Indian Health Service and Tribal Health Program Reimbursement Agreements

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Agenda

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- IHS and THP Implementation Timeline
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- Eligibility and Enrollment
- VHA Health Eligibility Center Training
- VA Office of Tribal Government Internet Site

Indian Health Service & Tribal Health Reimbursement Agreement Milestones

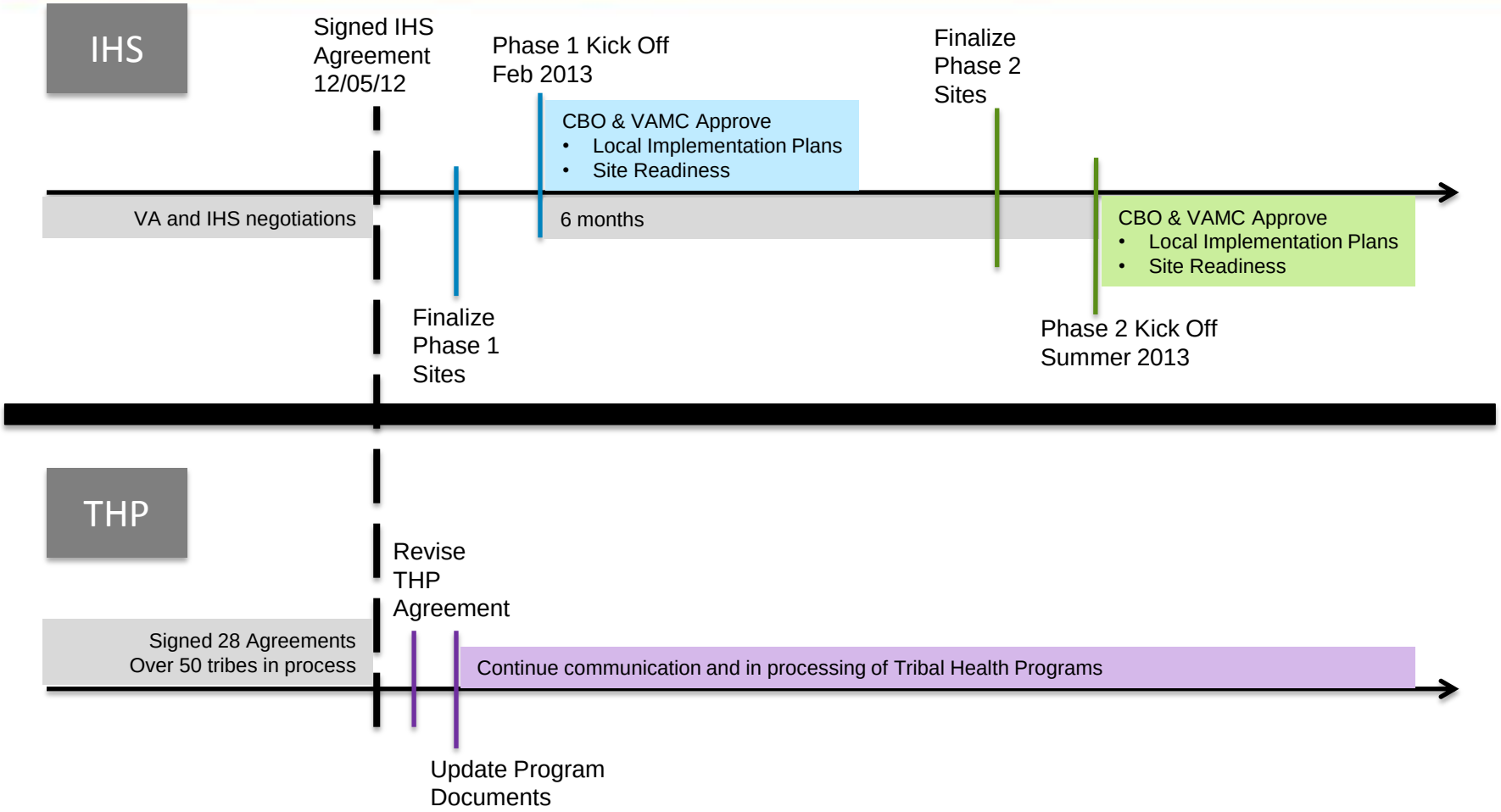
- October 1, 2010: the VA Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Petzel, and the IHS Director, Dr. Roubideaux, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- March – May 2012: VA and IHS and Tribal Health Programs (THP) initiated tribal consultation on a draft national agreement
- June 2012: Department of Justice provided guidance that VA's Title 38 was the authority that governed agreements between VA and IHS/ THP
- August 24, 2012: Dr. Petzel signed and distributed a letter to tribal leaders with program guidance.
- December 5, 2012: VA-IHS National Agreement signed.
- March 25, 2013: Phase 1 IHS implementation complete.

