

Serving Two Spirit Participants in Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts: An Annotated Resource Guide¹

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I. Overview

Indigenous people who are two-spirit are severely underserved, and yet, they make up a community who are most at risk of developing substance use disorders and experiencing other harms related to it.² Despite this fact, there are currently no resources for serving this community in Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts³ (tribal versions of treatment/drug courts, referred to herein as THWC). Additionally, there is little research about serving any two-spirit person, Native or non-Native, in state treatment courts.

In an effort to bridge information gaps, increase access to treatment services, and decrease high rates of incarceration within tribal communities, this resource guide will provide available resources to THWCs serving Native Two Spirit participants. While there are limited resources available for Indigenous Two Spirit participants in THWCs, this resource guide will provide information related to the following: issues for Two Spirit participants in treatment courts (not Native/Tribal specific), a list of judicial benchbooks and bench cards on Two Spirit people in state courts, general issues for Native/Tribal Two Spirit people, and general issues for Two Spirit people who are not Native/Tribal.

This resource guide starts by giving background on Two Spirit people in Native communities in Part II, “Two Spirit in Native Communities: Why This Resource Guide Matters.” It explains the impact that colonization has had on Indigenous Two Spirit peoples, and how prior to colonization, Two Spirit people had important roles in their communities. It also tells the history of two-spirit people and the role they play in their communities today. After giving the background of Native Two Spirit people and the roles they have in their communities, this part tells how this community has become vulnerable to substance use disorder and other related issues, such as mental health issues, homelessness, and incarceration. This has resulted, in part, due to the impacts of colonization.

Part III, “Resources on Issues for Two Spirit Participants in Treatment Courts,” provides a short list of the very few resources that exist for Two Spirit participants, either Native or non-Native, in state treatment courts. These resources cover topics relevant to treatment court staff working with Two Spirit participants, such as the stigma these participants face, specific

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² More information about this in Part II of this resource guide.

³ More information about Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts may be found here: “Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts,” Tribal Law and Policy Institute, <http://wellnesscourts.org>.

barriers to meeting the needs of Two Spirit participants and identifying specific strategies for overcoming barriers to these participants' success. This insight is useful for Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWC), as Tribal versions of treatment courts, to model for their own Two Spirit participants.

Part IV, "Judicial Benchbooks and Bench Cards on Two Spirit People in State Courts," provides a short list of the judicial benchbooks and bench cards available to assist judges who have Two Spirit clients. Though the two resources listed in part IV are specific to the states of California and Washington, this information would be helpful for a THWC judge to utilize, such as using inclusive language, applicable court rules and professional responsibility, dealing with Two Spirit youth and Two Spirit elders, and legal issues facing Two Spirit people.

Part V, "Resources on General Issues for Native/Tribal Two Spirit People," is a section that provides resources on issues that affect the Native/Tribal Two Spirit community. Topics explored in these resources range from incorporating Tribal resolutions and codes to support Two Spirit justice in Indian country, the specific issues Native Two Spirit youth face, how healthcare providers may best provide care for Native Two Spirit people, and more. Though these resources are not specific to treatment courts or THWC, they help provide insight on the issues affecting the Native Two Spirit community and how to best address these issues, which is relevant to THWC who have these community members as participants.

Part VI, "Resources on General Issues for Two Spirit People (Not Tribal or Native Specific)," expands this valuable information by providing resources applicable to all Two Spirit people, regardless of whether they are Native or not. Part VII, the conclusion, wraps up this resource guide with a final reminder of why it is important that THWCs learn how to best care for their Two Spirit participants. Part VIII is an appendix.

Finally, this resource guide provides a few helpful appendices for THWCs with Two Spirit participants: "Glossary," "List of Relevant Organizations," and "List of Relevant Topics." The glossary provides a list of terminology and language often used within and about the Two Spirit community. The "List of Relevant Organizations" provides a list of organizations that a THWC team might reach out to partner with on issues related to their Two Spirit clients.

It is our hope that this resource guide will help direct THWC staff to resources that will help them to best serve their Two Spirit participants. We acknowledge there are large resource gaps for the Native Two Spirit community in accessing treatment for substance use disorders, and for the community as a whole. We hope that this gap shrinks in the years to come, and that until then, THWCs serve as a safe space of healing for our valued Native Two Spirit community members.

