



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT *of* JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office  
District of Oregon

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2021

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**U.S. Attorney's Office Joins in Recognizing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day, May 5, 2021**

PORLAND, Ore.—On May 4, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden Jr. proclaimed today, May 5, 2021, as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day.

The [proclamation](#) reaffirmed the nation's commitment to solving all missing and murdered Indigenous persons cases and addressing the underlying causes of these crimes, including sexual violence, human trafficking, domestic violence, violent crime, systemic racism, economic disparities, and substance use and addition.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon joins its Tribal, federal, state, and local law enforcement partners in taking this opportunity to highlight the importance of supporting Tribal crime victims and synthesizing investigative leads and information across government and law enforcement agencies.

"The first step in seeking justice for missing and murdered Tribal victims is acknowledging the historical indifference to and neglect of these tragic cases. A lack of data and jurisdictional gaps have caused many solvable cases to go unsolved" said Acting U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug. "Today's commemoration reminds us of the hard work still to be done. We must not stop until we give every missing and murdered Tribal victim a voice and bring some degree of peace and comfort to their families."

In June 2020, the U.S. Attorney's Office [announced](#) the hiring of its first Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) program coordinator. In February 2021, the office [released](#) its first annual MMIP program report, summarizing what is known about missing and murdered Indigenous people in Oregon and outlining the office's plans and goals for the year ahead. The report was the first of its kind produced by a U.S. Attorney's Office. Recently, the office began working with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to develop a Tribal Community Response Plan as part of a Department of Justice pilot project.

MMIP is an important and sensitive issue to Tribal communities. Addressing MMIP in Indian Country is particularly challenging due to jurisdictional issues, lack of coordination and inadequate resources. However, for the first time in U.S. history, a national federal strategy—formalized by [legislation](#), [executive order](#), and [departmental directive](#)—is in place to address MMIP issues.

If you or someone you know have information about missing or murdered Indigenous people in Oregon, please contact the FBI Portland Field Office by calling (503) 224-4181 or by visiting [tips.fbi.gov](http://tips.fbi.gov).

If you have questions about the U.S. Attorney's Office MMIP program, please contact MMIP program coordinator Cedar Wilkie Gillette by emailing [Cedar.Wilkie.Gillette@usdoj.gov](mailto:Cedar.Wilkie.Gillette@usdoj.gov) or by calling (503) 727-1000.

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