

SPECIAL TRIBAL CRIMINAL JURISDICTION GRANT PROGRAM (TRIBAL JURISDICTION PROGRAM)



OVW Overview

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is a component of the US Department of Justice (DOJ). OVW administers grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and subsequent legislation and provides national leadership on issues of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. OVW grants support coordinated community responses to hold offenders accountable and serve victims.

The Tribal Affairs Division within OVW is responsible for the administration of tribal specific grant programs and initiatives, management of tribal specific training and technical assistance, and coordination with other federal departments, and DOJ offices on domestic violence, dating violence, sex assault, sex trafficking, and stalking in tribal communities.

Program Overview

The OVW Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction Grant Program (Tribal Jurisdiction Program), supports tribes in their efforts to exercise special Tribal criminal jurisdiction (STCJ) over non-Indians who commit “covered crimes” (assault of Tribal justice personnel; child, dating, sexual and/or domestic violence; obstruction of justice; sex trafficking; stalking; and protection order violations) within the Tribe’s jurisdictional boundaries and provides technical assistance for planning and implementing changes in their criminal justice systems necessary to exercise jurisdiction to ensure that victims find safety and justice and that non-Indians who commit certain crimes are held accountable.

Funding under the Tribal Jurisdiction Program may be used to:

- strengthen tribal criminal justice systems to assist Indian tribes in exercising special Tribal criminal jurisdiction, including for law enforcement; prosecution; trial and appellate courts; supervision systems; detention and corrections; treatment, rehabilitation, and reentry programs and services; culturally appropriate services and assistance for victims and their families; and criminal codes and rules of criminal procedure, appellate procedure, and evidence;
- provide indigent criminal defendants with licensed defense counsel, at no cost to the defendant, in criminal proceedings in which a participating tribe prosecutes covered crimes;
- ensure that, in criminal proceedings in which a participating tribe exercises special Tribal criminal jurisdiction, jurors are summoned, selected, and instructed in a manner consistent with all applicable requirements; and
- accord victims of covered crimes rights that are similar to the rights of a crime victim described in section 3771(a) of title 18, United States Code, consistent with Tribal law and custom.

Mandatory Program Requirements

- Required Project Partners:** Tribal Leadership; Tribal Judge; Tribal Prosecutor’s Office; Tribal Attorney/ In-house General Counsel; Law Enforcement; and a nonprofit, nongovernmental Victim Services Provider that provides direct services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- Dedicated Project Coordinator:** applications must include, at a minimum, a .5 FTE Project Coordinator who will oversee and assist with project implementation.
- Planning Period:** all applicants must engage in a planning period to further develop their proposed project and corresponding budget. During the planning period, all applicants must develop and submit an **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Internal Memorandum of Understanding (IMOU)** that includes all “Required Project Partners” listed above.
- Readiness Certification:** The Chief Executive of the Tribe and the Chief Legal Officer must certify that the Tribe’s criminal justice system has adequate safeguards in place to protect defendants’ rights. Additionally, the Chief Judicial Officer must certify to familiarity with the tribal constitution, code, and rules provisions to implement STCJ, including provisions that safeguard defendants’ rights.

- **OVW-Sponsored Training and Technical assistance Participation.** Grant Recipients must participate in OVW-sponsored trainings and technical assistance. This includes joining and participating in the Inter-tribal Technical Assistance Working Group (ITWG). The ITWG is a working group of tribal representatives who exchange views, information, and advice about how tribes may best exercise STCJ and address comprehensive systemic responses to the covered crimes.

Program Eligibility

OVW will accept applications from Governments of Indian Tribes.

OVW does NOT limit eligibility for the Tribal Jurisdiction Program to tribes that are already exercising or are prepared immediately to exercise STCJ.

NOTE: All applicants must propose to exercise jurisdiction over **at least one** of the covered crimes. Proposing to exercise jurisdiction over all the covered crimes is not required.

Additional Information

The solicitation to apply for this program can be found on OVW's website here: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/open-solicitations>.

Members of the public can also sign up for notifications on this webpage. Grant Announcements are posted to OVW's Twitter at twitter.com/OVWJustice.

Contact:

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OVW Tribal Affairs website:

www.justice.gov/ovw/tribal-affairs