responsiveness summary shall be prepared and made available to the public in accord with 40 CFR Part 25.8.

(b) In advance of the hearings and meetings required by paragraph (a) of this section, the State shall prepare a fact sheet on proposed regulations or legislation, mail the fact sheet to agencies, organizations and individuals on the list maintained under § 256.60(a)(1) and place the fact sheet in the State information depositories maintained under § 256.60(a)(2).

§ 256.63 Requirements for public participation in the permitting of facilities.

(a) Before approving a permit application (or renewal of a permit) for a resource recovery or solid waste disposal facility the State shall hold a public hearing to solicit public reaction and recommendations on the proposed permit application if the State determines there is a significant degree of public interest in the proposed permit.

(b) This hearing shall be held in accord with 40 CFR Part 25.5.

§ 256.64 Recommendations for public participation.

(a) State and substate planning agencies should establish an advisory group, or utilize an existing group, to provide recommendations on major policy and program decisions. The advisory group's membership should reflect a balanced viewpoint in accord with 40 CFR Part 25.7(c).

(b) State and substate planning agencies should develop public education programs designed to encourage informed public participation in the development and implementation of solid waste management plans.

(c) The State should inform all affected parties of the classification of a facility as an open dump, in accord with § 256.22(a), prior to publication of that facility by EPA on the open dump inventory.

[FR Doc. 79-23471 Filed 7-30-79; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-01-M

federal register

Tuesday
July 31, 1979

Part IV

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

National Institutes of Health

Recombinant DNA Research; Meeting and Actions Under Guidelines

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

National Institutes of Health

Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee; Meeting

Pursuant to Pub. L. 92–463, notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee at the National Institutes of Health, Conference Room 10, Building 31C, Bethesda, Maryland 20205, on September 6–7, 1979, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This meeting will be open to the public on September 6 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and September 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., to discuss:

Proposed procedures for the Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee

Proposed procedures for approval of large-scale experiments

Prokaryote host-vectors other than *E. coli* K–12

Large-scale experiments

Amendment of Guidelines

Proposed exemption under I–E–5 for *E. coli* K–12 host-vector systems

Exemptions for organisms that exchange genetic information (I–E–4)

E. coli host-vector Systems

NIH risk-assessment plan

Reports of Plasmid and Phage Subcommittees

Review of protocols for required containment levels

Other matters requiring necessary action by the Committee.

Attendance by the public will be limited to space available.

In accordance with the provisions set forth in section 552b(c)(4), Title 5, U.S. Code and Section 10(d) of Pub. L. 92–463, the meeting will be closed to the public on September 7 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. for the review, discussion and evaluation of a proposal from a commercial concern for scale-up of recombinant DNA experiments. This proposal and the discussions could reveal confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material.

Dr. William J. Gartland, Jr., Executive Secretary, Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee, National Insitutes of Health, Building 31, Room 4A52, telephone 301–496–6051, will provide materials to be discussed at the meeting, rosters of committee members and substantive program information. A summary of the meeting will be available at a later date.

Dated: July 25, 1979.

Suzanne L. Fremeau,

Committee Management Officer, NIH.

[FR Doc. 79–23549 Filed 7–30–79; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4110–08–M

Recombinant DNA Research; Proposed Actions Under Guidelines

AGENCY: National Institutes of Health, PHS, DHEW.

ACTION: Notice of proposed actions under NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the proposals for actions to be taken under the 1978 NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules [Federal Register of December 22, 1978 (43 FR 60108)]. Interested parties are invited to submit comments concerning these proposals. After consideration of these proposals and comments by the NIH Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee (RAC) at its September 6–7, 1979, meeting, the Director of the National Institutes of Health will issue decisions on these proposals in accord with the Guidelines.

DATE: Comments must be received by August 30, 1979.

ADDRESS: Written comments and recommendations should be submitted to the Director, Office of Recombinant DNA Activities, Building 31, Room 4A52, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland 20205. All comments received in timely responses to this notice will be considered and will be available for public inspection in the above office on weekdays between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information can be obtained from Drs. Michael Resnick or Stanley Barban, Office of Recombinant DNA Activities, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland 20205, (301) 496–6051.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Institutes of Health will consider the following changes and amendments under the Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules (43 FR 60108), as well as actions under these Guidelines.

