

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INDIAN PREFERENCE INFORMATION



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What should American Indian/Alaska Natives know about federal employment?

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM):

WELCOME to this fact sheet for American Indian/Alaska Native job seekers pursuing careers with the federal government. We offer it with the confidence that it will motivate Native people to apply and open the door to public service for this key population.

Everyone benefits when Native people are included in the recruitment, hiring and development of the federal workforce: the employees who contribute their talents in mission driven jobs; the agencies that gain an important perspective from qualified employees who understand the unique needs of native communities; employees' families who also benefit from a competitive total compensation package and the communities that flourish as these valued employees serve to fulfill their agencies' vision and mission. Native people are vital to our success. While challenges remain, our hope is that this guidance will be yet another step in our continuing efforts to connect with native people and nurture trust as we work together to build the workforce of the 21st Century.

INDIAN PREFERENCE (IP)

With Indian Preference, American Indian/Alaska Native applicants may receive preference over non-Indian applicants when applying to jobs with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and Indian affairs (including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and some positions within the Office of the Assistant Secretary--Indian Affairs.)

Preference in filling vacancies is given to qualified Indian candidates in accordance with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (Title 25, USC, Section 472). If you're claiming Indian Preference, you must submit form BIA 4432--Verification of Indian Preference with your application. Those eligible for Indian Preference who are not currently employed in federal service may be appointed under the Excepted Service Appointment Authority Schedule A, 213.3112(a)(7). We will consider non-Indian applicants if there are no job seekers who are qualified under Indian Preference.

[Learn more about Indian preference.](#)

BIA FORM 4432

If you're claiming Indian Preference, you must submit form BIA 4432--Verification of Indian Preference with your application. The time to complete will vary based on your tribe's process, so it is best to complete this step first if you want to use Indian Preference. You will also need to ensure that your form has not expired.

[Download form BIA 4432.](#)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) on Indian Preference

Q: Does Indian Preference apply at every agency?

A: No, IP only applies to jobs within the IHS and Indian Affairs (including the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education and some positions within the Office of the Assistant Secretary--Indian Affairs.) Refer to the job announcement to find out if it applies.

Q: When can I apply to an agency that does not have IP?

A: An employee with Indian Preference must complete a two-year probationary period. Upon successful completion they will need to serve one additional year to convert to competitive status. Competitive status will allow you to compete under merit promotion (MP) procedures.

"My time as a student volunteer gave me the opportunity to make meaningful, long-lasting, positive changes on behalf of my home community. It inspired me to continue my education to continue to give back to my people."

--Faith Tyson

(Native Village of Shishmeraf and descendant of Bering Straits Native Corporation)

2021-22 OPM student volunteer

Q: Can I transfer from Department of Interior (DOI) or BIA to or from IHS?

A: Hiring plans differ so it is best to speak with the agency or the human resources point of contact.

[Read the IHS FAQs.](#)

[Read the BIA FAQs.](#)

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES

If you're a current student or recent graduate, you may be eligible for federal internships and job opportunities through the Pathways and other student programs.

[Learn more about opportunities to join the workforce.](#)

Contact Us

Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20415

Email: consultation@opm.gov

For questions about outreach

Email: outreach@opm.gov

Website: <https://www.opm.gov/news/tribal-consultation/>

Agency-specific internships and fellowships

Individual agencies offer a variety of internships and fellowships for students, recent graduates, professionals and other job seekers who want to connect with agency missions and employ their unique education, background and skill sets in service to the nation. Visit specific agency websites for additional information.

Frequently asked questions (FAQS) for students and recent graduates

Q: When is the best time to apply for internships?

A: It will depend on when you would like to intern. Internships happen year-round so it is best to work on developing and maintaining your resume, USAJOBS profile, transcripts and documents to make sure that you are always prepared when an opportunity becomes available.

Q: Will housing be provided?

A: You are responsible for finding your own housing unless otherwise stated. Your internship coordinator or the local site can help you find arrangements. Many universities also offer safe, affordable and convenient housing to students with summer internships.

Q: Can an internship turn into a permanent position?

A: Upon successful completion and after meeting the required hours of the program, you may be converted to a permanent position. [Learn more about this.](#)

Q: Are there Indian Preference (IP) internships?

A: Indian Health Service (IHS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Udall Foundation and White House Initiative for American Indian and Alaskan Native Education all offer IP opportunities, which can be found on their websites and through USAJOBS.

Q: How do I find opportunities that allow me to work remotely?

A: Under the Location header in the **Overview** section of the job announcement, the remote job location will be listed as Anywhere in the U.S. (remote job). [Learn more about remote jobs.](#)

Native American Hiring Path

Native Americans or Alaskan Natives with a tribal affiliation

What is Indian Preference?


