Supervisor Reference Guide

SUPPORTING THE ICWA FAMILY PRESRVATIONIST (IFP)

Partnering for Stronger Outcomes for Native Children and Families

Your leadership helps ensure real-time, accurate ICWA implementation and strengthens collaboration with Tribal Nations and the IFP Program.

1 YOUR ROLE AS A SUPERVISOR

- Model partnership and respect for Tribal sovereignty and the IFP role.
- Ensure workers involve the IFP Program appropriately and early.
- Remove barriers and support timely communication and information sharing.
- Monitor practices that support accurate ICWA implementation.
- Champion collaboration, mutual accountability, and family-centered outcomes.

SUPERVISOR CHECKLIST

- [ ] Worker submitted ICWA inquiry within policy timeframe.
- [ ] Appropriate Tribes notified or cc'd (IFP has MOU).
- [ ] Family informed of IFP Program (if no MOU or ineligible).
- [ ] Information shared is relevant, necessary, and respectful.
- [ ] ROI obtained for any voluntary support.
- [ ] Documentation of communication and collaboration is in the record.

2 WHEN AND HOW WORKERS INVOLVE THE IFP PROGRAM

A REASON TO KNOW + TRIBAL MOU

REASON TO KNOW
ICWA may apply

→ **SUBMIT ICWA INQUIRY**
Submit to the appropriate Tribes and the IFP Director.

→ **TRIBE REVIEWS ELIGIBILITY**
The Tribe reviews membership or eligibility.

→ **IFP WORKS ON BEHALF OF TRIBE**
Under Reason to Know while eligibility is being reviewed.

→ **ELIGIBILITY CONFIRMED**
The IFP serves as the Tribe's authorized representative for ICWA implementation.

→ **ELIGIBILITY NOT VERIFIED**
The family may choose to continue IFP support through a signed Release of Information (ROI).

B NO MOU WITH TRIBE

SUBMIT ICWA INQUIRY TO APPROPRIATE TRIBES
Send the ICWA Inquiry to the appropriate Tribe(s).

→ **SHARE INFORMATION WITH FAMILY**
Make the family aware of the IFP Program and voluntary services.

→ **REFER TO IFP PROGRAM (OPTIONAL)**
Provide IFP contact information or send the referral on the family's behalf.

The IFP provides voluntary support to the family.

A signed Release of Information (ROI) is required for any voluntary support.

3 HOW SUPERVISORS CAN SUPPORT WORKERS

COACH AND CLARIFY
Review ICWA requirements and IFP involvement steps with workers.

MONITOR AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK
Review cases regularly to ensure early involvement and appropriate collaboration.

ADVOCATE AND REMOVE BARRIERS
Support timely responses, access to information, and IFP engagement.

PROMOTE RELATIONSHIP-BASED PRACTICE
Encourage respectful, consistent, and culturally responsive communication.

CELEBRATE PARTNERSHIP SUCCESSES
Acknowledge strong collaboration between workers, IFPs, and Tribes.

ENSURE DOCUMENTATION
Ensure all actions, communications, and agreements are clearly documented.

INFORMATION SHARING EXPECTATIONS

SHARE WHAT IS NECESSARY
Share information needed for safety planning, decision-making, CFTM goals/tasks, early kin search, and preferred placement advisement.

RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY
Do not share official documents unless appropriate. Safety plans and meeting summaries are appropriate to share.

FOLLOW POLICY AND LAW
Follow state policy, federal law, tribal sovereignty, and confidentiality requirements.

5 WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- ICWA inquiry not submitted or delayed.
- IFP not included early when MOU exists.
- Limited or delayed communication with IFP or Tribe.
- Barriers created (e.g., requiring ROI when not appropriate).
- Information withheld that impacts collaboration.
- Inadequate documentation of collaboration.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS LEAD TO BETTER OUTCOMES

- Stronger relationships with Tribal Nations.
- Better family engagement and trust.
- Accurate ICWA implementation.
- Increased cultural connections and preferred placements.
- Improved safety, permanency, and well-being for Native children.

QUICK REMINDERS FOR SUPERVISORS

- Communicate early and consistently.
- Support timely involvement of the IFP.
- Honor Tribal sovereignty and partnership.
- Follow up and remove barriers.
- Document collaboration and decisions.
- Encourage workers and IFPs to be part of the team.

It is not the program that works—
it is the partnership.

Strong partnerships between child welfare professionals, Tribal Nations, and the IFP Program strengthen ICWA implementation and improve outcomes for Native children and families.