



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of the Deputy Attorney General

The Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

November 15, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF COMPONENTS
FROM: THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL *W. Murray*
SUBJECT: Steering Committee to Address the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons

The Department of Justice is committed to addressing the persistent violence endured by Native American families and communities across the country, including by working with Tribal nations to address the important issues of missing or murdered indigenous persons. The Department views this work as a priority for its law enforcement components. It also recognizes the broader public safety and public health concerns that underlie many of these cases and require solutions from across the Department's components.

For that reason, I am launching a Steering Committee to coordinate the Department's efforts to address the issues of missing or murdered indigenous persons. The Steering Committee shall review the Department's current guidance, policies, and practices in these areas and recommend any changes necessary to better facilitate this work, including in response to the recommendations set forth in the U.S. Government Accountability Office's report titled, "Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women: New Efforts Are Underway but Opportunities Exist to Improve the Federal Response." Consistent with the Executive Order titled "Improving Public Safety and Criminal Justice for Native Americans and Addressing the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous People," I am also directing the Steering Committee, in coordination with other agencies as appropriate, to develop a comprehensive plan to strengthen the Department's work to address the issues of missing or murdered indigenous persons that will be submitted to the President within 240 days.

The Steering Committee's plan should reflect the Department's holistic approach to addressing these important issues. First, it should evaluate and build off existing efforts to develop a coordinated federal law enforcement response for cases falling within federal jurisdiction, including strategies for supporting victims and their loved ones. Second, it should include a strategy for enhancing coordination with and support for our Tribal, state, and local partners, who are often on the frontlines for these cases. Third, consistent with the findings and recommendations in the GAO report, the Steering Committee should build on the Department's efforts to improve data collection, data access and sharing, and education and outreach about federal databases, as well as develop a strategy for conducting ongoing analyses of existing

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federal databases and future data that may be gathered. Finally, it should assess how the Department can best address the root causes of many cases of missing or murdered persons, including by supporting intervention and prevention efforts across the government.

The Department recognizes that challenges faced by Tribes are best met by Tribal solutions, and the Steering Committee should therefore make Tribal engagement the cornerstone of its work. In particular, the Steering Committee, in coordination with the Office of Tribal Justice, shall notice a consultation with Tribal leaders within 60 days. The Steering Committee shall also seek and consider the views of stakeholders including survivors and their families, victim advocates, and urban Indian organizations. Finally, the Steering Committee will coordinate its work with that of the Joint Commission established under the Not Invisible Act, which will include Tribal leaders, community members, and other stakeholders.

The Steering Committee will be co-chaired by an official from the Office of the Deputy Attorney General and an official from the Office of Tribal Justice. Its members will include representatives from components across the Department, including the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS); the Criminal Division (CRM); Civil Rights Division (CRT); the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA); the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the Office of Justice Programs (OJP); the Office of Legal Policy (OLP); the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW); and the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS). I am directing those components to assign an appropriate representative or representatives to the Steering Committee and promptly inform Tracy Toulou, the Director of OTJ, of the selections. The co-chairs of the Steering Committee will provide me regular updates on its progress and recommendations.

The Department is committed to tackling the issues of missing or murdered indigenous persons in a way that will make a meaningful—and long-term—difference. I look forward to reviewing the Steering Committee's plan and recommendations and to sharing them with the Attorney General for his ultimate approval.