II. Two Spirit in Native Communities: Why This Resource Guide Matters

The term “two-spirit” came as a result of colonization and needing a pan-Indian term that communicates this variation that exists for many Tribes to non-Tribal communities.⁴ But even with this term, not all Indigenous communities perceive two-spirit people the same way, and some communities do not desire a pan-Indian term to replace the specific terms already in use by their cultures.⁵ Though there are differences in the language used to describe variations within tribes, as well as variations in what those rolls looked like, it is undisputable that two-spirit people had a prominent place in many tribes. Two-spirit people often had specialized roles, including special spiritual roles as healers and ceremonial leaders, teachers, knowledge keepers, herbalists, child minders, interpreters, mediators, and artists.⁶

Today, Native people who are two-spirit are still integral parts of their communities. Two Spirit people exist in every tribe and are valuable members of their communities, participating in ceremonies, maintaining their cultures, and living in kinship with other relatives and members of their tribes. Despite this fact, the loss of Indigenous language, traditional knowledge, and tribe’s teachings as a result of colonization have had deep and long-lasting impacts for Indigenous Two Spirit people.⁷ Because of the loss of language and culture, as well as Western values and ways of living being forced on Indigenous peoples, Native Two Spirit people experience harm both on and off reservations, both at the hands of people in and out of their community.⁸ This, in addition to other factors particular to this community, has led to ongoing concerns about the mental health and well-being of Indigenous Two Spirit people, especially because they experience heightened and increasing numbers of suicides.⁹

Other factors that lead to Native Two Spirit people being vulnerable is the reality that they experience domestic violence and sexual violence at exceptionally high rates. The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) reports that Indigenous Two Spirit communities face systemic discrimination, violence, and harassment at disproportional rates.¹⁰ In addition to mental health and safety concerns, Native Two Spirit people are more likely to experience systemic barriers, such as poverty and homelessness. Notably, the Trevor Project reports that nearly half (44 percent) of Native Two Spirit youth have experienced homelessness or housing instability at some point in their life.¹¹

Despite the prevalence of Two Spirit people in Tribal communities and the knowledge that they are particularly vulnerable to experiencing trauma and other harms, there is little research and resources about these communities. Indeed, Native peoples who are also Two-Spirit are often

⁴ [Two-Spirit](#),” Indian Health Services.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid. See also Qwo-Li Driskill, “D4Y DβC (Asegi Ayetl): Cherokee Two-Spirit People Reimagining Nation,” in *Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature* (pp. 97–112), University of Arizona Press (2011) See also Lezard Dr., et al., *Two Spirit National Action Plan Final Report*. (2011)

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ NCAI Policy Research Center, “[A Spotlight on Two Spirit Communities](#).” See also National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center, “[Showing Up in Support of Indigenous Two Spirit Survivors](#)” (May 2022).

¹¹ The Trevor Project, “[Homelessness and Housing Instability among Two Spirit Youth](#)” (2022).

invisible in these conversations about data and Two Spirit disparities,¹² the information mentioned previously being pulled from the extremely limited sources of data available. UCLA School of Law's Williams Institute noted that, Indigenous Two Spirit communities are often invisible in conversations about data and disparities.¹³ Not only is data on Native Two Spirit people limited, but so are the resources available for this community, leaving a noticeably large gap in accessing care.

Limited data and resources also exist for Two Spirit participants in Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWCs) and other treatment courts. As it stands now, there is no data that exists on Two Spirit in any treatment court, let alone THWCs. This is concerning, because there are high numbers of substance use among the Two Spirit community. Data from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) suggest that substance use patterns reported by two spirit adults differ from those reported by other adults, reporting that approximately 6.7 percent of these adults in 2020 misused opioids (prescription opioids or heroin use) in the past year,¹⁴ compared to 3.6 percent of the overall adult population.¹⁵ The NSDUH survey also found that, in 2020, approximately 21.8 percent of two spirit adults had an alcohol use disorder in the past year, compared to 11.0 percent in the overall population.¹⁶

