



**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. JBE 2021 – 7**

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***GOVERNOR’S TASK FORCE ON  
MURDERED AND MISSING INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS***

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**WHEREAS,** Indigenous women face a staggering and tragically high rate of violence and assault, due to historically unjust marginalization throughout the United States of America, which has resulted in an ongoing national humanitarian crisis;

**WHEREAS,** May 5 has been designated by the United States Senate, the legislative bodies of various states and tribes, and numerous community organizations as a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls;

**WHEREAS,** in November of 2019, Presidential Executive Order 13898 established Operation Lady Justice, the Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, recognizing the severe concerns of tribal governments regarding missing and murdered members of American Indian and Alaska Native communities, particularly women and girls;

**WHEREAS,** in April of 2021, United States Interior Secretary Deb Haaland announced the formation of a new Missing and Murdered Unit within the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services to provide leadership and direction for cross-departmental and interagency work involving missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, seeking to put the full weight of the federal government into investigating these cases and to marshal law enforcement resources across federal agencies throughout Indian Country;

**WHEREAS,** the State of Louisiana is committed to partnering with federal, state, interstate, and intertribal efforts to address the injustice and violence done to indigenous women residing within our nation and our State; and

**WHEREAS,** by engaging a wide and diverse group of stakeholders, and through collaboration with state administration and law enforcement, Louisiana can and will reduce the violence and harm threatening the lives and safety of women in our State’s Indigenous communities.

**NOW THEREFORE, I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS,** Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

**SECTION 1:** The Governor’s Task Force on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (hereafter the “Task Force”) is hereby established within the executive branch, Office of the Governor – Office of Community Programs.

**SECTION 2:** The duties of the Task Force shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. To investigate and make recommendations to address rates of homicide, human trafficking, and sexual violence being perpetrated upon American Indian/Indigenous women and children in the State of Louisiana, categorized as Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIWG).
- B. To promote greater public awareness of the ongoing crisis of violence against Indigenous women.
- C. To investigate and make recommendations to the Governor and the Attorney General as to the manner in which Indigenous people shall be categorized on all future records and reports under the administrative jurisdiction of the State of Louisiana.
- D. To investigate and make recommendations to the Governor and the Attorney General with regard to resources available to tribal law enforcement.
- E. To investigate and make recommendations to the Governor regarding the formulation of solution-based policies and their implementation regarding the following:
  - 1. Clarification of the responsibilities of federal, state, tribal, and local parish and city law enforcement agencies when responding to cases of murdered and missing Indigenous people;
  - 2. Establishment of methods to increase coordination and communication among Federal, State, Tribal, and local Parish and City law enforcement agencies.
  - 3. Creation of a process and structure to increase the collection of data related to murdered and missing indigenous women and children and the most effective and expeditious method of sharing that information among Federal, State, Tribal, and local Parish and City law enforcement agencies.
  - 4. Formulation of standard law enforcement protocols to respond to the unique challenges and circumstances surrounding the crisis of murdered and missing indigenous women and children, with prioritization for response criteria to a missing person report.
  - 5. Development of an effective framework within which intelligence can be gathered and shared in reciprocal compacts with other states related to human trafficking criminal organizations.
  - 6. Consideration of how temporary habitations that house workers, referred to as “man camps,” can be most effectively policed and monitored, and if existing zoning ordinances need to be amended to achieve that end.
  - 7. Recommendations to ensure that all non-resident workers who have been previously convicted of sex crimes in any jurisdiction register as sex offenders with the requisite authority in the State of Louisiana.
  - 8. Review of current cultural competency practices employed by industrial operators in the State of Louisiana, including but not limited to human trafficking awareness training with a specific focus on murdered and missing indigenous women.
  - 9. Establishment of guidelines specifically for reviewing possible MMIW “cold cases” and improving “cold case” investigative

methodology, including analysis of the serial nature of MMIW crimes in reservation and urban environments.

10. Recommendations regarding the establishment of Tribal Liaison Offices, and the possible locations thereof, to ensure access to culturally appropriate victim services for both victims and their families.

F. To make recommendations to the Governor and the Attorney General for the establishment of a statewide administrative process to identify MMIW victims that will be adhered to by all law enforcement agencies, coroners, and the Louisiana Department of Health, the Louisiana State Registrar, and the Louisiana Department of Vital Statistics, as well as the formulation of an oversight mechanism to preserve the integrity of such data.

**SECTION 3:** On or before June 30, 2021, the Task Force shall submit to the Governor and Attorney General an initial recommendation regarding the manner in which Indigenous people shall be categorized on all future records and reports under the administrative jurisdiction of the State of Louisiana.

**SECTION 4:** Thereafter, the Task Force shall meet at least quarterly and shall submit quarterly reports to the Governor and Attorney General, for a period of 24 months, regarding its findings and recommendations.

**SECTION 4:** The Task Force shall be composed of a maximum of twenty-five (25) voting members who, unless otherwise specified, shall serve at the pleasure of the governor:

1. One representative from each of the federally recognized and state-recognized tribal nations located within Louisiana, chosen by each tribe's respective tribal council;
2. One victims' advocate with no less than five years of professional experience of working in the field of sexual trauma and victim recovery, appointed by the Governor;
3. The Director of the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs;
4. One expert in Human Trafficking Prevention, appointed by the Governor;
5. One representative of the Louisiana Department of Justice, designated by the Attorney General;
6. One mental health professional, designated by the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health;
7. One Informational Technology expert, designated by the Superintendent of the Louisiana State Police.
8. One representative of the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, designated by the Secretary; and
9. Two at-large members, appointed by the Governor.

**SECTION 5:** The Task Force shall also include three non-voting advisory members from each of the following advocacy bodies, designated by their respective executive leadership: 1) the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET); 2) the Global Indigenous Council; and 3) the National Congress of American Indians.

**SECTION 6:** The chair of the Task Force shall be designated by the Governor from the membership of the Task Force. All other officers, if any, shall be elected by and from the membership of the Task Force.

- SECTION 7:** The Task Force shall meet at regularly scheduled intervals and at the call of the Governor or the Chair. All meetings of the Task Force shall be subject to the Open Meetings Law as contained in La. R.S. 42:11, *et seq.* A majority of the serving members of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum. The Task Force shall act by a majority vote of its serving members.
- SECTION 8:** The Governor, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections shall consider the recommendations of the Task Force for inclusion in a comprehensive plan to address the crisis faced by Indigenous people of the State of Louisiana.
- SECTION 9:** A. Task Force members shall not receive additional compensation or a per diem from the Office of the Governor for serving on the Task Force.
- B. Task Force members who are an employee or an elected public official of the state of Louisiana or a political subdivision of the state of Louisiana may seek reimbursement of travel expenses, in accordance with PPM 49, from their employing and/or elected department, agency and/or office.
- SECTION 10:** The Task Force shall be staffed by employees of the Office of the Governor, Office of Community Programs.
- SECTION 11:** All departments, commissions, boards, offices, entities, agencies, and officers of the state of Louisiana, or any political subdivision thereof, are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Task Force in implementing the provisions of this Order.
- SECTION 12:** The Task Force may collaborate with or seek input from additional local, state, and federal agencies or other stakeholders, including university or not-for-profit research institutions, to develop, implement, and evaluate the necessary components or actions of the Task Force.
- SECTION 13:** This Order is effective upon signature and shall continue in effect until amended, modified, terminated, or rescinded by the Governor, or terminated by operation of law.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the city of Baton Rouge, on this 5th day of May, 2021.

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**GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA**

**ATTEST BY  
THE GOVERNOR**

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**SECRETARY OF STATE**