The MOU and Agreements:

✓ Promotes quality health care through collaborative relationships and agreements

✓ Focuses on increasing coordination, collaboration, and resource-sharing for eligible American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans

Implementation Timelines



VA and IHS Phase 1 Sites by VISN

- **VISN 23**
  - **IHS Aberdeen Area**
    - Wagner Service Unit
    - Eagle Butte Service Unit
    - Sisseton Service Unit
    - Rapid City Service Unit
  - **IHS Bemidji Area**
    - White Earth Health Center
- **VISN 20**
  - **IHS Portland Area**
    - Warm Springs Service Unit
- **VISN 19**
  - **IHS Billings Area**
    - Blackfeet Service Unit
- **VISN 16**
  - **IHS Oklahoma City Area**
    - Pawnee Service Unit
- **VISN 18**
  - **IHS Navajo Area**
    - Chinle Service Unit
  - **IHS Tucson Area**
    - Sells Service Unit

Direct Care Services

- VA will reimburse the IHS/THP facilities for direct care services provided to eligible American Indian(AI)/Alaska Native (AN) Veterans VA will reimburse only for direct care services provided in the medical benefits package available to eligible Veterans at 38 CFR § 17.38.

- VA will not reimburse for any services that are excluded from the Medical Benefits package or for which the eligible AI/AN Veteran does not meet qualifying criteria.

- Direct Care Services is defined as any health service that is provided directly by IHS/THP. This does not include Contract Health Services, unless those services are provided within the walls of the IHS or THP facility.

Benefits

- **Medical Benefits Package –** VA will reimburse for direct care services provided in VA's Medical Benefits package available to eligible Veterans under 38 CFR § 17.38.

- **Choice of care provider –** Eligible AI/AN Veterans can choose to receive their health care from the IHS/THP facility and/or VA facility. No pre-authorization for care at the IHS/THP facility will be required.

- **Pharmacy Options –** IHS health care facilities will be reimbursed when providing a 30-day supply of outpatient medications to eligible AI/AN Veterans. After the initial 30-day supply, VA will only cover prescriptions using the Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP) for routine, long-term outpatient medication.

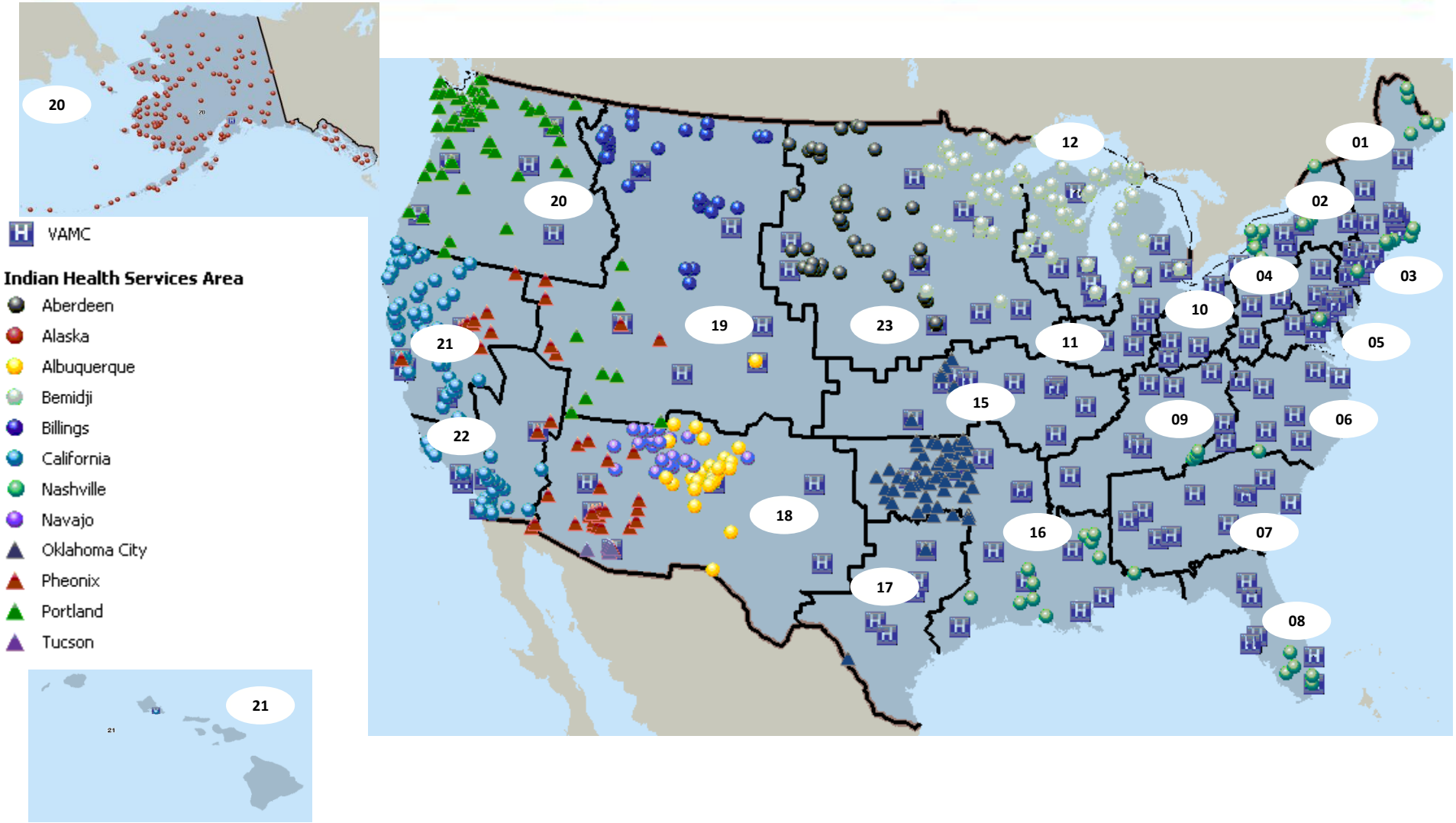
- **No Copayment –**Pursuant to section 405(c) of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), VA copayments do not apply to direct care services delivered by the IHS or THP healthcare facility to eligible AI/AN Veterans under agreements with VA.