While there is currently no existing data on Two Spirit participants in treatment courts specifically, there is research on these participants who enter other rehabilitation treatment that encourages that this community be tended to in order to better treat their substance use disorders and addictions, as well as reduce recidivism. While Two Spirit people are found to often enter treatment with more severe substance use disorders than others,¹⁷ addiction treatment programs offering specialized groups for two spirit people showed better outcomes for those clients compared to two spirit people in nonspecialized programs.¹⁸ However, only 7.4 percent of programs offered specialized services for Two Spirit patients.¹⁹ And while current research is limited on rates of substance use disorders among Two Spirit populations, research shows that Two Spirit people are more likely to seek treatment than the rest of the population.²⁰ Nonetheless, current research suggests that substance use disorder treatment

¹² UCLA School of Law Williams Institute, "[Indigenous Two Spirit People: Disparities and Data Justice](#)" (2022).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, "[2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Two Spirit Adults](#) (Annual Report)," See also National Institute on Drug Abuse, "[Substance Use and SUDs in Two Spirit Populations.](#)"

¹⁵ Substance Abuse Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. Results from the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables, SAMHSA (accessed February 2023). See also National Institute on Drug Abuse, "[Substance Use and SUDs in Two Spirit Populations.](#)"

¹⁶ See Ruppert et al., *Review: Prevalence of Addictions among Two Spirit Subgroup*, Int J Environ Res Public Health (2021), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8393320/>.

¹⁷ Cochran, B. N., Cauce, A. M., *Characteristics of Two Spirit Individuals Entering Substance Abuse Treatment*, J Subst Abuse Treat. (2006) 30(2):135–146. See also National Institute on Drug Abuse, "[Substance Use and SUDs in Two Spirit Populations.](#)"

¹⁸ Cochran, B. N., Peavy, K. M., Robohm, J. S., *Do Specialized Services Exist for LGBT Individuals Seeking Treatment for Substance Misuse? A Study of Available Treatment Programs*, Subst Use Misuse. (2007) 42(1):161–176. See also National Institute on Drug Abuse, "[Substance Use and SUDs in Two Spirit Populations.](#)"

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Keuroghlian, A. S., Reisner, S. L., White, J. M., Weiss, R. D., *Substance Use and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders in a Community Sample of Two Spirit Adults*, Drug Alcohol Depend (2015) 152:139–146. See also National Institute on Tribal Law and Policy Institute; March 2024

should address the unique factors in Two Spirit people’s lives that may include poverty, housing issues, family problems, violence, and social isolation.²¹

Despite the research showing that treatment that is tailored to Two Spirit participants is most successful, there is a large gap in this inclusive treatment being provided. This creates a barrier in access to treatment for Two Spirit participants, as negative experiences in healthcare settings may preclude some Two Spirit people from seeking out medical treatment for their addictions or mental health issues. For example, the *Journal of Two Spirit Mental Health* surveyed 130 Two Spirit volunteers and found that fear of treatment and past negative experiences accounted for some of the most common barriers to seeking mental health services.²² The study stated that participants most frequently mentioned that stigma was their main concern, as they were scared of “mistreatment at the hands of someone who could not understand them.”²³

And while these barriers exist, the incarceration rates for Two Spirit people are at a higher rate than the rest of the population. Two Spirit adults are incarcerated at three times the rate of the total adult population, while the population of incarcerated Two Spirit youth is double that of those in the general population.²⁴ These disproportional rates are in part due to the factors mentioned previously, such as high rates of homelessness, poverty, discrimination, and violence, in addition to high rates of unemployment.²⁵

For all these reasons, this resource guide was written with the intention of guiding THWC staff in better assisting their Two Spirit participants and community members, as they are a severely underserved community and most at-risk for harm.. It is important that Two Spirit people in Native communities not be forgotten in our effort to restore and heal our tribes and people. This resource guide hopes to provide the first steps in better assisting Native Two Spirit people—in better assisting our communities.

III. Resources Concerning Two Spirit Participants in Treatment Courts

As noted in the introduction, there are very few resources for Two Spirit participants in treatment courts. However, the following are two PowerPoints from presentations on the topic that may be useful for Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWCs).

Drug Abuse, “[Substance Use and SUDs in Two Spirit Populations.](#)”

²¹ Lombardi, E. L., van Servellen, G., *Building Culturally Sensitive Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Programs for Two Spirit Populations*, *J Subst Abuse Treat.* (2000) 19(3):291–296. See also National Institute on Drug Abuse, “[Substance Use and SUDs in Two Spirit Populations.](#)”

²² American Addiction Centers, “[Two Spirit and Addiction](#)” (August 2023) .