1. *Proposed Exemption for E. coli K–12 Host-Vector Systems.* The RCA Working Group on *E. coli* K–12 host-vector systems will report to the full committee for discussion/action documentation for a proposed exemption under I–E–5 of the Guidelines for experiments involving EK1 and EK2 host-vector systems. This proposed action would exempt certain categories of recombinant DNA molecules in addition to those already stated in Sections 1–E–1 to –4. The proposed exemption is as follows:

Those recombinant DNA molecules that are propagated in *E. coli* K–12 hosts not containing conjugation-proficient plasmids or generalized transducing phages, when lambda or lambdoid bacteriophages or non-conjugative plasmids are used as vectors, can be handled at P1 and are exempted from the Guidelines.

2. *Use of Agrobacterium tumefaciens as a Host-Vector System.* At its May 21–23, 1979 meeting, the RAC recommended approval, at the P3 level of physical containment, of specific experiments involving introduction of well-characterized fragments of eukaryotic DNA into *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* carrying a Ti plasmid, using an EK2 plasmid vector coupled to a gragment of the Ti plasmid and/or the origin of replication of a cryptic *A. tumefaciens*, plasmid, and introduction of these bacteria into plant parts or cells in culture under P3 conditions. Approval is now requested by Dr. M. D. Chilton for modification of the experimental procedure as follows:

Cloned desired fragments from any non-prohibited source may be transferred into *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* containing a Ti plasmid (or directives thereof), using a nonconjugative *E. coli* plasmid vector coupled to a fragment of the Ti plasmid and/or the origin of replication of an *Agrobacterium* plasmid, under containment conditions one step higher than would be required for the desired DNA in EK1 or HV1 systems. Transfer into plant parts or cells in culture would be permitted at the same containment level (one step higher).

The modification involves two changes: (1) it would extend the range of desired DNA fragments to be studied, including prokaryotic DNA, synthetic DNA, and eukaryotic DNA, that are not yet judged to be "well-characterized"; (2) it would make the containment level variable, depending upon the nature of the desired DNA to be studied. The requirement of P3 containment conditions for all experiments in this category seems inconsistent and arbitrary.

3. *Proposed Exemption for Pseudomonas putida and Pseudomonas fluorescens under Section I–E–4.* Dr. N. Ornston of Yale University has proposed, in accord with Section I–E–4 of the Guidelines, that *Pseudomonas putida* and *Pseudomonas fluorescens* be added to the exempt list in Appendix A of gram-negative organisms that

exchange DNA by known physiological processes. Further information documenting the exchange of genetic information between these two species and those in Appendix A is available from the Office of Recombinant DNA Activities.

4. *Cloning in Bacillus subtilis an Streptomyces coelicolor.* Dr. Stanley Cohen of Stanford University has proposed the following actions:

(a) *Bacillus subtilis* strains that do not carry an asporogenic mutation can be used as hosts specifically for the cloning of DNA derived from *E. coli* K–12 and *Streptomyces coelicolor* using NIH-approved *Staphylococcus aureus* plasmids as vectors under P2 conditions.

(b) *Streptomyces coelicolor* can be used as a host for the cloning of DNA derived from *B. subtilis, E. coli* K–12, or from *S. aureus* vectors that have been approved for use in *B. subtilis* under P2 conditions.

5. *Proposed Amendment of Sections II–D–1–a–(1) and III–A–1–b–(1).* Dr. Nickolas Panopoulos of the University of California, Berkeley has proposed amendments of sections II–D–1–a–(1) and III–A–1–b–(1).

