

A wooden gavel with a dark handle and a light-colored head, a quill pen with a dark handle and a light-colored tip, and a black feather with a white stripe are arranged on a white fabric with a black and red pattern. The gavel is positioned horizontally, the quill pen is positioned vertically, and the feather is positioned vertically. The text "Tribal Court Startup" is overlaid in a pink, cursive font.

# *Tribal Court Startup*

AVCP Presentation on Starting a Tribal Court  
Monique Vondall-Rieke and Kevin Illingworth

# Tribal Constitution and Tribal Code

1. Look to the Tribal Constitution for the authority to create the Tribal Court.

2. Does your Tribe have a Tribal Code?

<http://www.tribal-institute.org/lists/codes.htm>

<https://www.tananachiefs.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Protection-of-Elders-and-Vulnerable-Adults-Sample-Code-2016.pdf>

3. What kind of court does your tribe feel READY to practice?

# Tribal Court -- a Vision

## Basic Needs:

1. Decide how judges are selected/elected (according to the Tribal Constitution and/or Code).
2. Designate a location for the Tribal Court -- just an office or main area of the Village Tribal Offices BUT -- make sure you have a separate, locked, preferably fireproof file cabinet only accessible to Tribal Court Staff.
3. Computer, desk, supplies -- BUDGET for Tribal Court -- see Rick and AVCP Tribal Justice Staff for assistance in developing a budget.

## Bank of Forms -- AVCP Tribal Justice

Choose a set of simple forms to use for the Tribal Court.

Samples are available with AVCP Tribal Justice.

<http://www.tm.edu/wp-content/uploads/files/Academics/Paralegal%20Resources/CivilDivManual.pdf>

Excellent source for startup forms for Civil Court.



# Requesting the Tribal Court Assessment

## STEP 1: Official Letter from Tribal Leader

<https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/bia/ojs/ojs/pdf/idc1-031875.pdf>

## STEP 2: Gather documents

<https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/bia/ojs/ojs/pdf/idc2-045807.pdf>



# Tribal Court Judge and Clerk Trainings

AVCP Tribal Justice Department  
upcoming trainings.  
Contact Rick Garcia and AVCP  
TJD Staff



**Judge Debra O'Gara, Tlingit and  
Haida Tribal Court**

**Honorable Sandra Day O'Connor:**

“Today, in the United States, we have three types of sovereign entities—the Federal government, the States, and the Indian tribes. Each of the three sovereigns has its own judicial system, and each plays an important role in the administration of justice in this country.”

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