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ The Sentencing Project, “[Incarcerated Two Spirit Adults and Youth](#)” (2022).

²⁵ Ibid.

POWERPOINT: New York Association of Treatment Court Professionals, "[Culturally Responsiveness with Two Spirit People in Treatment Court](#)," 2021.

- **Source:** [New York Association of Treatment Court Professionals](#)
- **Description:** This PowerPoint goes over key concepts and definitions, stigmas and stereotypes, microaggressions, social detriment of health, unconscious and conscious bias, and cultural responsiveness for intake, assessment, and treatment with Two Spirit drug court participants.

POWERPOINT: All Rise (formerly known as, National Association of Drug Court Professionals), "[Two Spirit Participants in Treatment Court](#)," 2022.

- **Source:** [All Rise](#)
- **Description:** The content of this is meant to help identify where disparities occur with Two Spirit individuals in court and treatment, identify several treatment needs of Two Spirit participants, recognize specific barriers to meeting the needs of Two Spirit participants, and determine specific strategies to overcoming the barriers to Two Spirit participants' success.

FORTHCOMING CURRICULUM: [Two Spirit](#) Resource from All Rise (formerly known as, National Association of Drug Court Professionals).

- **Source:** [All Rise](#)
- **Description:** This curriculum will provide tools and resources for state treatment courts who treat Two Spirit participants. The curriculum will be published [here](#).

IV. Two Spirit People in State Courts: Judicial Benchbooks and Bench Cards

In this section are the two available judicial benchbooks and bench cards available to assist judges who have Two Spirit participants in their state courts. While they are catered to state courts in Washington and California, the information in them is useful to all courts, including Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWCs).

BENCHBOOK: Washington State Supreme Court's Gender & Justice Commission, [Judges' Bench Guide on the Two Spirit Community and the Law](#), 2017.

- **Source:** [Washington State Supreme Court's Gender & Justice Commission](#)
- **Description:** A comprehensive benchbook designed to serve as an introduction for jurists and legal practitioners to some of the issues affecting Two Spirit people. The guide touches on the following issues: using inclusive language, court rules and professional responsibility, Two Spirit youth, family law, employment law, public accommodations, legal issues facing Two Spirit people, and Two Spirit elders. Though the guide is for the state of Washington, information within the guide may be useful for other jurisdictions.

BENCH CARD: Judicial Council of California, "[Bench Reference Guide: What Do I Need to Know About Two-Spirit Youth in Juvenile Court?](#)," 2011

- **Source:** [Judicial Council of California](#)
- **Description:** A brief bench card describing useful tips on addressing Two Spirit youth in court, in addition to listing relevant California state laws. The tips listed within this resource is applicable for all courts.

V. General Resources Concerning Native/Tribal Two Spirit People

Like the preceding section, this section describes general issues for Two Spirit people, but specifically for those who are Native and Tribal. These resources touch on health issues for Native Two Spirit people, tips for working with and creating safe spaces for Indigenous Two Spirit communities, and Tribal resolutions and codes to support Two Spirit people and their justice in Indian country.

TOOLKIT: Native American Program of Legal Aid Services of Oregon, [Tribal Toolkit 2.0: Tribal Resolutions and Codes to Support Two Spirit & LGBT Justice in Indian Country](#), 2013.

Source: [Native American Program of Legal Aid Services of Oregon](#)

- **Description:** While this toolkit is specifically tailored to Tribal governments, it also includes useful information in it that would be useful for a Tribal Healing to Wellness Court, such as legal information for Native Two Spirit people in justice systems, child welfare systems, and so forth.

TOOLKIT: Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, *Celebrating Our Magic: Resources for American Indian/Alaska Native Two-Spirit Youth, Their Relatives and Families, and Their Healthcare Providers*, 2019, https://www.npaihb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Toolkit_v6_6.pdf

- **Source:** [Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board](#)
- **Description:** Contents of this toolkit include tips on how to improve resources and access to healthcare for Native two-spirit youth and increasing Tribal clinic capacity by creating long-term pathways to care for two-spirit individuals within the tribal health setting.

