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Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Operation Lady Justice

Background

On November 26, 2019, President Trump signed Executive Order 13898, forming the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives; Co-Chairs are Attorney General William P. Barr and Secretary of the Interior David L. Bernhardt. The Task Force aims to enhance the operation of the criminal justice system and address the legitimate concerns of American Indian and Alaska Native communities regarding missing and murdered people – particularly missing and murdered women and girls.

Task Force Members and Director

Katharine (Katie) Sullivan

*Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice
Designee for the Attorney General*

Tara Sweeney

*Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
Designee for the Secretary of the Interior*

Terry Wade

*Executive Assistant Director
Criminal, Cyber, Response and Services Branch
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice*

Laura Rogers

*Acting Director
Office on Violence Against Women
Department of Justice*

Charles (Charlie) Addington

*Deputy Bureau Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services
Department of the Interior*

Trent Shores

*U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Oklahoma and
Chair of the Native American Issues Subcommittee of the
Attorney General's Advisory Committee
Department of Justice*

Jean (Jeannie) Hovland

*Deputy Assistant Secretary for Native American
Affairs and Commissioner
Administration for Native Americans
Department of Health and Human Services*

Executive Director: Marcia Good

*Senior Counsel to the Director
Office of Tribal Justice
Department of Justice*

Operation Lady Justice Tasks

- ▶ Conduct appropriate consultations with tribal governments on the scope and nature of the issues regarding missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives
- ▶ Develop model protocols and procedures to apply to new and unsolved cases of missing or murdered persons in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, including best practices for:
 - Improving the way law enforcement investigators and prosecutors respond to the high volume of such cases, and to the investigative challenges that might be presented in cases involving female victims
 - Collecting and sharing data among various jurisdictions and law enforcement agencies
 - Better use of existing criminal databases, such as the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) including the National DNA Index System (NDIS)
- ▶ Establish a multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional team including representatives from tribal law enforcement and the Departments of Justice and the Interior to review cold cases involving missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives
- ▶ Address the need for greater clarity concerning roles, authorities, and jurisdiction throughout the lifecycle of cases involving missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives by:
 - Developing and publishing best-practices guidance for use by Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement in cases involving missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, to include best practices related to communication with affected families from initiation of an investigation through case resolution or closure;
 - Facilitating formal agreements or arrangements among Federal, State, local and tribal law enforcement to promote maximally cooperative, trauma-informed responses to cases involving missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives
 - Developing and executing an education and outreach campaign for communities that are most affected by crime against American Indians and Alaska Natives to identify and reduce such crime; and
 - Developing, in partnership with NamUs, a public-awareness campaign to educate both rural and urban communities about the needs of affected families and resources that are both needed and available

Reports

- ▶ By November 26, 2020, the Task Force must develop and submit a written report to the President regarding the activities and accomplishments of the Task Force; the status of projects the Task Force has not yet completed; and specific recommendations for future action of the Task Force.
- ▶ By November 26, 2021, the Task Force must develop and submit a final written report to the President regarding the activities and accomplishments of the Task Force.

