



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

June 11, 2026

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Office of Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (IA), Office of Facilities, Property and Safety Management (OFPSM), Division of Facility Management and Construction (DFMC), invites your participation in Tribal Listening Sessions as part of the effort to modernize correctional facility design guidance across IA, specifically for the following guidelines:

- BIA Justice Detention Facilities Design Handbook
- BIA Justice Detention Facilities Space Criteria
- BIA Justice Detention Facilities Space Templates

The current Justice/Detention Facilities Design Handbook, Space Criteria, and Space Templates were last updated in 2011 and can be accessed at: <https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/ofpsm/dfmc/info>. Since that time, detention operations, building technologies, Tribal justice system needs, and national safety and regulatory requirements have continued to evolve. Modernizing these documents is not a routine update, but a key step in strengthening how IA supports safe, secure, and operationally effective correctional facilities serving Tribal communities.

## **Why Tribal Listening Sessions Matter**

Indian Affairs values Tribal perspectives in shaping the updated design guidance for correctional facilities serving Tribal communities. You have essential knowledge of community needs, operational realities, cultural considerations, and long-term priorities for your justice systems. Your input will directly inform the updated Design Handbook, Space Criteria, and Space Templates to ensure they reflect modern standards while remaining responsive to the needs of Tribal communities.

## **What We Are Evaluating**

As we update the existing guidance, IA is reviewing opportunities to:

- Support more adaptable and efficient facility layouts for Tribal justice systems requirements;
- Strengthen alignment with applicable national standards, safety codes, and regulatory requirements;
- Improve clarity and usability of design guidance; and
- Provide flexibility without compromising safety, security, or compliance.

Our objective is to help ensure Tribal detention centers are safe, code compliant, and operationally efficient while meeting the diverse needs of Tribal justice systems.

### Key Questions for Listening Sessions

To help guide the modernization effort, we ask for your insight on the following refined questions:

1. What facility functions or spaces would benefit from greater adaptability to support Tribal operational needs, programmatic priorities, or changes in population or services?
2. What trends, challenges, or developments in your community or justice system should IA consider when updating correctional facility design guidance?
3. What are the most important factors for ensuring that correctional facilities serving Tribal communities remain safe, secure, and operationally effective?
4. Are there specific areas where current design guidance does not fully support Tribal needs or where clarification or improvement would be helpful?

### Listening Sessions

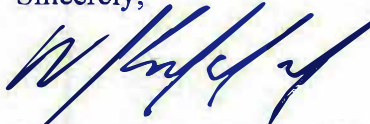
The DFMC will host two 1.5-hour listening sessions to hear directly from Tribal leaders and representatives before beginning updates to the design guidance. Please see the table below for details and advance registration links.

Date	Time	Please Register in Advance at:
July 14, 2026	11:00 am MDT	<a href="https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/fV9VZOL-RsyYASoZEKTNjA">https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/fV9VZOL-RsyYASoZEKTNjA</a>
July 16, 2026	1:00 pm MDT	<a href="https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/e_QGTi5sTd6svU-DPmuWlQ">https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/e_QGTi5sTd6svU-DPmuWlQ</a>

Written comments may be submitted to [consultation@bia.gov](mailto:consultation@bia.gov) by August 21, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact [consultation@bia.gov](mailto:consultation@bia.gov) or Adam Drozek, Branch Chief, Public Safety & Justice Construction by email at [adam.drozek@bia.gov](mailto:adam.drozek@bia.gov).

We look forward to your input and appreciate your partnership in strengthening correctional facility design for Tribal communities.

Sincerely,



William Henry Kirkland III  
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs