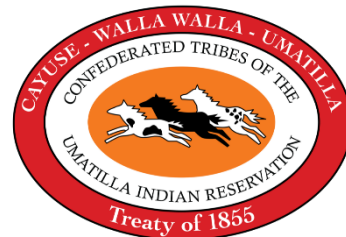


# Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

## PRESS RELEASE



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### DOJ Shares Access to Criminal Information Systems with CTUIR

MISSION – Ensuring U.S. tribal nations are included in the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) efforts to Make America Safe Again, the DOJ is sharing access to certain federal criminal information systems with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR).

In a historic move, the DOJ is sharing access to FBI-maintained criminal history records with the CTUIR’s Department of Education and Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) to conduct background checks on employees and volunteers. The background checks, which include fingerprint records, are also required for all new professional service agreements involving contractors who have significant interactions with children.

This access improves the integrity of the hiring process for the two CTUIR departments, strengthens the tribe’s efforts to protect children, promote public safety and comply with state and federal grant requirements.

“We appreciate the U.S. Department of Justice recognizing the CTUIR’s tribal sovereignty in sharing access into these federal criminal history databases. This allows our employees in Education and DCFS to run more thorough background checks,” CTUIR Board of Trustees Chair N. Kathryn Brigham said. “The more thorough the background checks are, the safer conditions are for people, especially children, who utilize these services.”

Since 2015, the DOJ has provided select tribal government agencies access to FBI Criminal Justice Information Services systems through the Tribal Access Program (TAP) for purposes authorized by Congress.

According to the DOJ, there are 152 tribes with more than 500 tribal government agencies that use TAP to improve public safety in their respective communities. Among other purposes, Congress has authorized

tribal governments to access criminal history record information to conduct background checks for specific purposes such as the screening of prospective foster parents and tribal government employees with access to children.

“Protecting children is among the tribe’s highest priorities, and this expansion of TAP is a great stride in the tribe’s ability to effectively protect children,” DCFS Director Julie Taylor said. “This advancement strengthens the tribe’s ability to conduct more thorough background checks for contractors, foster placements for children and others in trusted positions to care for children. This is a significant step towards the tribe’s effectiveness in providing a safe environment for children, supporting families and promoting the well-being of the community.”

Over time, tribes expressed interest in expanding the types of purposes for which they could access that information for background checks, such as educators and volunteers working in schools and social services.

Congress eventually amended 34 U.S. Code 41101 (sometimes referred to as Public Law 92-544) to provide a means for tribes to enact their own legal authorities that best meet the needs of their respective communities.

*The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Walla Walla and Umatilla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.*

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