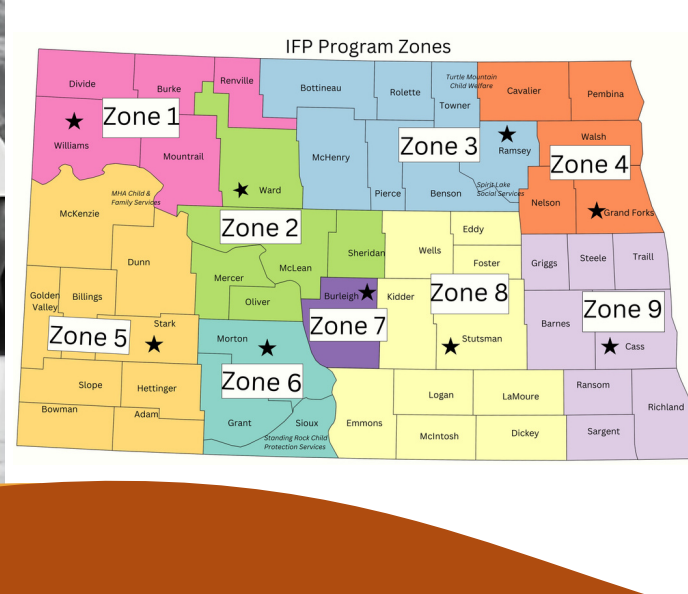




The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
Passed in 1978

Why ICWA Matters:

- To protect the best interests of Native children
- To keep Indigenous American families and Tribal Nations strong and together
- To make sure Native children stay connected to their culture and community

What ICWA Does:

- Says Native American children should stay in Native homes when possible
- Tells state courts to respect Indigenous heritage and the sovereignty of Tribal Nations
- Helps ensure Tribes have a voice in child custody cases

Contact

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"I used to only be able to be in one place at a time, now I can be everywhere...I just love the IFP Program"
Marilyn Poitra, ICWA Coordinator
Turtle Mountain Child Welfare

**Learn more about our programs, training,
and how we support Native youth and
families.**

*ICWA Family
Preservation Program*

"Why does ICWA matter in North Dakota?"

Because every Native child deserves to grow up surrounded by their traditions, their people, and their story.



Native American Training Institute

Our Vision & Mission

The ICWA Family Preservation Program protects the rights and well-being of Indigenous American children and families in child welfare cases. Centered on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), a North Dakota State and Federal Law, the IFP program ensures Native children remain connected to their families, culture, and Tribal communities.

IFP's represent North Dakota Tribal nations. They speak up for Indigenous families in court and other legal settings. Their job is to make sure Native voices are heard and respected throughout the process.

The program's main goals are to:

- Support families so they can stay together whenever possible.
- Prevent children from being removed from their homes unless absolutely necessary.
- Keep children within their tribal communities if they do need to be placed in a new home.

By doing this, the program helps preserve Native culture, family bonds, and tribal identity for future generations.

What is the IFP's Role in an ICWA Case?

The ICWA Family Preservationist (IFP) makes sure the child and family's best interests are protected throughout the case by following the ICWA Law.

Here's what they do:

- Help find ways to keep the family together
- Make sure those efforts are real and meaningful
- Support reunification when the child is no longer in danger
- Stay involved from beginning to end
- Talk with everyone involved in the case
- Share helpful resources and guidance with the family and team

When will an IFP be involved?

An IFP will join the case as soon as an inquiry form is sent to the Tribe.

Since March 1, 2020, IFP's are formally assigned through your Tribal ICWA Coordinator and stay involved for the entire case.

Note: IFP's only serve as the Qualified

Expert Witness (QEW) in the cases they are assigned.

Other cases will use the Tribal QEW List. <https://und.edu/cfstc/indian-child-welfare-act/qualified-expert-witness.html>



IFP's are not here to judge — they're here to help. They work with your family, your Tribe, and your support team to protect what matters most: your children, your culture, and your future.

Tribes

Respect the values and traditions of

Keep communication open with everyone involved

Connect the team with services and cultural support

Help families stay together or reunite safely

Make sure ICWA is followed

ICWA Family Preservationists (IFP's) are here to be a resource and support to the family and team through every step of the child welfare process.