

Reentry Program Evaluation Consulting Services for Catawba Indian Nation

June, 2025

1. Introduction

The Catawba Indian Nation is soliciting contract proposals from professional firms or qualified individuals to offer evaluation services for the Catawba Indian Nation Department of Justice Second Chance Reentry Program.

2. Background of the Catawba Indian Nation

2.1 Our Heritage and Legacy

Catawba Indian Nation is the only federally recognized Native American tribe in the state of South Carolina and one of two in North Carolina. The Catawba Indians have lived on their ancestral lands along the banks of the Catawba River, dating back at least 6,000 years. Before contact with the Europeans, it is believed that the tribe inhabited most of the Piedmont area of South Carolina, North Carolina, and the southern parts of Virginia. Our lands include a 1,000-acre reservation on two non-contiguous parcels of land approximately eight miles east of Rock Hill, South Carolina, and a 16.5-acre reservation in Cleveland County, North Carolina.

In 1993, Catawba's won its fight for federal recognition with the passage of the Catawba Land Claims Settlement Act. The Act restored the Federal Trust relationship between the Catawba Nation and the Federal Government and marked the path for self-governance. Today, we provide services for approximately 3,400 plus enrolled tribal members with housing, social services, public works, medical and dental care, economic development, childcare, senior programming, cultural preservation, transit, and more.

2.2 Vision for Future Generations

The Catawba Indian Nation has welcomed change with our newly adopted vision and mission that states the tribe will become an economically thriving community whose citizens embrace their cultural heritage, enjoy strong self-esteem, lead successful lives, and are fully prepared for a future of continuing opportunities and challenges.

Tribal leadership promotes the Catawba Nation's rich culture; works to ensure collective and individual self-sufficiency; promotes excellence in education; provides quality opportunities for its citizens' health, social, and economic well-being; and conducts its affairs with great integrity and commitment.

2.3 Catawba Indian Nation's Tribal Justice Services Strategic Plan

The Catawba Nation has completed a Tribal Justice System Strategic Plan, which included extensive community meetings and surveys to understand the safety and justice needs of the Catawba Indian Nation. This showed wide-ranging needs, including tribal courts handling child welfare cases, domestic violence cases, criminal matters, peace-making, and more. We seek a consultant to assist in developing a comprehensive evaluation plan as this program develops. Specifically, we seek evaluation of our efforts to reduce recidivism and support successful transitional planning for individuals who are, or have been, involved in the criminal justice system.

2.4 The Catawba Indian Nation's Second Chance Community-based Reentry Initiative

The tribe has established the Catawba Indian Nation's Tribal Justice System. All programs under the Justice System will mandate primary focus on restorative justice and holistic care for all participants.

To advance this initiative, the Department of Justice has funded a community-based reentry initiative to reduce recidivism among Catawba Indian Nation parolees. Most incarcerated Catawba citizens return to the reservation or surrounding areas upon completion of their prison sentence, regardless of the location of the federal, state, or local incarceration. Our Reentry Services program will support parolees by delivering tailored guidance for each person to guide them in addressing all aspects of their lives. The program will serve reentering clients housed in county and federal facilities along with citizens of other federally recognized tribes.

Recidivism is most likely to occur in the absence of community connections, recovery support, culturally appropriate programming, and treatment. This project aims to serve citizens of Federally and State recognized Tribes within the Catawba Nation Service area and reduce recidivism by developing and implementing a culturally relevant, holistic pre- and post-release program that speaks directly to each tribal citizen participant individually.

3. Scope of Work

3.1 Purpose

Native Americans face the highest recidivism rates in the country—a significant challenge that the Catawba Nation is determined to address through our evolving reentry program. Our project is geared towards crafting a culturally attuned, data-driven strategy that extends beyond its inaugural year.

Understanding that traditional assessment tools often overlook the unique needs of Native populations, our goal is to collaborate with an expert to develop a comprehensive evaluation framework tailored to our community's specific context and experiences.

3.2 Engagement and Feedback

The selected evaluator will collaborate closely with our Reentry Services Manager and Justice Services Director to craft insightful survey questions and drive the project's mission forward. The Tribe aims to gather insights from three key groups:

- **Citizens with Legal System Experience:** Their feedback will guide the personalization of pre- and post-release reintegration plans.
- **Close Relations of Incarcerated Citizens:** Understanding their perspectives will reveal the impact of reintegrating members on household dynamics.
- **Community Members:** Diverse viewpoints will enrich our understanding of reentry and tribal peacekeeping practices, and the application of restorative justice as a traditional Catawba practice.