REPORT: Two Spirit Sub-Working Group, *MMIW National Action Plan, 2021*, https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=indg_faculty

- **Source:** [Two Spirit Sub-Working Group of the Government of Canada](#)
- **Description:** A final report written by a Two Spirit Sub-Working Group on behalf of the government of Canada that explains the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous Two Spirit peoples and suggests solutions to providing safety for Two Spirit peoples. The report includes useful background knowledge and data on Native Two Spirit peoples and communities and provides recommendations that Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWCs) might find relevant in keeping their Two Spirit participants safe.

EDUCATIONAL GUIDE: Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition, “Walking in Two Worlds: Supporting the Two-Spirit Native Community,”

<https://tribalinformationexchange.org/files/resources/twospiritbrochure.pdf>

- **Source:** [Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition](#)
- **Description:** This resource explains what it means to be two-spirit, various related definitions, tips on how to be a good ally, and potential challenges and barriers that may be experienced by those who identify as Indigenous and Two Spirit are included within this educational guide. It includes practical tips, such as tips for effective and respectful interactions.

INFOSHEET: Tribal Information Exchange, “Creating Safe & Welcoming Spaces for Two-Spirit/Native Youth,” 2018, [https://tribalinformationexchange.org/wp-](https://tribalinformationexchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SafeandWelcomingSpacesWebinarHandout.pdf)

[content/uploads/2020/04/SafeandWelcomingSpacesWebinarHandout.pdf](https://tribalinformationexchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SafeandWelcomingSpacesWebinarHandout.pdf)

- **Source:** [Tribal Information Exchange](#)
- **Description:** This resource is catered to Tribal and State child welfare organizations and staff, tribal leaders, mental health professionals, foster families, and general community members. It gives concrete advice on how to create safe space for Two Spirit peoples with detailed steps and examples. There is also a list of resources at the end of the sheet.

RESOURCE SHEET: [Tribal Youth Resource Center, *Native Two-Spirit Resources*](#), 2023.

- **Source:** [Tribal Youth Resource Center](#)
- **Description:** This is the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Tribal Youth Resource Center’s (TYRC) own compilation of resources for Native Two Spirit people. This document has categories of resources, such as the Resource for Individuals Working with LGBTQ+ & Two-Spirit Youth in the Child Welfare System and/or Juvenile Justice System and the Resources for Healthcare Providers of Native Two Spirit Youth and/or Adults.

RESOURCE SHEET: Capacity Building Center for Tribes, [Working with Two-Spirit Native Youth](#), 2020.

- **Source:** [Capacity Building Center for Tribes](#)
- **Description:** This resource sheet is specifically for Tribal child welfare, but has relevant general resources listed such as resources to better understand the Two Spirit community, tips on how to better support the Two Spirit and create safe and welcoming spaces for them, and more.

WEBSITE: We R Native, [“Two Spirit.”](#)

- **Source:** [We R Native](#)
- **Description:** We R Native is a comprehensive health resource for and by Native youth, intended to promote “holistic health and positive growth in our local communities and nation at large” (We R Native Website). Their Two-Spirit/Native page offers a wide variety of resources to support Two Spirit youth, including links to articles and videos authored by Native Two Spirit youth and adults. This website has many great resources, advice, and articles for Two Spirit Native people.

WEBSITE/RESOURCE PAGE: [National American Indian Court Judges Association, “NAICJA Two Spirit/Native Resources,”](#) 2019.

- **Source:** [National American Indian Court Judges Association](#)
- **Description:** Various resources on the topic of Two Spirit in Tribal courts, including podcasts, webinars, and more.

VI. General Resources Concerning Two Spirit People (Not Tribal or Native Specific)

This section provides resources on general issues for Two Spirit people that are not specific to Tribal members or Native people. These resources touch on topics such as appropriate language and terminology to use when communicating with and about Two Spirit people, and tips for judges when interacting with an Two Spirit client, and other relevant considerations.

ARTICLE: American Addiction Centers, [“Two Spirit Friendly Rehabs: Statistics, Risk Factors & Treatment,”](#) 2023.

- **Source:** [American Addiction Centers](#)
- **Description:** This resource describes the reasons why someone who is Two Spirit may end up in substance use rehabilitation, as well as some tips on meeting the particular needs of Two Spirit populations. The website on which this resource lives has various other resources that might be relevant to the needs of Two Spirit people in Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWCs).

