

CTAS in Action: Nebraska and Kansas-based Native American police use DOJ grant to upgrade technology, improve public safety



A police officer from the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska uses his laptop during a routine patrol on the tribe's reservation. The tribe received a 2017 Department of Justice grant under the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, enabling the Iowa Tribe PD to purchase new equipment and receive critical training to remain certified in two states to provide public safety services. (Courtesy photo Iowa Tribe Police Department)

Providing public safety services on a reservation of more than 12,000 acres across two states is a daunting but necessary task for the six full-time and two part-time law enforcement officers of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska.

The eight-person department is responsible for providing all public safety services for the tribe of 700 members.

Before the department became operational 24/7 in 1996, basic tools crucial to successful law enforcement, such as reliable communications equipment, were unavailable to the rural area police force. A grant award of more than \$1.3 million from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) helped change that for the fledgling police force.

"Radios were limited to just the vehicles, officers had to share radios to complete shifts and answer calls," said N. Allen Phroper, the tribe's chief of police. "Reports were handwritten."

Thanks to additional grant funds awarded in 2017 via the Justice Department's Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, the PD now had upgraded gear, including fingerprinting machines, laptops and even automated external defibrillators in every patrol car.

"Having updated equipment and technology allows officers to be efficient with their daily duties, advocate community policing and protect tribal residents," said Phroper.

The grant was provided by COPS under CTAS [Purpose Area 1: Public Safety and Community Policing](#) – one of 10 "purpose areas" (grant programs) – available to federally-recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages. Under this grant program, COPS provides funding to enable tribal law enforcement agencies to make communities safer through

procurement of equipment, training, hiring or re-hiring career law enforcement officers, and through implementation of effective, data-driven policing strategies.

The Iowa Tribe received nearly \$179,000 in CTAS grant funds under Purpose Area 1.

Since 2010, the Department has awarded over 2,000 grants totaling more than \$943 million in CTAS grant funds to hundreds of American Indian and Alaska Native communities. The tribes are using these funds to enhance law enforcement; combat domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sex trafficking; bolster justice systems; prevent and control juvenile delinquency; strengthen the juvenile justice system; and serve sexual assault and elder.

The deadline to apply for Fiscal Year 2019 CTAS funds is March 12. To learn how to apply, visit the Department of Justice's Tribal Justice and Safety website at: <https://www.justice.gov/tribal/open-solicitations>.

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