



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO FEDERAL AGENCY HEADS AND TRAINING DIRECTORS

March 20, 2024

On May 1, 2015, The Office of Personnel Management issued guidance to agencies on Determining if a Conference is a Training Activity. The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) hosts an outstanding three-day National Training Program focused on leadership, professional development centered on OPM's Core Competencies, and the complex relationship known as the Federal Indian Trust Responsibility. Attendees can participate in developmental programs on a variety of topics while networking with other government professionals. Additionally, cultural awareness events are presented by local indigenous people and American Indian and Alaska Native professionals. As part of this program, SAIGE offers special training sessions for military veterans and leadership training for college students, as well as hosting a Career Fair with numerous federal agencies represented.

The 21st Annual SAIGE National Training Program, "Affirming Native Voices: Visibility-Leadership-Service," will be held at the Northern Quest Resort owned by the Kalispel Tribe June 3-6, 2024. For additional information you may visit our website at www.saige.org or our registration site at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-saige-national-training-program-tickets-770969760307>

SAIGE is providing the following information to Agency Heads, Training Directors, and others to assist in the training approval process in light of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) discontinuing its former practice of issuing yearly memoranda regarding whether conferences qualify as a training activity in accordance with [5 CFR 410.404](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-5--chapter-1--part-410--section-410.404).

SAIGE is pleased to announce that the SAIGE National Training Program specifically meets these required criteria.

According to OPM, Agencies may sponsor an employee's attendance at an event as a developmental assignment under section [4110 of Title 5](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-5--chapter-1--part-4110--section-4110.1), United States Code when:

The announced purpose of the conference is educational or instructional,

- ***SAIGE meets this criterion***
This National Training Program provides vital information to the government workforce on issues and topics affecting American Indians and Alaska Natives and addresses their federal recruitment and retention. The Professional Development track offers career advancement training for everyone, taught by instructors from various agencies who are subject experts in their fields.
- General sessions speakers provide valuable information and insight on timely topics relevant to attendees.

- (a) More than half of the time scheduled for a planned, organized exchange of information between presenters and audience which meets the definition of training in section 4101 of Title 5, United States Code.
- **SAGE meets this criterion**
 - Sixty percent of the training program includes:
 - Interactive workshops that include demonstrations, exercises and questions and answer sessions.
 - Plenary Session speakers who provide important information to attendees on professional topics to broaden career development for improved performance of their work responsibilities.
 - Networking opportunities allow attendees enhanced interaction with other federal employees, tribal representatives, academics, and other professionals.
- (b) The content of the conference is germane to improving individual and/or organizational performances.
- **SAIGE meets this criterion**
 - The SAIGE Training Program provides career development workshops.
 - The SAIGE Training offers sessions unique to the implementation of employees' duties regarding the Federal Indian Trust Responsibilities and related policies, laws and obligations. All Federal agencies are responsible for upholding this responsibility.
 - Plenary session speakers, workshops and networking provide information and tools that focus on improving individual attendees' and/or organizational mission.
- (c) Development benefits will be derived through the employees' attendance.
- **SAIGE meets this criterion.**
 - This event is the only national training program that trains individuals on the Federal Trust Responsibility as related to Federal Indian Law, in their roles as stewards of American Indian lands and resources, and in the conduct on their relationships with tribal governments.
 - Attendees undergo training that assists them in the performance of their duties as Special Emphasis Program Managers, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility committee members, and Human Resource or Equal Employment Opportunity professionals.
 - Networking opportunities augment information gained from plenary sessions and workshops, adding important ideas and connections that will enhance their abilities to provide services to American Indian and Alaska Native populations and to tribal governments.

OPM has stated that when making this determination, agencies should review the event's agenda, session descriptions and additional information as appropriate. Agencies are encouraged to continue to consider professional training organizations and *affinity groups* as a source of training. SAIGE has been a member of the National Coalition for Equity in Public Service (NCEPS) as an affinity group for Native Americans since 2005.



Fredericka Joseph
Chair, SAIGE Board of Directors