



## ICWA Family Preservationists (IFP)

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### *What is an IFP?*

ICWA Family Preservationists (IFP) are representatives of the North Dakota Tribes in Indian child welfare cases. As ICWA states, “A person may be designated by the Indian child’s Tribe as being qualified to testify to the prevailing social and cultural standards of the Indian child’s Tribe,” the IFP Model was developed from input from all four ND Tribes and is a result of tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

#### *What does an IFP do?*

- IFPs provide training on ICWA and the prevailing social and cultural standards of the family’s Tribe to the child welfare team.
- IFPs provide training for the family in understanding the letter and the spirit of ICWA law.
- IFPs identify and address barriers related to family preservation and assist with coordinating services when appropriate.
- IFPs coordinate with and provide reports to the ICWA Service Agent on all aspects of the case.
- IFPs prepare for and offer testimony in court pertaining to the safety concerns of the family while considering the prevailing social and cultural standards of the identified Tribe.

#### *What is the IFP’s role in an ICWA case?*

- IFPs advocate that the best interests of the child and family are considered throughout the duration of the case.
- IFPs support the identification and implementation of meaningful active efforts at all stages of the case.
- IFPs support the reunification process when there is no longer imminent danger or harm present.
- IFPs are knowledgeable of all aspects of the case for the duration of the case and communicate with relevant parties to provide resources and guidance.

#### *When will an IFP be involved in an ICWA case?*

IFP’s will be assigned as early in a case as possible, starting March 1, 2020. They will be assigned through consultation with ICWA Coordinators and will remain active participants for the duration of the child welfare case. Note: IFP’s only serve as the Qualified Expert Witness in the cases they are assigned to. All other cases will be referred to the existing Tribally Authorized QEW List.

#### *How can I contact an IFP?*

IFP’s are employed through the Native American Training Institute as part of the ICWA Partnership Implementation Grant. You can contact an IFP by calling NATI at (701) 255-6374, or emailing [leahm@nativeinstitute.org](mailto:leahm@nativeinstitute.org) or [sloanh@nativeinstitute.org](mailto:sloanh@nativeinstitute.org).