



**Catawba Indian Nation
Rock Hill, South Carolina
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Codification of Criminal Code for the Catawba Indian Nation Tribal Courts

1. Overview

The Catawba Indian Nation (the "CIN"), is seeking proposals from qualified individuals or firms with a legal background and demonstrated experience in codifying criminal codes. Prior experience working with tribal governments is strongly preferred. This work will support the establishment and operation of a misdemeanor magistrate-level Tribal Court, guided by the restorative justice principles.

The selected contractor will codify portions of the South Carolina Criminal Code for use by the Catawba Indian Nation Tribal Courts, ensuring that all materials are organized, accessible, and culturally appropriate.

2. Background

The CIN is the only federally recognized Native American tribe in the state of South Carolina. The Catawba Indians have lived on their ancestral lands along the banks of the Catawba River dating back at least 6000 years. Before contact with the Europeans, it is believed that the tribe inhabited most of the Piedmont area of South Carolina, North Carolina and the southern parts of Virginia. Our 1000-acre reservation is located on two non-contiguous parcels of land approximately eight miles east of Rock Hill, South Carolina, in the center of an area that once comprised Catawba territory. The CIN currently owns 1,727 acres of land in North Carolina and South Carolina, with approximately 1,165 held in trust.

In 1993, the CIN won its fight for federal recognition with the passage of the Catawba Land Claims Settlement Act. The Act not only restored the Federal Trust relationship between the CIN and the Federal Government but also marked the path for self-governance.

The CIN provides services for approximately 4,200 enrolled tribal members in the areas of legal and justice services, public safety, housing, natural resources, environmental services, public works, community services, cultural preservation, economic development, planning and development, transit services, public works, land management, realty, medical and dental care, wellness, behavioral health, tribal home visiting, childcare, youth development, social services, family services, and senior programming. The elected leaders of the CIN oversee the following tribal entities:

- a. **Tribal Government Offices:** Encompassing all the unique divisions and departments within the tribe's structure, as well as the supporting services to operate those programs, the Tribal Government Offices consists of ten division's including: (i) Government; (ii) Finance; (iii) Shared Services; (iv) Legal; (v) Public Safety; (vi) Tribal Resources; (vii) Community Development (viii) Planning and Development; (ix) Health and Human Services; and (x) Family Development

and Wellness. With the tremendous growth that the Tribe has witnessed over the last several years, CIN is currently undergoing an organizational wide restructure.

- b. **Catawba Corporations:** The CORPS serves as the principal economic arm of the CIN. Through its operations, the CORPS enables the CIN to be self-sufficient and provides economic support for the CIN's citizens through employment and business opportunities. The business affairs of the CORPS are separate from the CIN's governmental operations.
- c. **Gaming Authority:** The Gaming Authority is the governing arm of the CIN's casino and gaming operations in the Carolinas. Currently, the Gaming Authority's portfolio includes Catawba Two Kings Casino, located in Kings Mountain, North Carolina (near the South Carolina border and approximately thirty-three (33) miles west of Charlotte).
- d. **Service Unit:** The Service Unit includes the medical and dental clinic located on the Reservation; it is run under the authority of Indian Health Services (IHS).
- e. **Iswa HeadStart:** Iswa HeadStart oversees the Iswa Early Learning Center and HeadStart programs and manages a comprehensive early childhood program serving children from birth to five (5) years of age and their families.

The CIN welcomes change for the betterment of our great Nation and its people. The vision and mission of the CIN empowers our people to become an economically thriving community whose citizens embrace their cultural heritage, enjoy strong self-esteem, lead successful lives, and are fully prepared for a future of continuing opportunities and challenges. Tribal leadership promotes the Catawba's rich culture; works to ensure collective and individual self-sufficiency; promotes excellence in education; provides quality opportunities for health, social, and economic well-being of its citizens; and conducts its affairs with great integrity and commitment.

We show pride in our past our past by embracing our culture and sharing it with others. The CIN presently has a wide variety of programs and services available to enhance the lives of our citizens. As the Tribe prepares for the future growth through education, economic development and strategic planning, we recognize the need to exercise Tribal sovereignty to adopt Criminal Codes and Procedures ("Criminal Code"), which reflect the values and rich culture of the CIN and the Catawba people.

The purpose of this codification of a Criminal Code is to enable the Catawba Indian Nation to establish and operate a magistrate-level criminal court. This initiative supports the Nation's goal of exercising greater self-governance by providing a legal framework for handling lower-level criminal offenses within its sovereign territory. This sovereign territory includes the CIN's trust land located in South Carolina, where much of the Tribe's population resides, as well as trust land located in North Carolina, where the Catawba Two Kings Casino is located, which will draw millions of visitors every year.

