



Athena S. Elliott

Director, Office of Management Services

Indian Health Service

Athena S. Elliott, M.P.A., is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She has 25 years of experience in the Indian Health Service (IHS), both at Headquarters and Area Offices, in leadership positions. The Indian Health Service is an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that is the principal federal health care provider and health advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Ms. Elliott has served as the Director of the Office of Management Services since September 2005 and is responsible for a broad range of management duties. She provides senior advisory services to the IHS Director and senior management staff in the areas of human resources, grants, acquisitions, management policy, and other general administrative areas. Ms. Elliott also leads the IHS Ethics Program. She ensures that Agency policies for these administrative functions are consistent with applicable regulations, directives, and guidance from HHS and other federal oversight agencies. She provides leadership for continuous improvement of management accountability and administrative systems for effective and efficient program support services IHS-wide.

Ms. Elliott began her career as an accountant for tribal organizations in California and New Mexico. She joined the IHS in 1984 as an internal auditor in the Albuquerque Area Office, and moved to the IHS headquarters staff in 1987 as the Chief of the Systems Review and Analysis Branch in the Division of Resources Management. She subsequently served as the Deputy Associate Director in the IHS Office of Tribal Activities (OTA), where she was responsible for the day-to-day management of the OTA. She was also instrumental in the development of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, P.L. 93-638, regulations.

From 1997 to 2004, and from June 2005 to September 2005, Ms. Elliott served as the Director of the Management Policy Support Staff (MPSS), where she was responsible for coordinating the Agency's management control program, directing policy development, and overseeing changes to organizational infrastructure in the IHS. She served as the Acting Director of Public Affairs from May 2004 through June 2005. Her duties included advising senior officials on public affairs aspects of agency operational decisions and procedures, recommending agency public affairs policy, directing the development and evaluation of public affairs programs, overseeing media interactions at the Headquarters level, and serving as the agency spokesperson.

She has received numerous awards during her professional career, including the IHS Director's Award for Excellence in 1992, the IHS exemplary award for group performance in 1992, the HHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service in 1997 for her work on the P.L. 93-638 negotiated rulemaking committee, and numerous other awards for superior administrative service throughout her federal career. Ms. Elliott also served on the President's Task Force for Health Care Reform in 1993.

Ms. Elliott holds a bachelor of science degree in business administration/accounting from California State University in Sacramento, California, and a master's degree in public administration from American University in Washington, D.C.