

VISION

It is our vision that the present judicial system, consisting of an adversarial-style tribal court system modeled on Anglo courts, a peacemaking system modeled on Diné original dispute resolution methods, and Probation and Parole Services, will fully embody the values and processes of the Navajo People, including family and clan-centered Navajo values. Our justice system as a whole will truly reflect the heart and soul of the Diné. It will be one that the People recognize as their own and fully participate in the spirit of nábináháazlago.

MISSION

The Judicial Branch will provide stability in the Navajo Nation government by providing court, peacemaking, and probation and parole services, to adjudicate cases, resolve disputes, rehabilitate individuals and families, restore harmony, educate the public, agencies, services and other governments in Diné bi beenahaz'áanii and protect persons and property pursuant to Navajo Nation laws, customs, traditions and applicable federal laws. Pursuant to Diné bi beenahaz'áanii, the Judicial Branch will carefully develop a justice system that fully embodies the traditional values and processes of the Navajo people.

DIRECTORY

Administrative Office of the Courts

Office of the Chief Justice (928) 871-7669
Judicial Administration (928) 871-6762
Human Resources (928) 871-7023
Fiscal (928) 871-6900
Information Technology (928) 871-6765

Supreme Court of the Navajo Nation (928) 871-6763

Peacemaking Program (928) 871-6388

Office of Probation Services (928) 871-6625

Judicial Districts

Tuba City Judicial District (928) 283-3140
Window Rock Judicial District (928) 871- 6626
Shiprock Judicial District (505) 368-1270
Crownpoint Judicial District (505) 786- 2072
Kayenta Judicial District (928) 697-5549
Aneth Judicial District (435) 651-3545
Chinle Judicial District (928) 674- 2070/2071
Dilkon Judicial District (928) 657-8140
Ramah Judicial District (928) 775-3218
Dził Yijiin Judicial District (928) 725-3781
Alamo/Tohajiilee Judicial District
Alamo Court (575) 854-2668/2669
To'hajiilee Court (505) 908-2817/2818

Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation

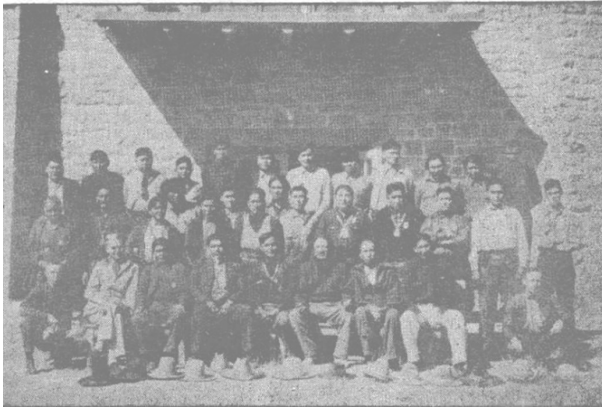
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JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE NAVAJO NATION

HISTORY OF THE COURTS



Navajo police, judges and court staff, 1930s

The history of our judiciary begins in our ancient history. According to the Journey Narrative, the People journeyed through four worlds and, in the course of their journey, came upon many problems both natural and caused by the People, which had to be resolved before the journey continued. The solution begins in a place of chaos, *hóochxó' / anáhóót'i'*. When *hóochxó' / anáhóót'i'* is confronted, people may learn there is a choice to leave it. When harmony, *hózhó*, is self-realized, sustaining it will have clarity and permanent *hózhó* will be self-attainable, *hózhóóji k'ehgo nįná'ildee' íhááhodidzaa ná'oodzii'*. In short, the concept of Diné justice is founded on the achievement of sustainable *hózhó*, which is in the People's own hands, and it is the duty of the judiciary to maximize this responsibility as far as our processes allow.

Our modern courts began with the Navajo Court of Indian Offenses established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1892. The Navajo Nation established its own court system in 1959 with trial courts. In the



Judges of the Navajo Courts of Indian Offenses, 1954

1970s, a Supreme Judicial Council was added. In 1985, the Navajo Nation Council passed the Judicial Reform Act to create the Navajo Nation

Supreme Court, streamline court operations and, at the same time, abolish both the Navajo Court of Appeals and the Supreme Judicial Council.

In 1982, the Peacemaking Court was established by vote of the Judicial Conference. The word “court” was subsequently removed and the community-based roots of peacemaking were acknowledged and protected. In 2012, the Navajo Nation Council's Law & Order Committee approved an extensive amended plan of operations for peacemaking that greatly expands its services while placing priority on the cultural education of all disputants, especially families and children.

COURTS AND PROGRAMS

Supreme Court

District and Family Courts

Peacemaking Program

Office of Probation and Parole Services

Chinle Judicial District
Crownpoint Judicial District
Kayenta Judicial District
Shiprock Judicial District
Tuba City Judicial District
Window Rock Judicial District
Ramah Judicial District
Alamo-To'hajiilee Judicial District
Dilkon Judicial District
Aneth Judicial District
Dził Yijiin Judicial District



Navajo Nation judges, 2003

Administrative Office of the Courts

Judicial Conduct Commission



Navajo Nation judges, 2016

OUR STRUCTURE

The Navajo Nation operates a two-level court system: the trial courts at the judicial districts and the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, which is the appellate court. Cases begun in the trial courts may be appealed to the Supreme Court, as may decisions of administrative agencies such as the Office of Hearings and Appeals and the Navajo Nation Labor Commission. The Navajo Nation courts typically handle over 50,000 cases per year.

Three appellate justices sit on the Supreme Court, headed by the Chief Justice who is also the chief administrator of the Judicial Branch. The Chief Justice supervises the judges, directs the preparation of the budget, sets and implements policies, and oversees Judicial Branch operations. District court judge positions serve the district courts.

In addition to the courts, peacemaking—a community-based system of cultural education and dispute resolution—and probation and parole services are supported by the Judicial Branch.

The Administrative Office of the Courts provides technical assistance to all the courts and programs of the Judicial Branch.