

NCUIH Requests Enhanced VA Support and Improved Reimbursement Rates for Urban Indian Organizations in Reimbursement Agreement Program

Category: Policy Blog

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On May 15, 2024, the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) submitted comments to the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA), in response to a [May 1, 2024, Urban Confer](#) regarding the revised template for the urban Indian organization (UIO)-VA Reimbursement Agreement Program (RAP) ("revised agreement"). In its comments, NCUIH requested that VA support UIO participation in the Program by providing technical assistance to UIOs and improving UIO reimbursement rates under the revised agreement.

Background

The [VA Indian Health Service \(IHS\)/Tribal Health Program \(THP\)/UIO RAP](#) provides VA reimbursement to IHS, THP, and UIO health facilities for services provided to eligible American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. The agreements program was first initiated in 2012 for IHS and Tribal health facilities. It was expanded in 2022 to include UIOs. The RAP is part of a larger effort to improve access to care and coordination for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans under a broader [VA-IHS Memorandum of Understanding](#) managed by [Veterans Health Administration](#) (VHA).

NCUIH previously submitted comments to VA in February 2022, requesting VA improve VA's urban confer process and continue to improve VA's relationship with UIOs.

NCUIH's Recommendations

In its May 15, 2024, comments, NCUIH recommended that VA:

- Continue to engage with and provide updates to UIO on the revised agreement through its development.
- Improve the UIO reimbursement rates under the revised agreement.
- Ensure changes to the scope of services include services provided at UIOs.
- Provide technical assistance to UIOs to support UIO participation.

NCUIH will continue to monitor the development of the revised UIO-VA RAP template.