

NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS AI/AN SANE-SART INITIATIVE

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATIONS?

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office for Victims of Crime



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Federal Government employees and agencies working in Indian Country can:

- Work with tribal partners to create District-specific, written guidelines for sexual violence response.
- Support staff participation in tribal MDTs and SARTs.
- Collaborate with tribal partners to develop training for federal employees on how to provide culturally appropriate services to AI/AN victims of sexual violence.

Tribal Governments and organizations can encourage federal employees and agencies to implement the recommendations by:

- Sharing the recommendations with MDT and SART partners and encouraging their implementation locally.
- Advocating for federal funding to increase the number of professionals who can provide forensic services to victims.
- Inviting federal employees to speak at tribal events about the issue of sexual violence.

IMPROVING FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN INDIAN COUNTRY:

How You Can Support The National Coordination Committee's Recommendations

A Summary of the
National Coordination Committee on the
American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN)
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner-Sexual Assault
Response Team (SANE-SART) Initiative's
*Report to the U.S. Attorney General on
Improving Federal Agency Response to
Sexual Violence in Tribal Nations:
Issues and Recommendations*

The Committee's full report can be read at:
www.ovc.gov/AIANSane-Sart/advisorycommittee.html



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THE NATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Under President Obama's Administration, the Federal Government has responded to the long-standing criminal justice crisis in tribal nations in unprecedented ways and supported key legislative changes in the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. These efforts have improved the lives of Native victims, enhanced justice, and empowered tribal nations.

Yet, more needs to be done.

Sexual violence in Indian Country remains at epidemic proportions and for many individual adult and child victims of sexual assault, the criminal justice system is just not working.

As a part of its AI/AN SANE-SART Initiative, the Office for Victims of Crime established the National Coordination Committee, chartered in 2011, with support from U.S. Attorney General Holder. The Committee is chaired by Sarah Deer, *Muscogee (Creek) Nation*, and comprised of representatives from six national tribal organizations and five federal agencies, and experts in Alaska Native issues and medical forensic exams. The Committee was tasked with developing recommendations for Attorney General Holder on improving the federal government's response to adult and child victims of sexual violence in tribal nations.

OVERVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Coordination Committee's recommendations address the following four areas and provide suggested steps toward their implementation.

- **Improve federal agency coordination and collaboration at the local level** by establishing District-specific, written guidelines for sexual violence response, and ensuring federal agency participation in local Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) and Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs);
- **Make DOJ personnel policy changes** involving hiring, training, and assessing federal employees to increase accountability for personnel serving in Indian Country;
- **Improve DOJ grant solicitations and funding to secure sustainable funding** for tribal victim assistance programs, and enhance VOCA and special funding to improve services to Native victims; and,
- **Improve public safety and public health** by making sexual violence response a priority for federal law enforcement personnel and prosecutors, supporting tribal law enforcement entities' access to the National Crime Information Center, and recognizing sexual violence as both a health care issue and a criminal justice issue.

IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation of the Committee's recommendations can have the following impacts:

- **Increased collaboration** among federal agencies and state, local, and tribal responders to ensure AI/AN victims of sexual violence receive comprehensive, victim-centered, and culturally appropriate services.
- **Increased access to timely, accurate, and no-cost forensic exam services** for all AI/AN victims of sexual violence and decreased processing time of sexual assault kits from Indian Country.
- **Improved provision of culturally appropriate services** to AI/AN victims of sexual violence by DOJ employees working in Indian Country-related positions.
- **Increased access to and more sustainable federal grant funding provided** for tribal victim assistance programs.
- **Increased staffing in DOJ agencies** to properly investigate and prosecute sexual violence crimes in Indian Country.
- **Increased access to the National Crime Information Center** for approved and appropriate tribal law enforcement entities.