

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

- 1.1 Purpose.** To establish policy for producing and issuing Regional Policy Memoranda.
- 1.2 Scope.** RPMs pertain to Indian Affairs (IA) employees within the jurisdiction of a Regional Office.
- 1.3 Policy.** RPMs are temporary policies which adapt interim national policy to circumstances unique to particular regions. RPMs are effective for one year and can be extended for one year, after which the policies published in RPMs should be incorporated into a Regional Directive or superseded by updated guidance. Regional policy cannot conflict with or supersede national policy.
- 1.4 Authority.**
- A.** The Public Information section of the **Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 552)** requires that the following information be made available to the public: descriptions of the organization, where and how information and decisions can be secured, what and how functions are performed, what requirements must be met to get benefits or services, and what procedures must be followed.
 - B. Departmental Manual 381 DM 1** requires that IA provide proper documentation of its organization, functions, policies, and procedures.
- 1.5 Guidance.** The Indian Affairs Directives Handbook (1 IAM-H) provides the instructions to publish RPMs, including templates and examples of RPMs, Clearance Records, and instructions for footnoting. The Handbook is on the IA intranet through the IA Directives System webpage: <http://inside.bia.gov/Org/AS-IA/ORM/DirectSys/index.htm> and on the Internet at <http://www.bia.gov/WhatWeDo/Knowledge/Directives/index.htm>. A copy may be obtained by contacting the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, 2051 Mercator Drive, Reston, VA 20191.
- 1.6 Style.** RPMs should be written in plain language which is easily understood. Technical language and legal jargon should be avoided. Acronyms should be used sparingly and only after the complete words for the acronym have been spelled out the first time it is used in a document.
- 1.7 Responsibilities.**
- A. Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA); Director, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and Regional Directors** are responsible for ensuring that the information in RPMs for the programs and functions within their authority, is accurate and up-to-date.
 - B. Regional Offices and Districts** are responsible for ensuring that the policy and processes in regional memoranda conform to applicable statutes, regulations and policies, and that regional policy is consistent with the directives in the Indian Affairs Manual (IAM). The authoring Office is responsible for developing content; circulating drafts for internal review and comment; preparing the Clearance Record for the RPM's formal

review and concurrence; and ensuring the material is appropriately distributed in electronic or printed format.

C. Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA) provides guidance and assistance for developing RPMs. RACA assigns a release number and document identification number; reviews memoranda for format and proper delegation of authority; and coordinates recommended changes or corrections with the authoring office. When RPMs are final and signed by the appropriate officials, they are returned to RACA to stamp the document with date of issue, enter it into the records management system, and forward for publication to the IA Internet.

D. Signature Authority. Officials with the authority to sign RPMs are: the Director, BIA; Director, BIE, and Regional Directors.

1.8 Definitions.

A. Clearance Record (Form DI 228). The Clearance Record is used during the final review and signature process (surnaming) to document concurrence by each reviewing official. Instructions and examples for completing the Clearance Record are in the Directives Handbook.

B. Directive. A means of written communication that conveys policy, initiates or governs actions, conduct, or procedures.

C. Document Identification Number. The document identification number is the unique identification number for the directive being issued. For RPMs, the number is constructed of: the acronym for the type of directive; the two-letter Regional Office Letter Code for the region producing the directive (i.e., “MW”); the Issuing Office Letter Code; and a consecutive number based on the originating Office’s production of directives. For example, an RPM pertaining to employees within the jurisdiction of Midwest Region, further refining an NPM for Trust may read **RPM-MW-TRUS-5**. Instructions for constructing the document identification number, and the Regional Office Letter Codes, are in the Directives Handbook.

D. Indian Affairs (IA). Includes the Offices of the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs (AS-IA), the BIA, and the BIE. The organization and functions of the components of Indian Affairs are described in 110 DM 8 and 130 DM 1 through 130 DM 12.

E. Proper Documentation. Identifying what information needs to be created or received to provide documented evidence of carrying out official responsibilities; managing the organization; and meeting the Department’s legal responsibilities.