Welcome! We will begin shortly.

Audio: To choose your audio connection, click on the audio icon at the bottom of the screen.

Slides/Materials: https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/topics/webinars

Live Transcription: Click Live Transcript and select Show Subtitle.

ASL Interpretation: You can pin the interpreter video by selecting the three dots in the upper right corner of their video.

For additional assistance, contact us at soar@prainc.com.



SOAR Enhances Income Stability in Native Communities

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SOAR Technical Assistance Center Policy Research Associates, Inc.



Disclaimer

The views, opinions, and content expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).



Webinar Instructions

- Slides/Materials: Available now at https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/topics/webinars
- Recording: Will be available within 1 week
- Questions: Please submit questions using the Q&A feature
- All participant lines will be muted and the chat feature is disabled
- Evaluation: Browser will redirect to survey following the webinar



Purpose and Objectives

- Learn about best practices for engaging and working with Native individuals to complete SOAR-assisted SSI/SSDI applications
- Understand the unique challenges and opportunities of working with Native applicants and within Native communities
- Share best practices for engaging with and gaining buy-in for SOAR from Native communities in both urban and rural settings



Agenda

Presenters

- Abigail Kirkman, MA, Assistant Director, SAMHSA SOAR TA Center
- Kim Vigue (Menominee/Oneida), MS, Managing Partner, Wolf River Consulting Group
- Rose David (Ojibway, Chimnissing First Nation), Partner, Wolf River
 Consulting Group
- Mylene Widner (Apsáalooke Nation (Crow), Turtle Mountain Chippewa /Plains Cree of Canada), SOAR Case Worker and PATH Liaison, South Central Mental Health Center, Billings, Montana

Questions and Answers

Facilitated by the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center



Welcome!

Asha Stanly, MSW, LICSW
Government Project Officer
Division of State and Community Systems Development
Center for Mental Health Services
SAMHSA SOAR TA Center



SAMHSA SOAR TA Center: Overview of AI/AN Tools and Resources

Abigail Kirkman, MA
Assistant Director
SAMHSA SOAR TA Center
Policy Research Associates, Inc.
Delmar, New York



SOAR Tools and Resources for Native Communities



Q: Are American Indians and Alaska Natives eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits? Yes! American Indians and Alaska Natives (Al/AN) may be eligible for SSI and/or SSD benefits if they meet from receiving Social Security eligibility with the Computer of the Computer

Q: Are American Indian and Alaska Native children (under the age of 18) eligible for SSI?

Yes, AI/AN children experiencing disabiling health conditions such as developmental disabilities, serious mental illness, trauma, and/or medical issues may qualify for SSI if they meet SAKs medical and non-medical eligibility criteria. Access to income and health insurance can help improve the entire family's stability by helping the family meet its basic needs, gain access to treatment, and build resiliency during the recovery process. You can find more information about SSI for Children at https://www.sas.agov/ssi/ext-child-ussi.htm.

Q: How can American Indians and Alaska Natives who are living on reservations or native lands or within urban areas access SSA services? There are several ways to contact the Social Security Administration (SSA)

- By phone (toll-free): 1-800-772-1214
- Online: https://www.ssa.gov/
- Use the online locator to find a Social Security office near you¹
- Video Service Delivery (VSD) Centers have been set up in some communities. At a VSD Center, an applicant can use the video phone to see and talk to an SSA employee²

Q: What is SSA doing to collaborate with tribal governments?

SSA established a formal consultation process with tribal governments in 2001. The Deputy Commissioner of Operations service as the Tribal Consultation Official and liaison with federally recognized tribal governments. SSA annually reviews its regulatory agenda and legislative submissions to determine if any proposals have tribal implications. The 2020 Tribal Consultation Progress Report, which describes all of SSA's ongoing communication, education and outreach activities, can be found on their website.³

Q: If an American Indian or Alaska Native individual is receiving SSI and also receives an annual cash allotment from his or her tribe, does it need to be reported to SSA?

Yes. Because SSI is needs-based, SSA considers an applicant's earned and unearned income. If an SSI beneficiary receives an annual cash allotment from his or her tribe, it should be reported

- 1 SSA Field Office Locator: https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp
- 2 SSA Video Service Delivery Locations, by Region: https://www.ssa.gov/open/maps/AIAN_details.html
- 3 Tribal Consultation and Coordination Plan: https://www.ssa.gov/people/aian/materials/pdfs/tribal-con-plan.pdf



OAR WORKS Getting Involved with SOAR in Tribal Communities:

You want to be a SOAR provider? That's great! Here's what to expect.