3.3 Vision and Primary Objectives

3.3.1 Long-term Vision:

The Tribe's ultimate goal is to pivot from purely tracking recidivism to a proactive desistance model. We aspire to explore how success across four key indicators—comprehensive healthcare, cultural engagement, relational growth, and socioeconomic outcomes—actively drives the reduction of criminal behavior. By understanding these indicators as catalysts for positive change, we can develop strategies that effectively combat recidivism.

3.3.2 Data Collection System:

The Tribe's primary objective involves developing a robust system meeting tribal, county, state, and federal criteria utilizing five indicators (evaluation metrics) as the baselines for assessing program efficacy:

- **Health Care:** Address physical, mental, and substance misuse needs.
- **Cultural Engagement:** Facilitate connections to tribal traditions.
- **Relational Growth:** Support family reunification processes.
- **Socioeconomic Outcomes:** Improve conditions across education, housing, and employment.
- **Recidivism Rates:** Correlation between specific or combinations of indicators and tracking recidivism rates at national and state levels.

3.4 Capacity Building

The Tribe's secondary objective involves training and ensuring tribal volunteers and staff, many experienced in focus groups and interviews, are equipped to use these methods to retrieve the data needed.

3.5 Final Product

While meeting the primary and secondary objectives, the final product created by the selected evaluator will incorporate information obtained through the community engagement and feedback to develop a sustainable comprehensive evaluation framework tailored to our community's specific context and experiences, which can be used to evaluate and improve the success of the Tribe's evolving reentry program

4. Contents of Proposal

The Tribe invites proposals from individuals or firms who are well-versed in the penal system and its societal impacts, and who are committed to integrating Native American values into their evaluation techniques. If interested, please submit at least three copies of a proposal in response to this RFP. The proposal should include the following information:

- A cover letter addressed to the attention of Terre Lucas, Reentry Services Manager
- A narrative explaining the experience and qualifications of the firm or individual applicant, including a resume of the proposed principal consultant to provide direct services. The narrative and resume should detail the applicant's understanding of the penal system and experience in assessing social outcomes in programming for diverse populations, preferably Native Americans. The narrative should include the types of organizations to which the applicant has provided services in the past, if any.
- A narrative explaining the applicant's proposed approach to the Scope of Work.
- Minimum of two (2) references from clients
- A detailed outline of the proposed cost.

5. Submission

Please submit three copies of the proposal by 5:00 pm, **July 15, 2025** to:
Catawba Indian Nation
Attn: Terre Lucas
996 Avenue of the Nations
Rock Hill, SC 29730

6. Evaluation

The Catawba Indian Nation will review all submitted proposals. The criteria by which the selected applicant will be chosen include the following:

- Quality of experience
- Technical capabilities to perform the project
- Qualifications of key personnel
- Approach to the project as described in the proposal
- Previous performance in the area
- Cost
- Schedule

Depending on the proposals received, the Catawba Indian Nation may determine that interviews with the top-ranked firms or individuals are necessary. If interviews are unnecessary, firms and individuals will be ranked, and the Catawba Indian Nation will initiate contract negotiations with the highest-ranked firm or individual.

7. RFP Schedule is as Follows

- Request for Proposals Posted **June 11, 2025**
- Proposals Due **July 15, 2025**
- Interviews & Selection Week of **July 22, 2025**

8. Additional Provisions

The Catawba Indian Nation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities and be the sole judge of the suitability of the proposed services for its intended use and further reserves the right to make the contract award in the best interest of the organization. The Catawba Indian Nation also reserves the right to modify the scope of work, add or delete tasks, and modify the proposed project budget in contract negotiations with the top-ranked firm.

9. Tribal Preference

The Catawba Indian Nation exercises Indian Preference in accordance with the Catawba Nation Preferential Hiring Ordinance and the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (24 U.S.C. 450, et seq.), 25 CFR 271.44 and other relevant laws (title 25, U.S. code, Section 472 & 473).

10. Additional Information

Our tribe envisions a prosperous community where citizens honor their heritage, nurture self-confidence, and thrive amid the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.

As stewards of a proud history, we embrace change by integrating traditional wisdom and contemporary strategies into initiatives like our Reentry Program. This venture represents our dedication to restorative justice and holistic community care, aligning with the mission to bolster the lives of our present and future generations.

Additional information about the Catawba Indian Nation can be found on our website, www.catawba.com. Questions regarding this Request for Proposals may be directed to Terre Lucas, Reentry Services Manager, at (803) 366-4792 or Terre.Lucas@catawba.com.