

## Federally Recognized Tribes in Michigan

There are [12 federally recognized Indian tribes in Michigan](#). While culturally related, Michigan's tribes are entirely separate, and each has sovereignty – the authority to self-govern.

Each tribal government follows a written constitution, and each has a tribal court that interprets and applies laws in its jurisdiction to resolve civil, criminal, and other legal matters.



## Exhibit

The People of the Three Fires ([Anishinaabeg](#)) exhibit at the Learning Center discusses the governments and culture of the federally recognized tribes in Michigan and the common ground shared among federal, state, and tribal courts.

The exhibit was developed with input from members of the Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum, which is made up of judges and other representatives of the three types of courts in Michigan.

Preview the exhibit's kiosk experience [here](#).

## Tribal Courts

Tribal courts in Michigan resolve civil, criminal, and other legal matters within their jurisdiction. Tribal courts emphasize helping those involved in a dispute and making things right. They are dedicated to fundamental fairness for all people.

Some tribal courts resemble federal and state courts. Others use traditional means such as peacemaking, elders councils, and/or sentencing circles. Some have both types of courts.



## A Family of Governments

Three types of sovereign governments – tribal, state, and federal – are linked in the United States Constitution. Laws, treaties, and court decisions also define the obligations these governments have to one another.

Sometimes described as a “family of governments,” federal, state, and tribal governments share many common interests. These include economic issues, children and families, and public safety.

For more information about the relationship between Michigan's tribal, state, and federal courts, see [courts.mi.gov/tribalcourts](https://courts.mi.gov/tribalcourts).

