



United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Northwest Regional Office
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4169

SEP 10 2018

In Reply Refer To:
Division of Tribal Government

Dear Tribal Leader,

This letter is to inform you that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is considering whether to end the practice of BIA personnel issuing Certificate(s) of Degree of Indian or Alaska Native Blood (CDIB). Your input and advice is appreciated in this survey. The BIA has issued CDIBs to individual Indians for several decades and we seek data to determine whether we should continue issuing CDIBs. Unfortunately, the absence of regulatory guidance has resulted in the inconsistent issuance of CDIBs by the BIA. Prior to making any final decision on this issue, the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs is seeking information on any potential impact that termination of the BIA CDIB program would have on tribes. To this end, the BIA regional and agency personnel will be conducting a survey that addresses CDIB related matters for each tribe that is served within each region and we seek your input and consultation on this effort.

Within the next several weeks, local BIA personnel will be reaching out to your tribal enrollment program point(s) of contact to gather CDIB information. Please note that the survey does not request any type of personally identifiable information. Further, nothing in this process will affect tribes' ability to run their own CDIB programs – we are simply seeking information on whether the BIA should continue to issue CDIBs and whether this activity should be best left to the tribes themselves as a tribe's right to define its own membership and degrees of Indian blood is recognized as a central aspect of tribal sovereignty.

Please note that the questionnaire is designed to address the issue nationwide and as all of the Northwest tribes operate their own enrollment programs, some questions may not apply. We will discuss this with your staff when we contact your enrollment department.

If you have further questions, please contact Greg Norton, Tribal Government Specialist, at (503) 231-6723.

Sincerely,

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Northwest Regional Director

CC: Northwest Region Superintendents