Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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ANADARKO, Okla. – Today, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Tara Katuk Sweeney praised the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Anadarko Agency for deploying the first Tribal Access Program (TAP) biometric/biographic kiosk workstation. The TAP kiosk will help process finger and palm prints, take mugshots, and access data with the national crime information databases to better ensure the safety of children in foster care. The BIA Anadarko Agency is the first of 28 BIA Agencies to make a newly installed TAP kiosk operational.

Before a Tribe can place a child into foster care, the Native American Children's Safety of 2016 (NACSA) requires a criminal records check, including a fingerprint-based check of national crime databases of all adults in a home, and a check of tribal and state abuse and neglect registries where the individual has lived in the past five years. The Act also applies to BIA Direct Services Agencies.

The on-site kiosk at Anadarko will enable the Agency's BIA-Office of Indian Services (BIA-OIS) Social Service Programs and tribal social services program to vet foster parents more proficiently, as required under NACSA, and will provide the Agency's BIA-Office of Justice Services (BIA-OJS) law enforcement personnel direct access to Federal Bureau of Investigation's Criminal Justice Information Services.

"Participation in the TAP will allow BIA-OJS law enforcement officers the ability to directly access criminal databases to keep tribal communities safe and to protect Native children in the foster care system," **said Assistant Secretary Sweeney**. "The Trump Administration is proud to bring this state-of-the-art technology and instrumental resource to our law enforcement and social service agencies."

"We are proud to partner with BIA-Office of Indian Services to deliver access to the TAP kiosk for the purposes of processing quicker background checks on prospective foster parents," **said BIA-OJS Director Charles Addington**. "Ensuring the safety of children and the safety of our tribal communities are our top priorities."

"We appreciate Assistant Secretary Sweeney and BIA-OJS for making this vital background investigation resource available for our social services programs and tribal social service programs," **said BIA-Office of Indian Services Director Spike Bighorn**. "Social workers know firsthand the great importance of quickly placing children in need of our intervention into safe homes and this technology will help us accomplish that for the Native children that we serve and protect."

The TAP kiosk at the BIA Anadarko Agency will be available for following tribes to process background checks pursuant to the provisions of the NACSA:

1. Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
2. Caddo Nation
3. Comanche Nation
4. Delaware Nation
5. Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
6. Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma

7. Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

The two remaining BIA social services locations, Northern Cheyenne Agency in Lame Deer, Montana and Northern Pueblos Agency in Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico, will install TAP kiosks within the next year. In partnership with the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation, the BIA-OIS at the Fort Peck Agency will begin using the Tribe's TAP kiosk in 2020.

BACKGROUND

On October 28, 2018, the DOI and DOJ jointly announced a dramatic expansion of DOJ's TAP, which is offered in two versions, TAP-FULL (with a kiosk) and TAP-LIGHT (without a kiosk), at BIA Agencies. In addition to the three BIA Agencies identified to receive the TAP-FULL Kiosk, 28 BIA-OJS Agencies, including Detention Centers, will gain access to the TAP-LIGHT version by the end of FY 2020. At these agency sites, BIA law enforcement provides service and support to 64 tribes, and of these tribes, 53 tribes did not have any direct or local access to TAP at the time of the October announcement.

The TAP is the federal government's key program that provides tribes with access to the national crime information databases, including the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Next Generation Identification (NGI), National Data Exchange (N-DEx), National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP) as well as other national systems such as the International Justice and Public Safety Network (Nlets).

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