



Bureau of Indian Affairs



DOI SGAC - BIA Updates

OLIVIA STEVE

ACTING DEPUTY BUREAU DIRECTOR (FOR THE OFFICE OF INDIAN SERVICES)

Executive Summary

BIA is **modernizing probate** processes; a live electronic probate demo to accompany this presentation.

Workforce expansion: Recruitment for critical need positions are progressing to strengthen Tribal service delivery.

BIA Pathways and **IGNITE** grants support Tribal workforce development and partnerships.

Energy initiatives are reducing project backlogs and improving renewable project pathways.

Opportunity Zones 2.0 offer Tribes new access to private capital, with federal partners supporting inclusion and project readiness.

Modernizing the Probate Experience for Tribal Families

One Place to Start the Process

Families can now submit death notifications and required documents through a single, easy-to-use portal - ending fragmented intake and creating a consistent starting point.

More Efficient Case Handling

Probate staff use a streamlined workflow that reduces manual steps and ensures cases move smoothly between BIA, OHA, and BTFA.

Clear, Real-Time Case Visibility

Families and staff can see where a case stands at any time, reducing uncertainty and cutting down on repeated status requests.

Accurate Information from the Start

The system automatically pulls verified data from connected federal systems, speeding preparation and reducing delays caused by missing or incorrect information.

Fewer Document Gaps

Rules-based tools identify exactly which documents are needed up front, minimizing back-and-forth and helping cases move faster.

Workforce Capacity Update - Strengthening BIA’s Ability to *Better Serve* Tribal Nations

METRIC	COUNT	% OF APPROVED	NOTES
Approved Positions	368	–	Annual Staffing Plan baseline
Submitted to HR	368	100%	Strong intake and processing momentum
Advertised*	161	70%*	Active market visibility and candidate sourcing
Selections**	52	14%	

Current Status

100% of positions in recruitment; 161 actively being filled with HR, focused on mission-critical roles (e.g., probate, energy, and self-determination).

*Advertisements often contain multiple vacancies; therefore, the % of advertised is an approximation.

**Reflects term limited and permanent placements

What This Means for Tribal Nations

Increased Workforce Capacity → Greater ability to support

Improved delivery service → Stronger responsiveness to Tribal priorities

Long-term Stability → Building and retaining the workforce needed to meet trust responsibilities

Status as of July 24, 2026

BIA Pathways – Next Generation Talent

Modernized Pipeline

Mission-driven and nationally aligned, BIA Pathways sets a unified standard for how BIA grows the workforce serving Tribal Nations.

Strategic Workforce Alignment

By aligning succession planning with mission-critical staffing and clear metrics, BIA Pathways builds a dependable workforce to support Tribal priorities.

Strengthened Tribal Partnerships

Deepens collaboration with TCU's, aligns career pathways to Tribal priorities, and streamlines support so participants can focus fully on learning and growth.

Call to Action

Supervisors mentor & convert; employees support learning.

Next

Updated guidance, toolkits, Townhalls.

Bottom-Line

This long-term investment builds the sustained workforce capacity needed to meet trust responsibilities and partner effectively with Tribes for generations.

IGNITE: Indigenous Growth in New & Innovative Trade Employment

Native American Technology & Manufacturing Grant Pilot Program

A New \$4.8M Workforce Investment for Tribal Nations

What IGNITE Supports

- Implementation-ready Tribal projects
- Training pathways in construction, infrastructure, utilities, energy
- Future-focused careers in advanced manufacturing, emerging tech, and STEM

Why It Matters for Self-Governance Tribes

- Fully supports Tribal workforce sovereignty
- Aligns with 638 contracts and Self-Governance compacts
- Flexible design to match Tribal economic priorities
- Builds long-term, locally controlled career pipelines

Grant Details

- **NOFO OPEN:** <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/dwd/pjt/IGNITE>
- **20–22 awards**, up to **\$300,000**
- **One-year** performance period

The Opportunity

Strengthen skilled-trade and technical workforce

- Reduce employment barriers for Tribal citizens
- Expand high-demand career access rooted in Tribal priorities

Energy Update — *Meaningful* *Progress* for Tribal Nations

Focused leadership coordination has reduced well over 40% of the longstanding CA backlog and nearly half of all pending cases - giving Tribes clearer timelines, faster project movement, and greater revenue certainty.

ROW & Leasing Improvements: Streamlined coordination is reducing clearance times, allowing Tribal energy, broadband, housing, and infrastructure projects to advance with greater predictably.

Clearer Pathways for Renewable Projects

New wind/solar NEPA and elevated review steps offer earlier federal step clarity, reducing uncertainty for Tribal utility-scale renewable projects.

Advancing Tribal Energy Sovereignty

BIA-BLM-IESC partnering to moving toward reducing silos, improving navigation, and expanding federal support for Tribal energy development.

TERA Accelerator expanding Tribal regulatory capacity and strengthening Tribal control over permitting and energy governance.

Way Ahead

Continued CA/ROW surge actions to improve payment timelines and project movement.

More predictable renewable project routing via standardized NEPA guidance

Opportunity Zones (OZ) Initiative – What Tribal Leaders *Need to Know*

A Federal Investment Tool

Opportunity Zones are a federal incentive that channels long-term private investment into high-need communities, included Tribal Nations, through designated eligible census tracts.

Why Tribal Nations Are Part of OZ 2.0

Federal teams (HUD, Treasury, DOI) are actively working to strengthen Tribal inclusion in **new OZ designations**, with updated mapping, Tribal tract overlays, and improved data pathways for eligibility.

Tribal tract overlays and mapping tools (HUD OZAM) are being built and reviewed.

States are being asked directly whether Tribal lands are part of their nomination strategies.

The OZ 2.0 Federal Engagement Plan

HUD outlines a three-phase national strategy:

Phase 1: Outreach to state CEO teams preparing new OZ nominations.

Phase 2: Transition planning as current designations expire.

Phase 3: “OZ Forward” - long-term support, technical assistance, and Tribal-focused investment tools

Tribal Opportunities & Immediate Actions

Why OZ Matters for Tribal Nations

Access to new streams of private capital through **Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOFs)**.

Federal partners are developing **Tribal-specific resources, case studies, and guidance** to support project readiness and investment.

Tribal tracts not currently eligible may be considered if alternative data can demonstrate need, addressing long-standing gaps in federal statistics.

Immediate Actions for Tribal Leaders

Engage your state's OZ nomination team - confirm how Tribal lands and rural priorities are being incorporated.

Submit local economic data to strengthen eligibility, especially for “off-list” tracts where standard federal statistics fall short.

Identify investable Tribal projects (housing, broadband, energy, tourism, small business) aligned with long-term private investment.

Request federal support - HUD, DOI, and Treasury can provide mapping overlays, demos, and Tribal-specific technical assistance.

Discussion & Questions