SOAR promotes recovery and wellness through increased access to Social Security disability benefits for eligible American indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-curring substance use disorder SOAA providers assist individuals with complete and quality applications. This is not an easy task, but we believe it is well worth the effort!

Training

The SOAR Online Course trains providers to assist individuals with the Social Security disability application process. The course includes an Adult Curriculum for assisting with Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) claims for adults and a Child Curriculum for assisting with SSI claims for children (under the age of 18).

- The SOAR Online Course: Adult and Child Curricula are free and are located on the SOARWorks website (https://soarworks.prainc.com/content/soar-online-course-catalog).
- Each curriculum consists of seven classes, each of which has a series of articles, short quizzes, and a practice case component. The practice case provides an opportunity for trainees to apply what they have learned in the course by completing a sample application packet for a fictitious applicant using SOAR techniques.
- It takes approximately 20 hours to complete each curriculum and participants can work at their own pace, starting and stopping as they wish. However, we encourage students to complete the curriculum within 30 days to retain the information learned.
- Upon successful completion, participants will receive 20 continuing education units from the National Association of Social Workers.

Many SOAR Local Leads offer 1-day SOAR Online Course Review Sessions to review key components of the curriculum, discuss tribia, is tate and local practices, and connect new providers to local Social Security, Administration (SSA) and Disability Determination Services (DDS) offices.

Time Commitment

We estimate that each SOAR application will take approximately 20-40 hours to complete, from initial engagement to receiving a decision on a claim. This generally occurs over the course of 60-90 days.

The time spent on each application will vary depending on the amount of engagement
that is needed as well as other variables such as the experience level of the SOAR
worker. For example, engagement with an applicant who is residing in an institution may
take 20 hours, while it may take longer to connect with someone who is living outside or
difficult to contact.

SOAR Critical Components

SOAR providers with higher approval rates credit their success to implementing the SOAR critical components¹ and submitting high-quality applications. Use of these components significantly

https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/soar-model-critical-components



(OAR WORKS

Implementing State and Local SOAR Initiatives in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

State, Local, and Tribal Leads spearhead and coordinate the implementation of SOAR initiatives. These leaders identify and engage stakeholders to participate in steering committees whose goal is to create and implement a SOAR action plan to support adult and child applications for Social Security disability benefits. These committees meet regularly to collaborate, report on progress, and troubleshoot challenges.

Introduce SOAD to Your Community

- Identify and engage state, local, and tribal agencies and stakeholders to participate in your
 community's SOAR initiative. Educate and inform them about the purpose and benefits of SOAR
 for individuals in your community with disabilities.
- · Offer SOAR Orientation presentations for tribal and organizational leadership and direct service providers.
- Attend existing community meetings and share information about the importance and impact of SOAR.
- Train and Support Staff That Assist Adult SSI/SSDI and/or Child SSI Applicants

 Identify programs and organizations within your community that are currently assisting adults,
 children, and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness with Social Security (slasbility
 applications. Explore reallocation of existing resources to incorporate fully or partially dedicated
 SOAR benefits specialists.
- Identify staff to complete the SOAR Online Course: Adult and/or Child Curriculum. Provide guidance throughout and following the training. Inform trainees of any state/local/tribal-specific processor.
- Establish quality review procedures to assess fidelity to the SOAR model and ensure that
 applications are complete and high quality. Get feedback from SSA/DDS on SOAR-assisted
 applications they are receiving.

Collaborate, Coordinate, and Communicate

- Social Security Administration (SSA) and Disability Determination Services (DDS): Negotiate a SOAR Process for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) adult SSI/SSIO and child SSI application submission. Identify SSA/DDS SOAR laisons in local and tribal offices.
- Medical Providers: Identify medical providers who can provide physical/psychiatric evaluations and co-sign Medical Summary Reports. Explore using retroactive Medicaid to reimburse for medical evaluations. Set up a process to obtain medical records. free of charge if possible.
- Other Collaborations: Think broadly! Include tribal administrators, school leadership, vocational service providers, Tribal Indian Child Welfare departments, tribal family services, tribal economic support, housing agencies, jails/prisons, Veteran services, and representative payee services.

