

NCUIH Releases 2025 Annual Policy Assessment

Category: Policy Blog

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The Policy Assessment informs Urban Indian Organizations policy priorities for 2026, identifies barriers to closing funding gaps, opportunities to strengthen the workforce, and building community resources for Urban Native communities.

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is pleased to announce the release of its [2025 Policy Assessment](#). This assessment was developed based on the 5 focus groups by UIO facility type (full ambulatory, limited ambulatory, outreach and referral, and outpatient and residential) between October 7-9, 2025, as well as a written survey sent out via email to all 41 UIO leaders. The focus groups and survey provided an invaluable opportunity to reflect on the achievements and challenges of 2025, fostering a deeper understanding of the progress made and the areas that require further attention.

Together these focus groups allow NCUIH to work with UIOs to identify policy priorities in 2026 and identify barriers that impact delivery of care to Native patients and their communities. Of the 41 UIOs, 20 attended the focus groups and/or participated in a survey. This is the sixth year that NCUIH has conducted the assessment via focus groups sessions.

Overview of the Policy Assessment

During the focus group sessions, UIO leaders had the opportunity to share their opinions on the successes and challenges they experienced in 2025. UIO leaders also provided input on the policy areas they would like to see the greatest policy support from NCUIH. Some of the key policy priority areas identified included increasing funding for IHS and urban Indian health line items, the importance of advance appropriations, securing 100% Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for UIOs, and implementing food is medicine programs.

Key Findings from the Policy Assessment are as follows:

- Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service Prove Critical to Maintaining Services in the Shutdown
- Impacts of Federal Policy Changes on Urban Indian Organization Funding
- Impact of DEIA Executive Orders on Urban Indian Organizations
- Achieving Parity: Extending 100% Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage to Urban Indian Organizations
- Strengthening the Workforce to Support Urban Indian Organizations
- Food is Medicine: Addressing Food Insecurity and Health

Next Steps

NCUIH will use this assessment to develop a comprehensive document of the 2026 Policy Priorities.

Past Assessments and Priorities

- [2024 Policy Assessment](#)
- [2024 Policy Priorities](#)
- [2023 Policy Assessment](#)
- [2023 Policy Priorities](#)
- [2022 Policy Assessment](#)
- [2022 Policy Priorities](#)
- [2021 Policy Assessment](#)