- **No Outstanding Balances –** IHS and THPs will bill third parties prior to billing VA so that VA is responsible only for the balance remaining after other third party reimbursements.

Payment Methodologies and Fees

- **Inpatient** hospital services are based on Medicare Inpatient Prospective Patient System (IPPS).
- **Outpatient** services will be based on the IHS All Inclusive Rate published in the Federal Register.
- **Critical Access Hospitals** will be reimbursed at the established rate as determined by Medicare.
- **Ambulatory Surgical Services** will be reimbursed at Medicare rates.
- **Administrative fees** will be applied to the following claims:
  - Outpatient claims with the All Inclusive Rate will have a $15 fee per claim for the first two years
  - Paper claims will also incur a $15 fee for the duration of agreements

IHS and THP Locations in the Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs)

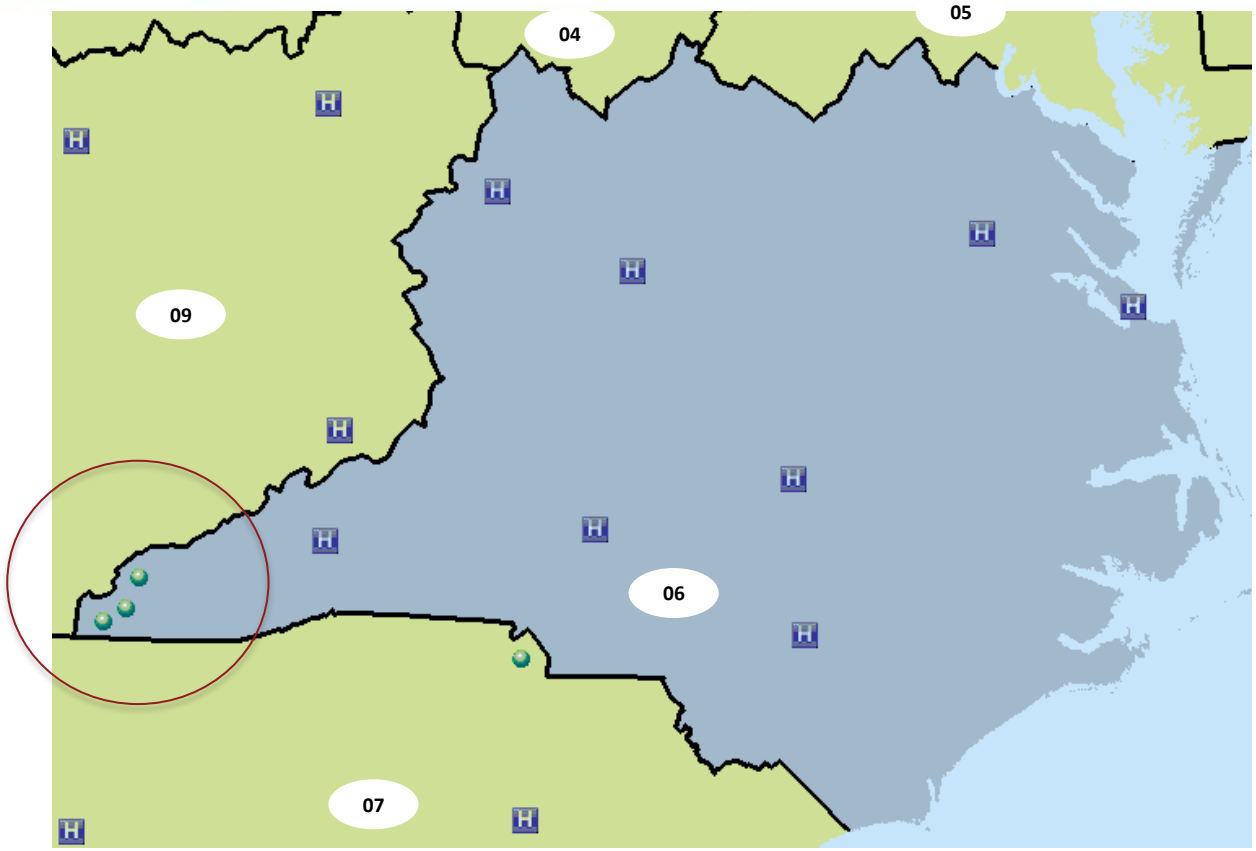


IHS and THP Locations in the VISN 6

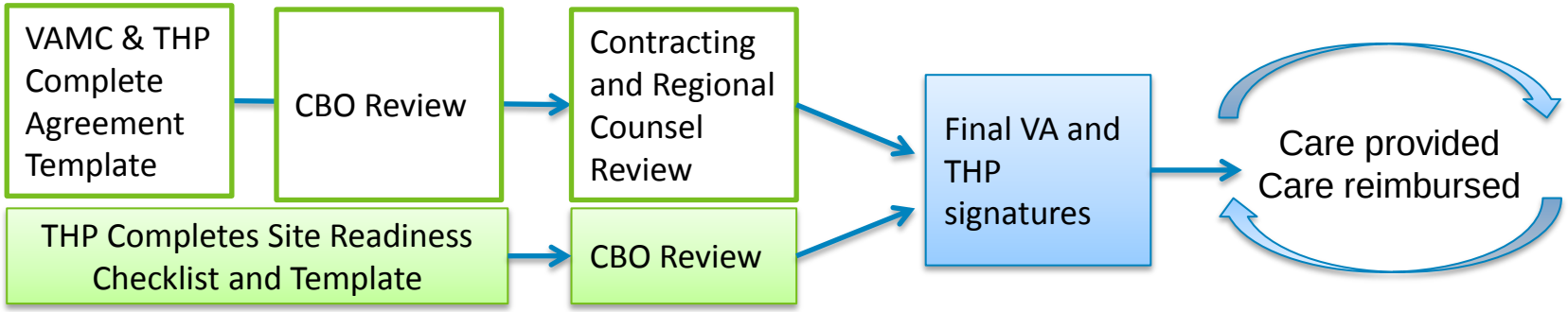
VAMC

Indian Health Services Area

Nashville



THP Agreement Review and Approval



- Using the agreement template, the VAMC and THP work together to complete the draft reimbursement agreement.
- Concurrently, the THP works to satisfy site readiness criteria. The Site Implementation Plan must also be completed
- Once the draft is complete, it will be reviewed by CBO and regional counsel/contracting. After final signatures, reimbursement for direct care can commence.

Eligibility and Enrollment

- VA and IHS are responsible for determining eligibility for health care services within their respective programs.
  - An eligible AI/AN Veteran is enrolled in the VA's system of patient enrollment in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 1705 and 38 C.F.R. 17.36 or is eligible for hospital care and medical services under 38 U.S.C. § 1705(c) (2) and 38 C.F.R. 17.37(a)-(c).
  - The eligible Veteran must also meet IHS eligibility requirements and be eligible for services in accordance with 42 C.F.R. Part 136.
- VA Health Eligibility Center (HEC) is providing monthly training focused on eligibility, the medical benefits package, and enrollment to IHS and Tribal Health Programs.

VHA Health Eligibility Center Training

How to check Veteran eligibility and enrollment

- Please dial 1-855-488-8441. The Veteran name and social security number will be required.