TOOLKIT: National Center for State Courts, *Language in the Courts: How to Treat Everyone with Fairness, Dignity, and Impartiality*, 2022, <https://cdm16501.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/accessfair/id/1012>

- **Source:** [National Center for State Courts](#)
- **Description:** This toolkit is on language in the courts, made possible with the support of the Pew Charitable Trusts and the input and collaboration of the National Center for State Courts' Access and Language Access teams.

PUBLICATION: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, [Teen Dating Violence and Two Spirit Youth: A Resource to Support Judges and Other Professionals Interacting with Teen Victims and Offenders](#), 2022.

- **Source:** [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#)
- **Description:** This resource lays out the issue of teen dating violence among Two Spirit youth. It additionally provides some tips as it relates to working with Two Spirit people who have experienced teen dating violence.

RESOURCE KIT: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), *Top Health Issues for Two Spirit Populations Information & Resource Kit*, 2012, <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma12-4684.pdf>

- **Source:** [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)
- **Description:** This kit was designed organizations and individuals that serve Two Spirit populations across the country. These include prevention specialists working in State, Territorial, and Tribal community-based organizations; behavioral healthcare providers; medical and other allied health professionals; health educators; technical assistance providers; and Two Spirit individuals. The tools in this resource kit—such as fact sheets and PowerPoint slides—may be used individually or together to raise awareness of the physical and behavioral health status and needs of Two Spirit populations.

POWERPOINT: Minnesota Department of Human Services, "[Working with Two Spirit Youth](#)."

Source: [Minnesota Department of Human Services](#)

- **Description:** A general resource on the ins and outs of working with Two Spirit youth, such as how to build relationships with these youth and how to ensure their safety in child welfare placements.

POWERPOINT: National Center for State Courts, "[Workplace & Justice in the Courts: Two Spirit Considerations](#)," 2017.

- **Source:** [National Center for State Courts](#)
- **Description:** This PowerPoint is a National Association for Court Management (NACM) presentation regarding Two Spirit inclusiveness from the perspective of Florida and provides steps that court leaders can do to ensure Two Spirit inclusiveness in their court. Additionally, this resource describes best practices to encourage a varied workplace.

INFOSHEET: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, "[Access to Juvenile Justice: Supporting Two Spirit Youth](#)," 201.

- **Source:** [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#)
- **Description:** This resource provides tips to judges on how to best support Two Spirit people in their courts.

WEBSITE: NCTE, "[Know Your Rights](#),"

- **Source:** [NCTE](#)
- **Description:** This resource explains the legal rights of two spirit people. The resource includes information on how to find legal help. The most relevant section for THWCs is the "healthcare" section, though other sections may be helpful depending on the client, such as the "housing and homeless shelters" and "survivors of violence" sections.

EDUCATION MATERIALS: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, “VA [Two Spirit Health Program Patient Education, Resources, & Outreach Materials](#),”

- **Source:** [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Patient Care Services](#)
- **Description:** These Veteran education brochures communicate important information to Two Spirit Veterans about their unique health risks and relevant services offered by VA.

VII. Conclusion

This resource publication has provided an overview of the limited resources available that may be of assistance to Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWCs). Though it is the hope that these resources will be helpful to THWCs whose participants are a part of the Two Spirit community, it is also apparent that more resources are needed to better assist this vulnerable population. While efforts are made to close the gap in care that Native Two Spirit people need through data collection and resource creation, THWCs serve as the best place to help Two Spirit people in their communities who have substance use disorders and addictions. We encourage THWCs to take the steps that they are able to ensure the safety and well-being of Native Two Spirit people because they are valuable members of our tribes and communities, just as they have been since time immemorial.

VIII. Appendix

The following is an appendix that may be useful for a Tribal Healing to Wellness Court (THWC). The appendix is a list of relevant organizations that a THWC team might reach out to partner with on issues related to their Two Spirit clients.

A. List of Relevant Organizations

[Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirits](#)

[City of Angels Two Spirit Society](#)

[The East Coast Two Spirit Society](#)

[Eastern Woodland Two-Spirit Society](#)

[Indigenous Two Spirit Los Angeles](#)

[Minnesota Two-Spirit Society](#)

[Montana Two Spirit Society](#)

[National Indigenous Women's Resource Center](#)

[Portland Two Spirit Society](#)

[Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition's Two Spirit Advisory Council](#)

[Southwest Two Spirit Society](#)

[Two-Spirit Society of the Carolinas](#)

[Two Spirit Society of Denver](#)