The Criminal Code must be drafted to recognize the Tribe's particular authority on its South Carolina trust lands under the Catawba Land Claims Settlement Act, as well as the full sovereign authority available to the Tribe on its North Carolina trust lands under general tribal criminal jurisdiction. The Criminal Code must provide for jurisdiction over members of the CIN, and jurisdiction over non-member Indians under 25 U.S.C. § 1301. The Criminal Code must provide procedures for the exercise of authority by tribal police officers to temporarily detain and search non-Indian individuals on the trust lands and traveling on public rights-of-way through the trust lands if there is reasonable suspicion of a state or federal law violation, under *United States v. Cooley*, 593 U.S. ____ (2021), as well as procedures for banishment and removal of non-Indian offenders from Tribal land. The Criminal Code also needs to contain the necessary provisions to permit the Tribe to seek "Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction" under the Violence Against Women Act under 25 U.S.C. § 1304, *et. seq.*

3. Scope of Work

The individual or firm will be responsible for the following tasks and activities:

- a. **Support Tribal Vision and Mission**
 - Understand and actively engage in the successful implementation of the Catawba Indian Nation's vision and mission throughout the codification process.
 - Understand the unique nature of criminal authority granted to the CIN over its trust lands in South Carolina by the Catawba Land Claims Settlement Act.
 - Understand the unique problems related to the CIN's jurisdiction over its trust lands in North Carolina.
- b. **Legal Analysis and Adaptation**
 - Review and interpret the South Carolina Criminal Code, North Carolina statutes, and other legal sources to identify criminal provisions suitable for a magistrate-level court operation under tribal jurisdiction.
 - Research and explore Catawba traditions related to justice and conflict resolution.
 - Review criminal justice solutions enacted by other Native American tribes, such as the Navajo, Choctaw, or Miccosukee.
 - Synthesize the codifications of non-Tribal criminal law with the values and traditions of the Catawba.
 - Recommend adaptations to non-tribal criminal laws that would better align with the Catawba Indian Nation's legal authority and restorative justice model.
- c. **Codification and Organization**
 - Structure and organize selected legal codes and court procedures in a manner that is logical, user-friendly, and legally sound.
 - Ensure clarity and usability for Tribal Court personnel and accessibility for community members.
- d. **Regular Consultation and Collaboration**
 - Meet regularly (weekly or bi-weekly, depending on availability) with the Director of Justice Services, Legal Department, Procurement Director, and Controller to review drafts, provide updates, and incorporate feedback.
 - Meet with other stakeholders in the criminal justice system, as needed, to receive input and suggestions.

4. Proposal Requirements

Interested parties must submit no fewer than three (3) hard copies of their proposal. The proposal must include the following components:

- a. **Cover Letter**
 - Addressed to Meredith Jolin, Director of Justice Services
- b. **Narrative of Experience and Qualifications**
 - Provide a detailed narrative describing the applicant's or firm's experience in codifying criminal laws.
 - Include a resume for the principal individual who will provide direct services.
 - Demonstrate understanding and experience with tribal sovereignty and tribal criminal jurisdiction.
 - Describe prior work with tribal governments or justice systems, and list types of organizations served.
 - Provide examples of programs supported through legal or policy development services.

- c. Writing Sample
 - An excerpt (no more than five [5] pages) from a policy or legal document authored by the applicant.
- d. References
 - Contact information for a minimum of two (2) clients who can speak about the applicant's qualifications and experience.
- e. Cost Proposal
 - An outline of the proposed fees or pricing structure, including hourly rates, flat fees, or other applicable cost formats.

5. Submission Details

Proposals must be submitted in hard copy (minimum of three [3] copies). All proposals must be received no later than:

5:00 pm on September 2, 2025

Please deliver proposals to:

Catawba Indian Nation
Attn: Meredith Jolin
996 Avenue of the Nations Rock Hill, SC 29730

Late submissions will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure delivery by the deadline.

6. Evaluation

The Catawba Indian Nation will review all submitted proposals. The criteria by which an individual or firm will be chosen include the following:

- a. Experience and Qualifications.
- b. Proposed Work Plan.
- c. Cost Estimate.
- d. Timeline.
- e. References and Past Performance; and
- f. Tribal Preference.

Depending on the proposals received, the CIN may conduct interviews with top-ranked applicants. If interviews are not necessary, a ranking will be determined, and contract negotiations will begin with the highest-ranked candidate.

7. Schedule

The project is anticipated to commence on or about September 29, 2025, and will continue until completed.

RFP Timeline:

Request for Proposals Posted	Monday, August 18, 2025
Proposals Due	Tuesday, September 2, 2025
Interviews & Selection	September 17 – September 26, 2025
Project Begins	Around September 29, 2025

8. Additional Provisions

The Catawba Indian Nation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities and be the sole judge of the suitability of the proposed services for its intended use and further reserves the right to make the contract award in the best interest of the CIN. The CIN also reserves the right to modify the scope of work, add or delete tasks, and modify the proposed project budget in contract negotiations with the top ranked individual or firm. The CIN further reserve the right to accept the proposal deemed the most advantageous and in the best interest of the CIN in their complete and absolute discretion.

The CIN is not responsible for expenses incurred in preparing and submitting a proposal or for the costs of any services performed in connection with submission of a proposal or taking any action in connection with the selection process.

All respondents to this RFP shall be prepared, upon request, to schedule and attend a site visit. Such visit shall be conducted at the respondent's sole cost and expense, and no reimbursement shall be provided. This requirement shall apply in the event the CIN elects to conduct interviews as part of the evaluation process.

Furthermore, the CIN reserves the right to investigate the qualifications of any respondent that it deems appropriate, negotiate modifications to any of the items in the proposal, request additional information from any respondent, reject any or all, in full or part, any proposal, and/or waive irregularities in any proposal.

9. Sovereign Immunity:

The CIN is a sovereign nation, and Contractor shall adhere to and comply with all laws of the Nation, including the Preferential Hiring Ordinance.

10. Additional Information

Additional information about the CIN can be found on our website, www.catawba.com.

Questions regarding this Request for Proposals may be directed to Meredith Jolin, Director of Justice Services at (803) 984-0393 or meredith.jolin@catawba.com.