Training

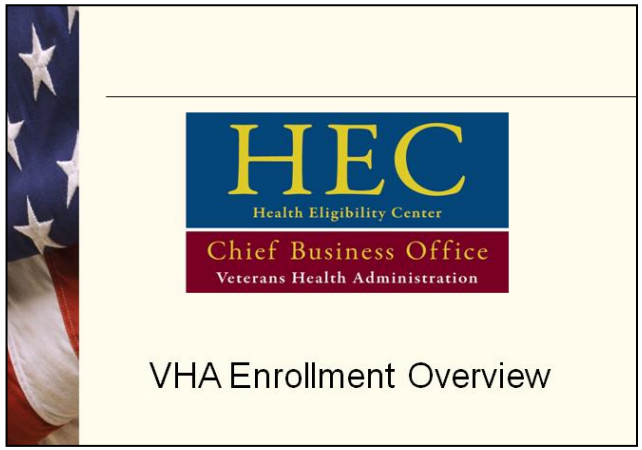
- The VHA Health Eligibility Center (HEC) provides monthly training focused on eligibility, the medical benefits package, and enrollment.

  Schedule:

  – Every third Tuesday Monthly
    - 2pm – 3pm (EST)

  – Please email Tribal.Agreements@va.gov

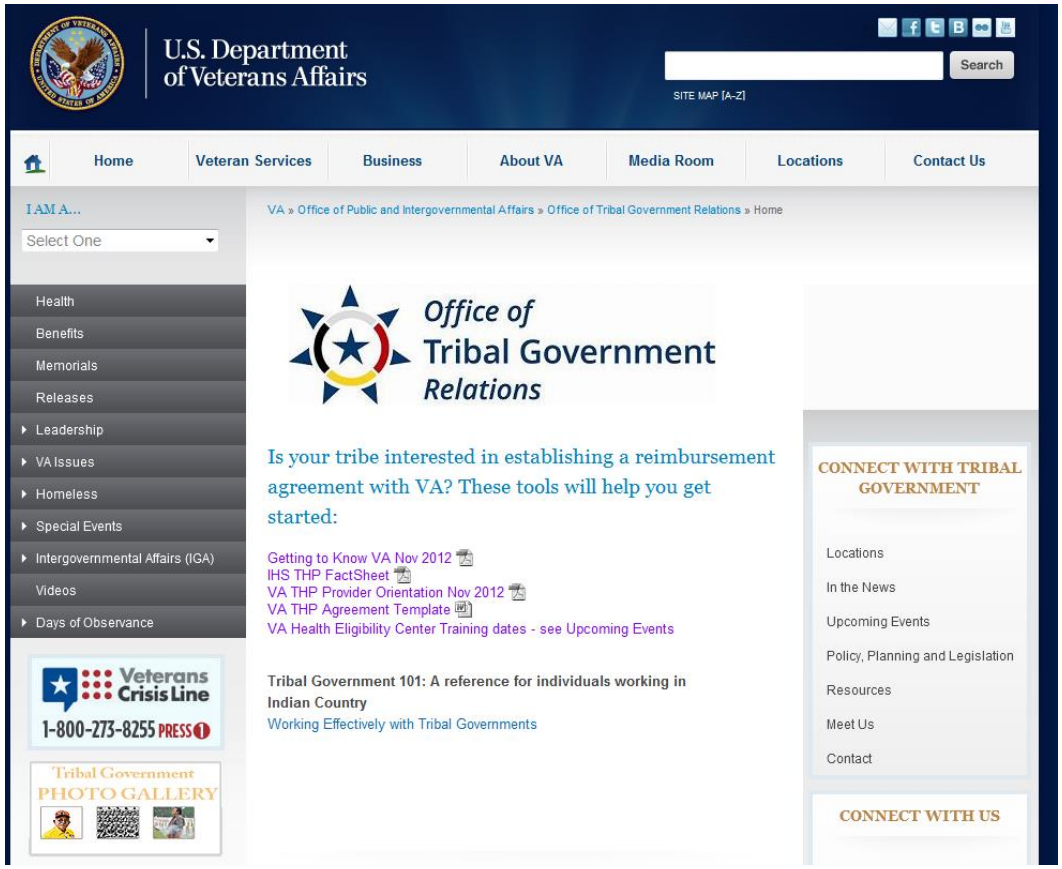
  to receive a calendar invite.



Further Information

All documentation on how to establish agreements will be housed at VA Office of Tribal Government Relations Website.

http://www.va.gov/tribalgovernment/

For more information on getting started with Tribal Health Program agreements, send an e-mail to

tribal.agreements@va.gov