



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

MAY 17 2018

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am pleased to announce the availability of new guidance on conducting background checks for foster care placements under the Native American Children's Safety Act. This guidance is enclosed and available at the following Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) website:

<https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/dhs>.

The guidance, entitled Background Checks for Foster Care Placements under the Native American Children's Safety Act (NACSA), builds upon Tribes ongoing work to ensure the safety of their children. As noted in the introductory section of this guidance, protecting the safety of children takes on special significance for Tribes. There is no resource more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Tribes.

The new guidance will assist you and your staff in complying with NACSA by providing information on how to conduct background checks for adults living in the foster care home or working in the foster care institution. The guidance also recounts promising practices some Tribes currently use for emergency placements and recommends self-reporting requirements and certification requirements for Tribes to include in Tribal placement standards.

Thank you for the input you provided on the draft guidance during consultation; this version is much improved as a result. The BIA hopes to continue working with you on implementation. The BIA Office of Indian Services, Division of Human Services will be reaching out to your staff in the coming months to offer training and technical assistance.

I appreciate your participation in the development of this guidance and your tireless work to keep your children safe.

Sincerely,

John Tahsuda
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary –
Indian Affairs