Track and Report Outcomes

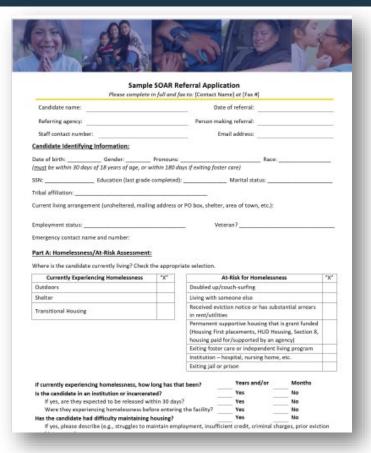
- Identify tracking mechanism to be used—e.g., SOAR Online Application Tracking System.
- . Establish procedures for the reporting of outcomes by communities and SOAR-trained staff.
- Report outcomes to the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center as requested.

Fund and Sustain

- · Use your outcomes to expand or sustain your SOAR initiative.
- Educate stakeholders, influential tribal leaders, tribal social service leadership, tribal grant offices, and potential funders about the impact SOAR has in your tribal community. Share success stories; report on cost savings (reimbursement/recoupment totals).
- Explore various funding sources. Consider use of federal funds (e.g., PATH, CABHI, Systems
 of Care); pool and/or realign existing resources; explore al/Alon organizations and community
 foundations, United Way, corporations, and hospital collaborations; and investigate criminal or
 iuvenile iuxtice funding to implement SOAR in iails, prisons, or detention facilities.



SOAR Referral and Medical Summary Report





Medical Summary Report Interview Guide and Template for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

The Medical Summary Report (MSR) Interview Guide provides sample questions and guidance for gathering information necessary to the SSI/SSDI disability determination process. We do not expect you to ask all of the questions in each section. The questions are intended to help you gather all of the information you will need to write a Medical Summary Report. For example, if the individual has not been in military service, there is no need to include a military history section. Likewise, if the individual has no legal issues, do not include a legal history section.

Using this guidance, SOAR-trained providers are able to gather a thorough history in a respectful manner, which in turn helps the Disability Determination Services (DOS) understand the duration of a person's impairment and the effect of their illness(es) on work ability and functioning. The MSR Template may be used to compile information in the form of a narrative letter to SSA/DDS as part of the SOAR process. The template has eight main sections, covering the types of information that DDS needs to make a decision. Use the headings provided in the template to organize your MSR.

Trauma-Informed Interviewing

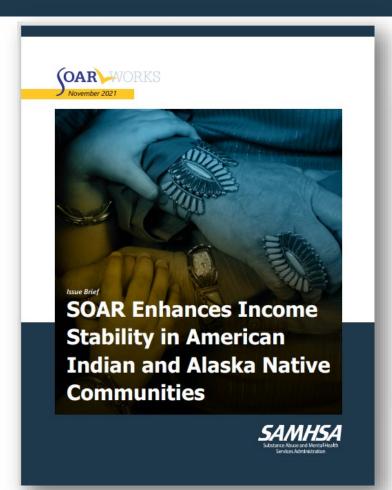
How questions are asked can be critical to obtaining the appropriate information. It is important to be sensitive to influences that affect a person's ability and willingness to provide information (cultural factors, past experiences with the mental health system, etc.). The interviewing process can also uncover sensitive topics like past and current trauma that need to be approached with care. When asking about trauma, it is critical to not overwhelm the applicant. It is equally important that the person be safe and secure after leaving the interview. Gathering such personal information requires a sensitive and skilled interviewer.



SOAR Tip: Interviewers who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to explore certain topics should not do so. Instead, they should seek assistance from someone who is more clinically skilled and more able to assess responses, to ensure that the person is safe from self-harm and/or emotional distress when the interview ends.



