



USAO OREGON INDIAN COUNTRY NEWSLETTER

July 2, 2026

Note from the U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon

Public safety in Indian Country remains a top priority for the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon. We are proud of our longstanding partnerships with the nine federally recognized tribal nations in Oregon, as well as with intertribal law enforcement organizations. Through collaboration with our federal, state, local, and tribal partners, we remain committed to addressing the unique public safety challenges facing Indian Country.

I look forward to the July Tribal Summit and meeting with the representatives from the tribal nations to discuss shared priorities and critical issues, including the FBI's Operation Steadfast Promise initiatives, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons, and protection of crime victims' rights. By working together, we can enhance public safety, support victims, and build a stronger community for all.

Meet the U.S. Attorney's Office Indian Country Team



Pam Paaso, Chief of the Violent Crime & Immigration Unit

Pam Paaso has been with the U.S. Attorney's Office since February 2017. Pam transferred from the Eugene Branch Office where she prosecuted child exploitation, environmental, and violent crime cases. Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Pam spent 10 years at the Harris County Texas District Attorney's Office handling domestic violence, sex assault, and homicide cases, among others.

Jeff Sweet, Assistant U.S. Attorney

Jeff Sweet has been with the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eugene Branch Office since 2008, and prosecutes violent crime, child exploitation, and drug and gun cases. Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Jeff spent 7 years with the Douglas County District Attorney's Office.



Andrew Ho, Assistant U.S. Attorney

Andrew Ho is the District of Oregon tribal liaison to the nine tribal nations. Andrew has been with the U.S. Attorney's Office since January 2021. He has prosecuted violent crime, child exploitation, and drug crimes, and is currently in the National Security and Economic Crimes Unit, where he prosecutes fraud cases.

Kate Rochat, Assistant U.S. Attorney

Kate Rochat has been with the U.S. Attorney's Office since 2023 and currently works in the Violent Crime Unit. She joined the office after serving as a JAG in the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force, she served in Japan and South Korea as the Chief of Military Justice.



Arin Heinz, Assistant U.S. Attorney

Arin Heinz recently joined the District of Oregon after serving as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in California since 2022. She works in the Violent Crime Unit and is eager to work on cases arising out of Indian Country. She previously served on active duty in the military for almost 8 years as a lawyer. As a military lawyer she specialized in special victim cases.

Shelby Whitehill, Victim Witness Specialist

Shelby Whitehill recently joined the District of Oregon after serving 3 years as a Victim Witness Specialist for the District of New Mexico. Prior to her service for the District of New Mexico, she worked as a Supervisory Victim Advocate in the Pima County Attorney's Office in Tucson, AZ, for 10 years. Throughout her career, Shelby has advocated on behalf of victims of violent crime, DUI crimes, and special victims' cases.



In the News | Recent Prosecution Highlights from the USAO District of Oregon

United States v. Javier Francisco Vigil

On April 7, 2026, Javier Francisco Vigil, 54, [pleaded guilty](#) to attempted murder, robbery, and illegally possessing a firearm as a convicted felon (Armed Career Criminal Act).

According to court documents, on August 17, 2022, Vigil entered the Wildhorse Casino, walked straight to the cashier cage in the gaming area, and handed the cashier a note demanding \$1 million. Vigil then drew a holstered pistol, pointed it at the cashier, and threatened to “bathe everyone in blood.” After getting nearly \$70,000 in cash, Vigil exited the casino and shot at the responding Umatilla tribal police officer, who returned fire striking Vigil.

This case was investigated by the FBI and the Umatilla Tribal Police Department, with the assistance of ATF, the Hermiston Police Department, the Pendleton Police Department, Oregon State Police, Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office, and Morrow County Sheriff’s Office. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Cassidy Adams and Arin Heinz are prosecuting the case.

United States v. Harold Charley

Harold Charley, 40, was [sentenced](#) to 240 months in federal prison and a lifetime term of supervised release for sexually abusing two minors.

According to court documents, in January 2024, Charley, a prior sex offender, engaged in sexual abusive contact with two minor victims between the ages of 12 and 16 over the course of several weeks on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

On September 23, 2025, Charley was charged by superseding information with two counts of abusive sexual contact.

On October 7, 2025, Charley pleaded guilty to two counts of abusive sexual contact.

This case was investigated by the FBI with assistance from the Warm Springs Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Pamela Paaso.

