

Native Verification



How to trace your Native American Ancestry

Tracing your Native American Ancestry can be a challenging task, but it is important to understand your cultural background and heritage. Here are the first steps to tracing you Native American Ancestry:

1. **Do Genealogical Research**-The best place to begin the journey of finding your Native American Heritage is with yourself. Create a family tree beginning with yourself and work back in time through your lineage. Gather as much information as you can about your ancestors such as where they lived, maiden and married names, and names of children. Remember this is also helping you learn more about where YOU come from. Embrace the journey and find joy in the discovery.
2. **Document Your Ancestry**-As you are tracing your lineage, find as much official documentation as you can such as birth certificates, death certificates, and census reports that link your |connection to your family members. This will be very important for proving your lineage.
3. **Find Your Tribe**-After you have gathered a few generations work of lineage, you might see a trend in where your family was located. Search for Native American tribes in that region. You might find that a relative comes from that reservation. For California Tribes, you can contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Sacramento at 916-978-6000 or for out-of-state Tribes, you can contact the national office at 202-208-3710.
4. **Contact Your Tribe**-You have done your homework and have documented your lineage and your connection with a specific Tribe. Now you are ready to contact the Tribe! Tribal membership is determined by each Tribe and therefore the process can vary by Tribe. Call the Tribal office and ask to speak to a representative from the enrollment office to determine what the specific requirements are. In some cases, enrollment applications are available on line. Once the application is complete, you can submit the information you have gathered with certainty of your ancestral lineage. This is the first step in gaining your Tribal verification.

For more information or assistance, call us at 916-341-0575
Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc.
2020 J Street, Sacramento CA 95811