Issue Brief



CONTENTS

Framing the Issue4	ł
Understanding SSI/SSDI5	
SSA's Definition of Disability5	
SSDI/SSDI for AI/AN People	
Accessing SSA Services in AI/AN Communities	
Using SOAR to Increase Access to SSI/SSDI8	
Engaging Native Communities in the SSI/SSDI Application Process9	
Building Resilience: Encouraging Return to Work10	
Resources	
Working with the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center	
to Enhance SOAR Implementation13	
Endnotes 14	



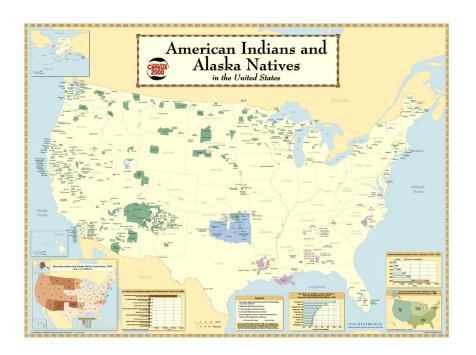




Rose David, Partner Ojibwe, Chimnissing First Nation Rose.David@wolfriverconsulting.com



Kim Vigue, Partner *Menominee/Oneida*Kim.Vigue@wolfriverconsulting.com



Understanding the Native Communities We Serve

- •574 Federally recognized ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse Nations (Tribes, Nations, Bands, Pueblos, Communities, Native Villages) in the United States.
 - 229 of these federally recognized Nations are in Alaska
 - 345 remaining federally recognized nations are in 35 states.
 - 60+ state recognized tribes in 13 states with formal relationships with state government

Understanding the Native Communities We Serve

Population

5.2 Million people identify as American Indian or Alaska Native

Residence

7 in 10 of live in urban, suburban, and non-reservation lands

Age

Indian Country is young with 29% of Native people under 18 years

Poverty

26.8% live in poverty compared to national rate of 4.6%

Sanitation

9.5% of homes lack access to safe water supply and/or waste disposal facilities

Mobility/Mortality

Life expectancy 4.2 years less than other races (liver disease, diabetes, injuries, assault, self harm, suicide)



Understanding Tribal Sovereignty

Tribal nations right to ongoing self-government of their lands, jurisdictions, and communities

Nationhood status allows government-to-government relationship at state and federal level

Ensures decisions regarding tribe are made with participation and consent

Trust responsibility to protect self-governance and provide federal assistance to ensure success of tribes

Using Appropriate Terminology



Native American or American Indian?

 American Indian, Indian, Native American, Indigenous, or Native are acceptable and often used interchangeably in the United States

Tribe or Nation?

- Used interchangeably but hold different meanings
- •Tribes have more than one name because Europeans used inaccurate pronunciations of the tribal names or renamed the tribes (often derogatory)

Indian is a Legal Term

- •To be deemed "Indian" by the Federal Government signifies a political status and is not a racial classification
- "Indian Country" is recognized by US law: reservations, informal reservations, dependent Indian communities, allotments, and special designations

Tips

- Avoid generalizations
- Use present tense and contemporary examples
- Always ask how the individual or community wants to be described



Urban Indian Communities



More than 75% of AI/AN live outside of tribal lands

Nearly 7 out of every 10 AI/ANs live in or near cities

Poverty rate: 20.3% (AI/AN) vs 12.7% (non-Native)

Unemployment rate: 1.7 times higher (AI/AN) than non-Natives

Homelessness: AI/AN 3x more likely to lack housing



Challenges for Native Youth in Indian Country

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death (2.5x the national rate) for Native youth

1 in 9 Native youth have reported suicide attempt

High school graduation rate among Native students is 74% vs 94% for white students.

Native youth are arrested at rate 3x the rate of national average and make up 79% of the Federal Bureau of Prison's youth population.

Native youth represent 8.4% of the foster care population.

Violence (intentional injuries, suicide, and homicide) account for 75% of deaths among Native youth.

References:

https://www.cnay.org/resource-hub/fast-facts/ https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/american-indians-and-crime-bjs-statistical-profile-1992-2002



Homelessness in Native Communities

AI/AN have the 2nd highest rate of homelessness compared to other racial groups

1 in 200 AI/ANs are homeless vs 1 in 1,000 in US population

Over 10% of AI/ANs in SD, ND, AK, NM, MN are experiencing homelessness

Housing Conditions in Native Communities





99.8 of tribal housing officials reported doubling up (taking in family and friends)

