



TRIBAL JURISDICTION PROGRAM

- The Grants to Tribal Governments to Exercise Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction (Tribal Jurisdiction Program) provides support and technical assistance to Indian tribes for planning and implementing changes in their criminal justice systems necessary to exercise “special tribal criminal jurisdiction” (STCJ) and funds to exercise the jurisdiction.
- Prior to the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA 2013), if a victim was Indian and the perpetrator was non-Indian, the crime could be prosecuted only by the United States or, in some circumstances, by the state in which the tribe’s Indian Country is located. VAWA 2013 included a provision recognizing the authority of participating tribes to exercise “special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction” over certain defendants, regardless of their Indian or non-Indian status, who commit crimes of domestic violence or dating violence or violate certain protection orders in Indian Country. The Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 expanded this jurisdiction to cover additional crimes, including assault of tribal justice personnel, child violence, obstruction of justice, sexual violence, sex trafficking, and stalking and renamed it to “special tribal criminal jurisdiction.”
- The Tribal Jurisdiction Program is designed to enhance the ability of tribes to implement and exercise STCJ. The program encourages collaborations among tribal leadership, courts, prosecutors, attorneys, defenders, law enforcement, probation, victim services providers, and other partners to ensure that victims find safety and justice and that non-Indians who commit the covered crimes in the Indian Country of the tribe are held accountable.
- Eligible applicants are limited to: governments of Indian tribes that have jurisdiction over Indian country.
- In 2022, the Tribal Jurisdiction Program gave out four awards, totaling over \$1.5 million.
- The solicitation to apply for this program can be found on OVW’s website here: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/open-solicitations>. Members of the public can also sign up for notifications on that website, and grant announcements are posted to OVW’s Twitter at twitter.com/OVWJustice.
- This program is authorized by the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended, 25 U.S.C. § 1304(h)(2).

CONTACT

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