The proposed revised sections are as follows (new text appears in italics):

II–D–1–a. *HV1.* A host-vector system which provides a moderate level of containment. *Specific systems:*

II–D–1–a–(1). *EK1.* The host is always *E. coli* K–12 or a derivative thereof, and the vectors include non-conjugative plasmids (e.g., pSC101, Co1E1, or derivatives thereof [21–27] and variants of bacteriophage, such as λ [28–33]. The *E. coli* K–12 hosts shall not contain conjugation-proficient plasmids, whether autonomous or integrated, or generalized transducing phages *except as specified under Section III–A–1–b–(1).*

III–A–1–b. *Prokaryotic DNA Recombinants.*

III–A–1–b–(1). *Prokaryotes That Exchange Genetic Information* [35] *with E. coli.* Those prokaryotes that exchange genetic information with *E. coli* by known physiological processes will be exempted from these Guidelines if they appear on the "list of exchangers" set forth in Appendix A (see Section I–E–4).

For those not on the list, the containment levels are P1 physical containment + and EK1 host-vector.

In fact, experiments in this category may be performed with any *E. coli* K–12 vector (e.g., conjugative plasmids). However, for prokaryotes that are classified [1] as Class 2, the containment levels are P2 + EK1.

When a non-conjugative vector is used, the E. coli K–12 host may contain conjugative proficient plasmids, either autonomous or integrated, or generalized transducing phages. In general, for experiments in this category, the E. coli K–12 host may contain such plasmids or phages provided that the physical containment level is raised one step.

Additional major actions will appear in a subsequent issue of the **Federal Register.**

Dated: July 24, 1979.

Donald S. Fredrickson,

Director, National Institutes of Health.

[FR Doc. 79–23550 Filed 7–30–79; 8:45 am]

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federal register

Tuesday
July 31, 1979

Part V

Department of the Interior

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Indian Child Welfare Provisions

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

25 CFR Part 13

Tribal Reassumption of Jurisdiction Over Child Custody Proceedings

July 24, 1979.

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs is adding a new part to its regulations to establish procedures by which an Indian tribe may reassume jurisdiction over Indian child custody proceedings as authorized by the Indian Child Welfare Act, Pub. L. 95–608, 92 Stat. 3069, 25 U.S.C. 1918.

DATE: This rule becomes effective August 30, 1979.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Etheridge, Office of the Solicitor, Division of Indian Affairs, Department of the Inderior, 18th and C Streets, NW., Washington, D.C. 20240; (202) 343–6967.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The authority for issuing these regulations is contained in 25 U.S.C. 1952 and 209 DM 8. This new part was published as proposed rules on April 23, 1979, 44 FR 23992. The comment period on the proposed rules closed on May 23, 1979. Comments were reviewed and considered and changes were made where appropriate.

A. Changes made due to comments received

(1) Section 13.1 has been modified in response to comments urging additional clarification to assure that tribes may reassume jurisdiction without relinquishing their legal arguments that they already had such jurisdiction. One federal district court has ruled that Public Law 83–280 did not deprive tribes of jurisdiction, but merely conferred concurrent jurisdiction on the state. *Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation* vs. *Beck*, C–78–76 (E. D. Wash, December 13, 1978). Additionally, disputes continue to exist over whether particular statutes authorizing the sale of certain tribal lands had the effect of transferring to the state jurisdiction over those lands that are sold. *See e.g., United States* vs. *Juvenile*, 453 F. Supp. 1171 (D. S. D. 1978).

(2) Section 13.1 has also been modified to reflect the variety of jurisdictional arrangements authorized by the Indian Child Welfare Act. Where both the tribe and the state currently assert or exercise jurisdiction over the same Indian child custody disputes, the tribe may obtain exclusive jurisdiction. If a state is asserting exclusive jurisdiction, the tribe may take over all jurisdiction or simply obtain jurisdiction concurrent with the state. Additionally, a tribe may reassume partial jurisdiction limited to only certain types of cases. For example, it could take jurisdiction over only a portion of its former reservation area or only over cases referred to it by state courts as authorized under 25 U.S.C. 1918(2).

(3) In response to a comment, specific reference is made to Oklahoma to reflect the intent of Congress, which is clearly stated in the legislative history, that the right to reassume jurisdiction be available to Oklahoma tribes.

(4) A comment that a specific provision be included to authorize groups of tribes to join together so they can pool resources to develop a feasible plan for reassumption of jurisdiction has been adopted as subsection (c). The Act places no restrictions on how tribes organize to assume jurisdiction so long as the final result is a feasible plan. The consortium approach has already been successfully used by tribes in the Northwest and in Nevada. Under such an approach a single court may be designated by several tribes as their tribal court.