One third of homes on reservations overcrowded or severely crowded

40% of homes are considered substandard Lacking public sewer system, water, electrical, phone

wolf river

Factors Contributing to Poverty, Substance Use, and Homelessness

HISTORICAL TRAUMA EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

Colonization Depression and suicide

Forced Removal Poverty

Boarding Schools Incarceration

Assimilation policies Abuse and neglect

Relocation Violence

Racism Substance abuse

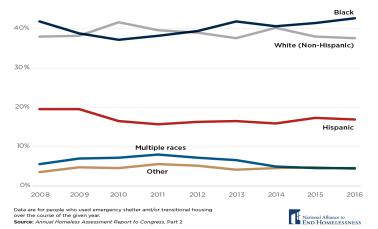
Discrimination Post traumatic stress disorder



Data Collection and Invisibility

Racial Disparities in Sheltered Homelessness Are Not Improving Over Time

Share of total annual population using shelter, by race and ethnicity, 2008-2016



Native communities undercounted or omitted in data collection

Accurate data is limited

Invisibility leads to marginalization in public policies and funding



Supportive Federal Agencies & Services



Bureau of Indian Affairs

- Tribal Government
- Safety
- Self-determination
- Social services
- Justice
- Housing improvement



Indian Health Service

- Reservation hospitals and clinics
- Urban Indian health programs
- Medical care
- Behavioral health
- Substance abuse



Housing and Urban Development

- Tribal housing
- Community development
- Grants and loans
- Tribal veterans supportive housing



Health and Human Services

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Temporary
 Assistance for
 Needy Families
 (TANF)



Social Security Administration

- Retirement disability
- SSI benefits
- Survivor benefits
- Video Delivery Centers on Tribal Lands

Governance & Delivery of Services

Public Law No. 93-638

- Increases control of programs and solutions implemented on tribal lands
- Transfer of funding and management from federal government to tribes

BIA and IHS System of Care

- Service to approximately 2 million AI/ANs
 - Federally-operated
 - Tribally operated
 - Urban Indian Organizations



How are Services Provided?

Behavioral Health Care Service Systems

- Facilities operated directly by Indian Health Service (IHS)
- Facilities operated by tribes through contracts and compacts with IHS
- Programs managed by urban Indian health programs to provide services for eligible American Indian and Alaska Natives (member of Federally recognized tribe) in urban areas

Federal Support Programs

•Grant programs and initiatives provided to tribes or nonprofit organizations to address suicide prevention, substance abuse, youth violence prevention, mental health services, childhood trauma, traditional healing practices etc.

Availability of Services

- Vary by location, most IHS facilities on reservations in rural areas
- Access to care limited for urban populations (UIOs, referrals)
- Distance, transportation barriers, and childcare limit access to adequate services

Strengthening Capacity to Serve: Federal Level Engagement

Federally Recognized Tribes

• Tribal Leaders Directory: https://www.bia.gov/tribal-leaders-directory

Indian Health Service Facilities

https://www.ihs.gov/locations/

Urban Indian Organizations

• https://www.ihs.gov/urban/urban-indian-organizations/





Strengthening Capacity to Serve: Tribal Level Engagement

Tribal Council

Tribal Hospitals and Clinics

Social Services

Child and Family Services

Behavior Health

Disability Services

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Indian Child Welfare (ICWA)

Law Enforcement

Common Services and Supports Provided by Native Communities

PROGRAMS	WHO TO CONTACT
Housing Authority	Housing Authority Director
Behavioral Health Department	Behavioral Health Providers
Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Programs	Disability Benefit Specialists
Social Service Divisions	Social Workers/Case Managers
Tribal Government	Tribal Leadership for MOU's/ Cooperative Agreements
Urban Indian Centers and Organizations	Clinic Director

Culturally
Appropriate
Engagement and
Collaboration
with Native
Communities

Understand

Understand that each Native community are unique

• Be aware of cultural, linguistic and spiritual diversity, cultural customs, and perspectives

Identify and engage

Identify and engage tribal liaisons to establish relationship with the community and leadership

• Create a receptive environment with offering for their time (food, coffee, small gifts of appreciation)

Learn about Learn about elected, traditional, spiritual leadership and decision makers

- Learn how to address them appropriately
- Understand protocols for communication

Culturally Appropriate Engagement and Collaboration with Native Communities

Show Cultural Humility

Approach communities with positive intent Be open to other ways of thinking and behaving

Listen and Observe

Pay attention and observe tribal members are experts on their own community

Be Patient

Rapport and trust do not come easily. Do not take it personally if you experience initial suspicious or frustration