With Indian Preference, you may receive preference over non-Indian applicants when applying to jobs with the [Indian Health Service](#) and [Indian Affairs](#) (including the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education and some positions within the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.)

Preference in filling vacancies is given to qualified Indian candidates in accordance with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (Title 25, USC, Section 472). If you're claiming Indian Preference, you must submit [Form BIA 4432 Verification of Indian Preference](#) with your application. Indian Preference eligibles not currently employed in federal service may be appointed under the Excepted Service Appointment Authority Schedule A, 213.3112(a)(7). Consideration will be given to non-Indian applicants if there are no qualified Indian Preference eligibles.

Eligibility

To be eligible, you must submit a complete [BIA form 4432](#) along with your application for each job announcement.

How do I know a job is open to Native Americans?

In the job announcement look for the **This job is open to** section. When a job is open to **Native Americans** you'll see this icon:  There may be other groups listed that can also apply.

In search you can also select the **Native Americans** filter. Your results will display all jobs open to Native Americans.

Explore hiring paths

The federal government offers unique hiring paths to help hire individuals that represent our diverse society. Learn more about each hiring path and your eligibility.



Open to the public

U.S. citizens, nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.



Federal employees

Current or former, includes the competitive and excepted services



Veterans



Military spouses



National Guard & reserves

Current or prospective members



Students & recent graduates



Senior executives



Individuals with disabilities



Family of overseas employees



Native Americans

American Indian or Alaskan Native



Peace Corps & AmeriCorps VISTA



Special authorities

**VERIFICATION OF INDIAN PREFERENCE FOR EMPLOYMENT
 IN THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE**

Complete one of the categories as stated in the Instructions and submit this form with your application for Federal employment.

CATEGORY A - MEMBERS OF FEDERALLY-RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES, BANDS OR COMMUNITIES

This is to certify that the person named below is a member of the tribe shown:

Full Name	Enrollment No.	Date of Birth	Tribal Affiliation
I certify that the above information was taken from the official membership records of the _____ Tribe (or records maintained for the Tribe by the BIA) and acknowledge that falsification and misrepresentation of this information is punishable under Federal Law, 18 U.S.C. 1001.			
Certification by Tribal Official:		And if required, verification by the BIA Official maintaining the official tribal rolls that the individual is listed on enrollment list maintained by the BIA at the request of the tribe.	
Signature	Date	Signature of BIA Official	Date
Print Name & Title of Tribal Official	Name/Title	Agency	

CATEGORY B - DESCENDANTS OF MEMBERS OF FEDERALLY-RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES, BANDS OR COMMUNITIES AND WERE RESIDING ON ANY INDIAN RESERVATION ON THIS DATE, JUNE 1, 1934

I certify that the person named below has established to my satisfaction that he/she is a descendant of an enrolled member of the tribe named below and that he/she was living on an Indian reservation on June 1, 1934. The applicant's family history is outlined on the attached family history chart.

Full Name	Date of Birth
Reservation of Residence on June 1, 1934	Full Name of Ancestor & Tribal Affiliation
Title and source of records upon which this is based:	BIA Official
	Date
	Title
	Agency

CATEGORY C - PERSONS WHO POSSESS AT LEAST ONE-HALF DEGREE INDIAN BLOOD DERIVED FROM TRIBES INDIGENOUS TO THE UNITED STATES.

I certify that I have reviewed the documentation to support the below listed individual's claim to possess at least one-half degree Indian blood. The applicant's family history is outlined on the attached family history chart and official records.

Full Name	Date of Birth	Degree of Blood and Tribal Derivation
Title & Source of Records upon which this is based:	BIA Official	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Official Records of Tribal Affiliation & Blood Degree <input type="checkbox"/> State or Academic Recognition of Indigenous Status	Title	Agency

CATEGORY D - ALASKA NATIVE

I certify that the person named below is a member of an Alaska Native Tribe; or, an individual whose name appears on the roll of Alaska Natives prior to July 31, 1981, and not subsequently disenrolled; or, an individual who was issued stock in a Native corporation pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1606(g)(1)(B)(i).

Name	Date of Birth	Alaska Native Village/Corporation/Roll

Title and source of records upon which this is based:

	BIA Official	Date
	Title	Agency

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING FORM BIA-4432

1. It is the responsibility of the individual to establish evidence of entitlement to Indian preference. Applicants must submit as much background information as possible to verify eligibility for Indian preference. Falsification or misrepresentation of information is punishable under Federal Law, 18 U.S.C. 1001.

