

Press Release



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New HUD Website Strips Critical Access for Tribes: A Direct Violation of Tribal Sovereignty

New Orleans, LA — The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has launched a new version of its HUD.gov website, claiming to focus on “Americans’ experiences” to improve service delivery. However, in doing so, HUD has eliminated access to the Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) webpages—critical resources that Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) rely on to administer federally funded housing programs.

This change has effectively erased public access to essential documents and systems, including Public and Indian Housing (PIH) Notices, program regulations, funding formula information, and most importantly, access to ELOCCS—the Electronic Line of Credit Control System used to draw down federal housing funds. These resources are not supplemental; they are essential tools for tribes exercising their sovereign right to self-govern their housing programs.

“This is not modernization—it is erasure,” said Brandi Liberty (Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska/United Houma Nation), a Tribal Housing Consultant and CEO of The Luak Group. “By removing ONAP from public view and burying Native housing program resources, HUD has undermined the trust responsibility and violated the principles of tribal sovereignty.”

Tribes are federally recognized sovereign nations with the legal authority to manage and operate their own housing programs under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA). For decades, ONAP has served as a crucial point of access for tribal communities to receive federal guidance, financial tools, and technical assistance. The new HUD.gov layout disregards this relationship and excludes tribal nations from the broader vision of “Americans” being served

“Secretary Turner’s statement about focusing on ‘Americans’ experiences’ fails to recognize that Native Americans are sovereign nations—not just citizens in need of services, but governments managing their own housing infrastructure,” Liberty continued. “This shift diminishes our nation-to-nation relationship and treats our sovereignty as an afterthought.”

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The inability to easily access ELOCCS or up-to-date guidance disrupts housing development timelines, delays payments to contractors, and jeopardizes compliance with federal deadlines. Many TDHEs are in the final phases of obligating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or competitive grant funding—any delay puts these dollars, and the homes they would build, at risk.

Tribal leaders and housing professionals are calling for immediate action to:

1. Restore ONAP's visibility and access on the HUD website;
2. Provide direct links to Native housing program materials and ELOCCS access;
3. Consult with tribal leaders before any further digital or administrative restructuring;
4. Issue a formal apology and corrective plan for how HUD will repair this breach in its trust responsibility.

"This is more than a web redesign," said Liberty. "It's a deeply harmful decision that cuts tribes off from the tools they need to govern. Sovereignty must be respected—in policy, in practice, and yes, even online."

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