# Tribal Codes of Ethics: Broad Applications of Ethical Conduct & Compliance Across Indian Country

**Introduction:**

There are 567 federally recognized Native nations within the United States. These Native Nations have been recognized to have the sovereign right to govern, which is based on a foundational legal decisions, treaty agreements, and federal legislation.

This project provides a broad perspective of how compliance and conduct disputes are handled within tribal governance and management practices in Indian Country. The intent of this research is to better assist Native nations leaders in addressing ethical issues in a way that increases transparency and accountability within their nation.

**Methods:**

To date, the project has identified common factors that comprise these codes and considered innovative ways in which Native nations apply their ethics codes to ensure compliance and create healthy tribal work environments.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes Collected from Online Searches</th>
<th>Tribal Code of Ethics Collected from Online Searches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Codes Cover the Tribal Council Only</td>
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<td>Codes Cover Tribal Council &amp; Tribal Entities</td>
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**Ethics Review Boards:**

Composition and membership requirement are defined throughout the codes when an Ethics Review Board is mandated. This research highlights the innovative ways Native nations are addressing ethical issues arising in tribal governance and management.

**Ho-Chunk Nation**

- 14 Tribal Citizens | Selected from 5 districts | Standing Committee funded | 2 yr. terms

**Shingle Spring Band of Miwok Indians**

- Ad-hoc Committee | Unfunded
- Composition: Tribal Chair, Chair Gaming Authority Board, Chair Gaming Commission Board, Chair Health Board, Chair Business Development, Chair Section Committee, Chair Enrollment Committee, Chair Ethics Committee

**Enforcement Mechanism**

Enforcement oversight varies among the codes. Several codes allow for tribal council to review ethics violations and enforce judgments. Other codes delegate authority to independent review boards and the branches of government to enforce the ordered penalties. Tribal judiciaries can also be used to enforce penalties.

**Next Steps:**

- Gather more information to see if there is a correlation between implemented Tribal Ethics Codes and developing effective tribal governance and economic environments.
- Develop survey questions to use during interviews with selected Native nations whose Tribal Ethics Codes we have collected.
- Seek out codes from First Nations and other international Indigenous communities to gain a better perspective on ethical conduct and compliance outside of the U.S.