

For: State and County Offices

Voting Eligibility of Native American and Alaskan Natives in COC Elections

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

Efforts to involve a larger number of socially disadvantaged voters are being made by USDA this year and for future years. Virtually every Native American/Alaskan Native on a reservation is considered an owner of allotted land. Therefore, each of these individuals is eligible to vote in COC elections.

In some instances, County Offices send a single ballot to the tribal government for the entire community. As a result, there are very few Native American/Alaskan Native COC members. Ballots must be sent to individual Native American/Alaskan Native voters whose name and addresses have been provided by either the tribal government, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or the individual.

B Purpose

This notice informs County Offices to update the eligible voter's list to include Native American/Alaskan Natives wishing to participate in the 2004 COC elections and thereafter.

Disposal Date	Distribution
February 1, 2005	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice AO-1312

2 Action

A State Office Action

SED's, working with STC's, shall instruct DD's, CED's, and COC's in counties having LAA's with Indian reservation land to work with tribal leadership to:

- provide the names and addresses of tribal members for voting and COC participation
- obtain names of Native American/Alaskan Native individuals interested in serving on a COC or serving as an Advisor.

SED's shall consult with appropriate officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or tribal councils to enable County Offices to continually update eligible voter lists.

B County Office Action

CED's working with COC's shall take the following action.

Step	Action
1	Contact BIA and Indian tribal council members to obtain and to update names and addresses of reservation members.
2	Provide the duties and responsibilities of COC members and advisors to the tribal leaders and local BIA office. See 16-AO (Rev. 3), Exhibit 15
3	Send county newsletters and election materials to each eligible voter affiliated with the reservation.
4	Report to SED if attempts are unsuccessful to obtain names and addresses of reservation members from BIA or the tribal council members.