



State-Tribal Collaboration Act

FY 2025 Agency Report

New Mexico Workers' Compensation Administration



State of New Mexico

**Workers'
Compensation
Administration**



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A. In FY25, the WCA prioritized strengthening relationships with New Mexico's sovereign tribal nations by participating in the State-Tribal Summit. Through the active involvement of Tribal Liaison Trey Flynt and Santa Fe Field Office Manager Charlene Cde Baca, the WCA worked to establish new lines of communication with tribal representatives and increase understanding of shared jurisdictional challenges.

II. AGENCY OVERVIEW / BACKGROUND

A. Agency Overview.

The New Mexico Workers' Compensation Administration (WCA) is a state agency dedicated to providing swift and effective benefits to injured workers while maintaining reasonable costs for employers. The WCA works to maintain a balance between the interests of workers and employers and maintains jurisdiction over most New Mexico businesses.

B. Mission Statement.

To assure the quick and efficient delivery of indemnity and medical benefits to injured workers at a reasonable cost to employers. As tribal liaison our role is to assist in the overlap in jurisdiction between sovereign nations and the State regulatory matters. The WCA is willing to assist with any questions regarding benefits or compliance with the New Mexico Workers' Compensation Act.

III. AGENCY EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT POLICY

- A. In FY2025, the Workers' Compensation Administration (WCA) took steps to improve awareness and accessibility of its Tribal Collaboration and Communication Policy. All WCA staff were reminded of the agency's obligations under the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA), and trained employees were made available to respond to any tribal inquiries. Copies of the STCA policy are readily available upon request and can also be accessed via the Indian Affairs Department (IAD) website.

Additionally, WCA worked to ensure that its outreach efforts, publications, and Ombudsman Program support equitable access to workers' compensation benefits for members of New Mexico's tribal communities. The agency remains committed to strengthening trust and communication with tribal



members and employers through culturally informed practices and ongoing availability of assistance and information.

IV. CURRENT AND PLANNED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR AMERICAN INDIANS / ALASKA NATIVES

A. Current and Planned Programs/Services.

At this time, the Workers' Compensation Administration (WCA) does not provide specific programs or services targeted solely to American Indian or Alaska Native populations due to jurisdictional limitations. However, the agency remains committed to identifying opportunities for collaboration and service when jurisdiction allows.

B. Accomplishments and Challenges in FY2025.

The WCA continues to prioritize clarity around jurisdictional boundaries and claims resolution involving tribal and non-tribal employers. A key challenge remains navigating sovereignty assertions by tribal entities in cases brought before the WCA Court. Despite this complexity, the agency works diligently to respect tribal sovereignty while promoting access to workers' compensation benefits for all eligible workers.

C. Goals for Fiscal Year 2026.

In the coming year, the WCA aims to build meaningful communication pathways with tribal governments and enterprises. The agency's primary goal is to collaboratively address jurisdictional questions and explore solutions that help ensure tribal and non-tribal employees of tribal enterprises are appropriately covered by workers' compensation insurance. WCA welcomes dialogue with any interested tribe to support the protection and well-being of all workers.

V. TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE NOTIFICATION

A. STCA Training Certification.

The Workers' Compensation Administration (WCA) will coordinate with the State Personnel Office (SPO) to ensure WCA employees have access to STCA-related training. Staff will be encouraged to attend any SPO or other officially recognized training programs as they become available.



B. Employee Notification About STCA.

WCA is committed to making the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA) accessible to all employees. While training has previously been offered, WCA will continue to provide staff—and any members of the public who inquire—with copies of the STCA policy or direct them to the version available on the Indian Affairs Department (IAD) website. Additionally, WCA will explore adding the STCA policy to its own website to further improve access.

VI. KEY NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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VII. APPENDICES:

Copy of Agency Tribal Collaboration and Communication Policy.