Use a Tribal Perspective

Avoid using a Western, non-Native perspective



Culturally Appropriate Engagement and Collaboration with Native Communities

Incorporate Culturally Based Practices

 Research and utilize culturally, communitybased practices along with evidence-based practices Reinforce Cultural Strengths

 Learn community protective factors and incorporate community traditions into programming Honor Confidentiality

 Respect the right of the tribe to control information, data and public information about services Be Flexible

 Adapt to the community's pace, changing needs and traditions



Best Practices for Delivering Your Messages



Understand technological access to determine appropriate communications channels
Lack of reliable internet service

Lack of reliable internet service in many communities

Use of cell phones and mobile devices

Digital access limited to tribal offices, library or schools



Consider all forms of communication when engaging your audience

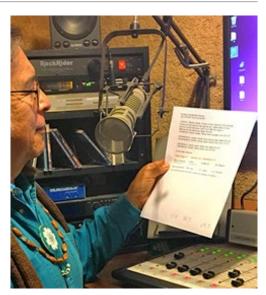
Word of mouth

Print materials

Tribal radio

Social media

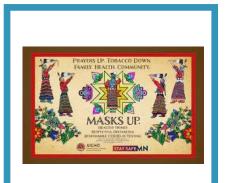
Mobile friendly website and apps, Text messaging, Television

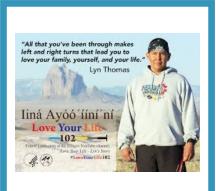




Best Practices for Engaging Your Audience

- Seek help from Native youth and the community to shape your messages and materials
- Use trusted members of the community to deliver your messages
- Incorporate tribally specific photographs of people and locations, cultural designs, and artwork that will resonate with the community
- Include words, phrases and messages in the Native community's language or dialect
- Always get approval from leadership to distribute your messages and materials









Questions?

Contact

Kim Vigue

Wolf River Consulting Group

Kim.vigue@wolfriverconsulting.com

Rose David

Wolf River Consulting Group

Rose.David@wolfriverconsulting.com

The Impact of SOAR in Native Communities in Montana

Mylene Widner (Apsáalooke Nation (Crow), Descendent of Turtle Mountain Chippewa and Plains Cree of Canada)

SOAR Case Worker and PATH Liaison South Central Mental Health Center Billings, Montana



Working with Indigenous People

- Serving individuals through the SOAR Process requires an awareness of the political and legal status of American Indians.
 - For indigenous people, an awareness of the relationship between the United States Government, and each tribal population.
- American Indians and Alaska Natives are not only U.S. citizens, but they are also citizens of their state and tribal nation.



Collecting Records and Vital Documents

- Many applicants may have a history of services with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Social Services Office.
- It will be helpful to:
 - Identify family contacts
 - Establish an educational history (IEP, records from a federal or state school system)
 - Provide collaboration with mental health and medical providers
 - Identify contract services used from behavioral health and residential care facilities



Collecting Records and Vital Documents

- Organizations to assist with locating records:
 - Informational Officers (Area Office Level) can help you manage archive record searches (7 years and older)
 - Regional Indian Health Services (IHS) Hospitals
 - Local Clinics (Service Units)
 - Tribal Health Clinics, Prevention Programs, and Wellness Centers
 - Tribal Recovery Programs



Completing SOAR Applications

- Engagement is key!
- Establish trust
- Work collaboratively with the applicant to apply for SSI/SSDI



Thank You

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

Mylene Widner mwidner@scmrmhc.org

www.samhsa.gov

1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) • 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)

Poll Question

- If you are interested in learning more about working with Native applicants and within Native communities, please provide your Name / State / Email.
- This question will also be on the webinar evaluation.



Questions and Answers

Please type your questions into the Q&A box.





AI/AN Tools and Resources

- SOAR Works Website: Articles, Issues Briefs,
 Webinars:
 - https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/topics/americ an- indians-alaska-natives
- Bureau of Indian Affairs: https://www.bia.gov
- Indian Health Services: https://www.ihs.gov



Webinar Evaluation

- At the conclusion of the webinar, you will be automatically redirected to a survey.
- Please click "Continue" when you receive this message:

Thank you for attending the Webinar.

Please click Continue to participate in a short survey.

you will be leaving zoom.us to access the external URL below https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VNJHSXG

Are you sure you want to continue?

Continue Stay on zoom.us



Thank You

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.



www.samhsa.gov

1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) ● 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)