CATEGORY A

MEMBERS OF FEDERALLY-RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES, BANDS OR COMMUNITIES. If you are a member of a Federally-recognized tribe, you must request that your tribe complete this category. One of the following procedures will apply and you will be advised by your tribe:

If your tribe has contracted or compacted the maintenance of tribal enrollment records under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, Pub. L. 93-638, as amended, 25 U.S.C. 450, a verification signed by an *authorized* Tribal Representative(s) is sufficient

If your tribe does *not* maintain tribal enrollment records, the tribe must certify that you are a member and you must submit the form to the BIA official who maintains the official roll for the tribe.

CATEGORY B AND C

- **DESCENDANTS OF MEMBERS OF FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES, BANDS OR COMMUNITIES WHO WERE RESIDING ON ANY INDIAN RESERVATION ON JUNE 1, 1934**
- **PERSONS WHO POSSESS AT LEAST ONE-HALF DEGREE INDIAN BLOOD DERIVED FROM TRIBES INDIGENOUS TO THE UNITED STATES**

If you are claiming preference based on any of these categories, you should provide as much information as possible regarding your family history. This will be the only information which the BIA will have to certify your lineal descent.

If you are claiming preference through Category B based upon your lineal descent from a member of a federally recognized tribe, band or community, you must also document that you were residing within the present boundaries of the reservation on June 1, 1934.

If you possess one-half degree Indian blood from a tribe indigenous to the United States, you must submit state or academic records that document this status, as well as official records that establish your degree of Indian blood, such as census records. You must also complete the attached FAMILY HISTORY.

Category D

ALASKA NATIVE OR DESCENDANT OF AN ALASKA NATIVE. You may contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs office servicing your village or corporation for completion of this category.

2. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIA OFFICIALS:

This form has been designed for the verification that an applicant is entitled to Indian preference in employment. If category A membership is verified through records maintained for the Tribe by the BIA, a tribal representative must also sign the verification. If the applicant does not meet the tribal enrollment criteria, the form should not be completed. If the applicant cannot document at least one-half degree Indian blood derived from tribes indigenous to the United States, the form should not be completed. Upon verification by a BIA Regional Director, Superintendent or other designated responsible BIA official, the applicant will be entitled to preference in employment.

3. INSTRUCTIONS TO PERSONNEL OFFICERS:

Receipt of a properly verified FORM BIA 4432, together with an acceptable application, "Personal Qualifications Statement", entitles an applicant to preference in employment.

4. PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE:

The information collection is approved by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3507(d), and assigned clearance number 1076-0160. This information is collected to verify that individuals are eligible for preference when appointments are made to vacancies in positions in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It is estimated that it takes the applicant about 30 minutes to complete this form. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. If you have any questions regarding the burden estimation, please contact: Information Collection Clearance Officer – Indian Affairs, 1849 C Street, NW, MS-3642, Washington, DC 20240.

5. PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT:

This information is collected as provided pursuant to the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a, for individuals completing application forms for Federal employment with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (DOI) or the Indian Health Service (DHHS). We are authorized to collect information to verify Indian ancestry or Indian tribal membership by 25 U.S.C. 2, 4 Stat. 564 and 15 Stat. 228; 25 U.S.C. 9, 4 Stat. 738; 25 U.S.C. 43; 36 Stat. 272; 25 U.S.C. 44, 28 Stat. 313; 25 U.S.C. 46, 22 Stat. 88 and 23 Stat. 697; 25 U.S.C. § 348, 24 Stat. 398 and 31 Stat. 1085; 25 U.S.C. 472, 48 Stat. 986; 25 U.S.C. § 472a, 93 Stat. 1057 and 94 Stat. 695; 25 U.S.C. 479, 48 Stat. 988; and 5 U.S.C. 8336. The information collected will be used to determine eligibility for Indian preference and may be disclosed to the Department of the Interior Office of Personnel, the United States Office of Personnel Management, and the Indian Health Services Office of Personnel. The system of records notice is DOI-79, Interior Personnel Records, 64 FR 20010 (April 23, 1999).

6. EFFECTS OF NON-DISCLOSURE:

Disclosure of the information requested on this form (Form BIA 4432) is voluntary. However, consideration for Indian preference in employment under 25 CFR Part 5 requires proof that (a) you are a member of any recognized Indian tribe currently under Federal jurisdiction; (b) you are a descendant of a member residing within the present boundaries of any Indian reservation on June 1, 1934; (c) you are an Eskimo or another aboriginal person of Alaska as defined by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*); or (d) you possess one-half or more Indian blood of tribes that are indigenous to the United States. Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934, 25 U.S.C. 472.