

ICWA INQUIRY & CASE UPDATE FORM INSTRUCTIONS

WHEN TO USE THE ICWA INQUIRY/CASE STATUS FORM

The ICWA Inquiry/Case Status Form must be completed and sent when any of the following occurs:

- Emergency Removal of a child.
- Filed and substantiated 960 Report (abuse or neglect report that requires a full Child Protection Services (CPS) assessment).
- Initiation of Involuntary In-Home Services, with or without a court order.
- Placement of a child in Foster Care following a CPS report.
- Any Change in Placement or Program Provision, such as:
 - A case transitioning from CPS assessment to involuntary in-home services.
 - A case transitioning from CPS assessment into foster care placement.
 - A change in physical address of child.

KEY REMINDERS:

- Complete and send the digital form via email as soon as feasible after the event.
- Each child requires a separate form. When there are multiple children, attach all forms to a single email when sending them to the Tribe(s).
- Do not send handwritten forms via email; only typed electronic forms are acceptable.
- Initial outreach to the Tribe(s) should be supported by telephone contact when appropriate, in addition to sending the form via email.
- Both state and tribal systems have secured email protocols, ensuring safe transmission.

Important: Effective immediately, all new or initial ICWA inquiries and Case Updates—including those to out-of-state Tribes—must be sent directly to the respective Tribe(s) and cc'd to Jessi Leneagh, IFP Program Director, at jessil@nativeinstitute.org.

FORM BASICS

The ICWA Inquiry & Case Update Form is designed for ease of use:

- Date boxes feature calendar pop-outs.

- Drop-down menus are provided throughout, with the option to manually enter text when necessary.
- State fields accept two-letter abbreviations (e.g., ND).
- Zip codes accept five-digit entries.
- Phone numbers format automatically (no dashes or slashes needed).
- Checkboxes allow multiple selections where applicable.
- Text fields auto-adjust to the amount of information entered without character limits.

Helpful Tip: Hovering over a field provides guidance on what information to enter.

COMPLETING THE FORM

- Today's Date: Enter the date the form is being sent to the Tribe(s).
- To/From Fields: These are manually completed (no dropdowns). For Tribes or agencies not listed (including out-of-state entities), simply type in the name.
- FRAME Case Number: If not yet assigned, enter "Unknown."
- Court Information Section: Include the name and address of the overseeing court and a court contact person (e.g., judge, judicial referee, or other personnel). Include court numbers and hearing dates if available.
- Additional Information Section:
 - Enter information about siblings or any other relevant case details not captured elsewhere.
- Cc'd to the Following Parties Section:
 - List anyone else receiving a copy of the form, such as supervisors, parents, or additional Tribes.

SUBMITTING ICWA INQUIRIES

- Send completed ICWA Inquiry/Case Status forms via email to the identified Tribe(s).
- Cc Jessi Leneagh, IFP Program Director, at jessil@nativeinstitute.org on all new or initial inquiries (this includes out-of-state Tribes).
- Use the email subject line:
 - For new cases: "NEW Inquiry"
 - For updates: "ICWA Case UPDATE"

North Dakota Tribal contact information can be accessed [\[here\]](#).

AFTER SENDING THE INQUIRY

- Tribes generally aim to acknowledge receipt within three working days.
- Following a determination of tribal affiliation, the sender will receive an ICWA Inquiry Response Form from the ICWA Service Agent, indicating:
 - Child's eligibility status,
 - Applicability of ICWA, and
 - Assignment of an IFP (if applicable)
 - Whether the Tribe intends to intervene.

WHEN/IF THE CASE TRANSFERS

If there is any change—such as a transition from emergency removal to a foster care placement, a change in case type, or assignment to a new case worker, the form should be updated and re-sent to the Tribe(s) and cc'd to Jessi Leneagh.

Important: Notify the identified ICWA Agent immediately via email with any updates.

Efficiency Tip: Save a personal copy of a partially pre-filled form (with your county and contact info) to speed up future submissions.

WHY ACCURACY MATTERS

Accurate and timely completion of these forms strengthens our collective ability to serve Native American children and families with respect, transparency, and integrity. Clear communication ensures faster connection to the services needed and support, while minimizing delays that can harm families and children.

Thank you for your dedication to upholding the spirit and intent of the Indian Child Welfare Act.