

ICWA Best Practice

- **ADOPT** the BIA Guidelines for Implementing the Indian Child Welfare Act as the foundation for best practices in serving Native American children and families.
- **ASSUME** that the child is an Indian child unless and until there is information indicating otherwise.
- **DOCUMENT** clearly and objectively all of your efforts, but especially those related to inquiry, notice, active efforts and placement.
- If a child must be enrolled in order to be considered a member of a tribe, the social worker should **ASSIST** the family and child in completing required paperwork and engaging in the enrollment process.
- **FOLLOW** the Spirit of ICWA: Ensure access to culturally appropriate services and facilitate ties between the child, extended family and the tribe, when the tribe is not federally recognize and when the Native American child is descended from a federally-recognized tribe but is not eligible for membership.
- **COMPLETE** every section of ICWA 010 and 030 forms. If, after asking, you are unable to obtain information, write “information unavailable” on the form.
- Make sure to **CONSULT** with the tribe when preparing each court report to confirm their choice of permanent plan has not changed.
- As soon as possible, **ENGAGE** with tribal social workers, ICWA agents and advocates and develop relationships that support appropriate decision-making to ensure ICWA compliance.

