and share best practices regarding the use of national crime information databases to strengthen public safety.

During 2016, participating tribes received a kiosk workstation that provided access to national systems as well as training to support whole-of-government needs. User Feedback Phase tribes have elected to implement TAP in a variety of criminal and civil agencies. Those tribal criminal agencies included law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, criminal courts, jails and probation departments. The tribal civil agencies and programs that were eligible to use TAP included agencies whose staff and volunteers have contact with or control over Indian children; public housing agencies; child support enforcement agencies; head start programs; civil agencies that investigate allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children; civil courts that issue orders of protection, restraining orders, or other keep away orders; and sex offender registration programs.

“Sharing crime information helps police solve crimes and fosters better cooperation between tribal, federal, state and local law enforcement,” said Director Tracy Toulou for the department’s Office of Tribal Justice. “This expansion is another step forward in the Justice Department’s ongoing efforts to strengthen the ability of tribal institutions to keep communities safe. For example, tribal court orders of protection entered into this system will be accessible to law enforcement nationwide and help safeguard victims of domestic violence.”

“TAP showcases how a blend of Indian Country policy experts, technology specialists, and law enforcement experts working in partnership with native communities can have a direct and positive impact on the daily lives of people in Indian Country,” said Deputy Assistant Attorney General and Chief Information Officer Joseph Klimavicz for the department’s Justice Management Division. “It is my hope that the development of a comprehensive solution to the issue of tribes’ long-standing inability to access national crime information databases breaks an impasse that was putting communities at risk.”

The department’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART) are each providing \$1 million in funding for the expansion, which will be used for approximately 10 kiosks.

“Access to data is an integral part of building trust between tribal law enforcement agencies, the federal government, and tribal communities,” said Director Ronald Davis of the COPS Office. “The COPS Office is proud to continue its support of the Tribal Access Program, which provides public safety agencies serving tribal populations the access to critical information databases that can help keep their communities safe.”

“The SMART Office is proud to contribute a million dollars to this effort, for the second straight year,” said Director Luis C. deBaca for the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. “Access to federal justice information systems is critical to public safety in tribal communities, as they work to combat sexual violence and build registration and notification programs.”

TAP enhances tribal efforts to register sex offenders pursuant to the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA); have orders of protection enforced off-reservation; protect children; keep firearms away from persons who are disqualified from receiving them; improve the safety of public housing, and allow tribes to enter their arrests and convictions into national databases.

TAP supports tribes in analyzing their needs for national crime information and includes appropriate solutions, including a state-of-the-art biometric/biographic kiosk workstation with capabilities to process finger and palm prints, take mugshots and submit records to national databases, as well as the ability to access Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) systems for criminal and civil purposes through the Department of Justice’s Criminal Justice Information Network. TAP, which is managed by the department’s Chief Information Officer, provides specialized training and assistance for participating tribes, including computer-based training and on-site instruction, as well as a 24/7 Help Desk.

Eligibility Criteria For Interested Tribes

Because of the success of the User Feedback Phase, the department is expanding TAP. Tribes who have either an Adam Walsh Act Sex Offender Registry, or a tribal law enforcement agency which is not a federal Bureau of Indian Affairs police department, are eligible to participate in TAP. The pertinent dates for the next phase of TAP:

- Expression of Interest Submission: Oct. 24 - Dec. 2
- Notification of Selection: Dec. 16
- Onboarding and Vetting: Jan. 9, 2017 - May 31, 2017
- Deployment: May 9 - Sept. 29, 2017

Federally recognized tribes interested in participating in TAP must submit a letter or resolution from the tribe's governing body. That document should include:

- Name and contact information of a senior tribal executive who will act as the primary TAP point of contact. This individual must have authority to ensure coordination of TAP across various tribal agencies, departments and offices. An alternate point of contact must also be named.
- A statement acknowledging that misuse or non-use may result in TAP access being discontinued.
- Language affirming the tribe's agreement to:
- Make whole-of-government legislative and policy determinations which provide guidance to tribal agencies about how national crime information databases are used, including what tribal data is entered into those systems.
- Use TAP to close gaps related to access to national crime information databases if that was an impediment to the implementation of SORNA. This must be accomplished within one year of deployment.
- Execute a Memorandum of Agreement with FBI CJIS and pay the standard national user fees associated with fingerprint-based for noncriminal justice (civil) purposes.
- Provide necessary documentation and establish appropriate policies during the onboarding and vetting time period.
- Ensure users of TAP establish appropriate accounts, take required training, background checks, and obtain necessary certification during the onboarding and vetting time period.
- Ensure users of TAP participate in deployment day training during the deployment time period.
- Comply with and adhere to auditing and policy requirements as well as all personnel, physical, and technical security requirements.
- Provide high-speed Internet access to the kiosk.

The letter or resolution from the tribe's governing body must be sent to TAP.App@usdoj.gov no later than midnight eastern time, Dec. 2.

For more information about the Justice Department's work on tribal justice and public safety issues, visit: www.justice.gov/tribal.

For specific information on TAP, visit www.justice.gov/tribal/tribal-access-program-tap.

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