United States v. Edward Francis Jones

Edward Francis Jones, 33, has been [charged](#) by criminal complaint with possessing multiple firearms as a felon and eluding police officers after a high-speed chase.

Jones has been wanted by the U.S. Marshals Service since May 29, 2025, for two separate supervised release violation cases with underlying felon in possession charges. Law enforcement has attempted to arrest Jones multiple times. The FBI, U.S. Marshals Service, Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office, Prineville Police Department, Crook County Sheriff’s Office, Oregon State Police, Warm Springs Police Department, Hood River Police Department, and Wasco County Sheriff’s Office participated in the search for Jones.



News Highlights

City of Portland Welcomes Gerald D. Skelton Jr. as Tribal Government Relations Manager

The City of Portland [announces](#) the appointment of Gerald D. Skelton Jr. as the City’s tribal government relations manager. Skelton brings extensive experience working with Tribal governments at the local, state, national and international levels, with a career dedicated to honoring treaty rights, cultural heritage and Tribal self-governance.



Photo Credit: City of Portland

Justice Department Expands Tribal Access Program to Improve the Exchange of Critical Data with Federally Recognized Tribes

The Justice Department has selected six federally recognized Tribes to participate in the continued expansion of the [Tribal Access Program for National Crime Information](#) (TAP), a program that provides Tribal governments with means to access, enter, and exchange data with national crime information systems, including those maintained by the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division.

Justice Department Surge to Indian Country under Operation Steadfast Promise 2026

[Operation Steadfast Promise](#) will support five operations, including Not Forgotten (MMIP), Trusted Trails (violent crime), Ballistic Backlog (firearm seizures), Resolute Arrow (crimes against children), and Iron Justice (fugitives).

Portland FBI Surges Personnel in Support of Operation Steadfast Promise 2026

In support of Operation Steadfast Promise 2026, the Portland Field Office for the FBI will receive three special agents in August 2026.

Priority will be placed on cases involving violence against women and children, including those who are missing or murdered.



Photo Credit: FBI

News in Oregon

[Delta Park Powow and Encampment occurred June 19-21](#)

[Northeast Portland church land returned to Indigenous community for affordable elder housing](#)

[Roseburg Schools to begin granting credit for learning Oregon tribe's Native language](#)

[Oregon, tribal leaders applaud 'rebuilding' as development takes shape at Willamette Falls](#)

[Oregon tribal leaders join celebration ceremony at Oregon Capitol Plaza](#)

[Willamette Falls development project receives \\$4M federal grant](#)

[CTUIR Again Contracts with LASO for Legal Aid to Tribal Members](#)



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
District of Oregon

We're Hiring!

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Regional Coordinator

Apply today at:
[Open to the Public](#)
[MS/U.S. Government](#)

Job Postings

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
[Police Records & Evidence Administrator](#)

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
[Tribal Court Administrator](#)

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation are hiring for multiple positions, including police officer and attorney. For these and more opportunities, click [here](#).

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs are hiring for multiple positions, including police detective, adult probation officer, and corrections officer. For these and more opportunities, click [here](#).

The Klamath Tribes
[Male Youth Probation Officer – Court Bailiff](#)

Justice Department Announces Funding Opportunities for Tribal Communities

[Office for Victims of Crime Current Grant Opportunities](#)

[Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Current Grant Opportunities](#)

[Office for Community Oriented Policing Services Current Grant Opportunities](#)

[Office on Violence Against Women Current Grant Opportunities](#)



U.S. Attorney Bradford speaking to students at [Chemawa Indian School](#) in April 2026 about the dangers of fentanyl, cyber awareness, and cyber hygiene.

To request a training, presentation, or outreach event, reach out to usaor.publicaffairs@usa.doj.gov

A Note About Our Language

“Indian Country” is the legal term used to describe reservations and other lands set aside for Indian use, such as Indian allotments and lands held in trust for Indians or Indian tribes, and is defined under 18 U.S.C. § 1151. We use the term Indian Country versus the term Native American or some other term because it describes the statutory jurisdiction of the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

Disclaimers

The links provided in this newsletter are for information only. Not all content reflects the views of the U.S. Attorney’s Office or Department of Justice. Events and trainings are not vetted or otherwise endorsed by the USAO or DOJ. Please contact usaor.publicaffairs@usa.doj.gov to submit suggested trainings for our next newsletter.

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Header photo is of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.