(5) In response to a comment, provision has been made for land or communities that acquire reservation status after reassumption of jurisdiction. New subsection (e) states that such land or communities automatically become subject to tribal jurisdiction unless the petition for reassumption specifically states that it does not apply to lands or communities that subsequently acquire reservation status.

(6) Section 13.11 has been modified to delete requirements for information concerning the reservation when a tribe wishes to assume only referral jurisdiction under 25 U.S.C. 1911(b). Such information is not needed for referral jurisdiction since that jurisdiction is not dependent on residence or domicile on a reservation.

(7) A comment that the phrase "clear and definite" be substituted for the word "legal" in referring to the description of the reservation has been adopted. Commenters objected that some tribes may have difficulty meeting the requirements of preparing a "legal description" of the boundaries. The purpose of this requirement is simply to inform the public and government officials what territory is subject to tribal jurisdiction so that uncertainty over this issue will not delay the resolution of child custody matters by the proper court. A "clear and definite" description of the boundaries will suffice for that purpose.

(8) Several commenters objected to the use of the term "judicial system" because it could be construed to be not as broad as the definition of "tribal court" in 25 U.S.C. 1903(12), which includes any "administrative body of a tribe which is vested with authority over child custody proceedings." The use of the term "adjudicate" was considered objectionable for the same reason. The final rules have been revised in light of these comments by referring to a "tribal court as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903(12)" rather than a "judicial system" and replacing the phrase "adjudicate child custody disputes" with "exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters."

(9) Some commenters said they thought the phrase "persons with a legitimate interest in a child custody proceeding," which was used to describe those persons who would be able to ascertain from the tribe whether a particular child is a member or eligible for membership, is too vague. Accordingly, that phrase has been changed to "a participant in an Indian child custody proceeding."

(10) One commenter pointed out that some tribes operate without any constitution or other form of governing document. Accordingly, the words "if any" have been added after the phrase "constitution or other governing document."

(11) Comments were also made regarding the requirement that the plan provide information concerning court funding. These objections were based on concern that an impasse might develop in which funding would be contingent on reassumption of jurisdiction and reassumption of jurisdiction contingent on funding. If funds will become available when the tribe reassumes jurisdiction, those funds may be listed in the plan. This provision has been modified to make it clear that such funds may be included. This requirement has been retained because availability of funding to implement the reassumption plan is an essential element of feasibility.

(12) Some commenters also objected to the requirement that the plan state how many tribal members there are and how many Indians live on the affected territory. In part, these objections arise due to difficulty some tribes may have in arriving at precise figures. Accordingly, these provisions have been modified to permit estimates where necessary.

(13) One commenter pointed out that the number residing on a tribe's

reservation is irrelevant if the tribe is petitioning only for referral jurisdiction. Therefore, the requirement for that information, for referral jurisdiction only, has been deleted. The requirement that information be provided concerning the number of persons that will become subject to the tribe's jurisdiction and the number of child custody cases expected, has been retained because it is needed to evaluate whether the plan is adequate. Population is one of the specific factors listed by Congress as appropriate for consideration in making a feasibility determination. See 25 U.S.C. 1918(b)(iii).

(14) Many commenters objected to the requirement for a description of support services that will be available to the tribe or tribes when jurisdiction is reassumed. Some feared that the Bureau would only consider those resources normally employed by traditional social service agencies and would not consider special non-institutional resources available uniquely to the tribe. This provision has been modified to make it clear that such a narrow construction of "support services" is not intended. There was also concern expressed that this provision might effectively preclude poorer tribes from reassuming jurisdiction. The listing of support services may include any services available to the tribe regardless of who funds or operates them. The section has been revised to make this point clearer. States, of course, continue to have the same obligations towards Indians residing within their borders as they have to other citizens under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Some state services, however, may become less available after reassumption of jurisdiction simply because tribal courts lack the jurisdiction that many state courts have to compel state agencies to provide support services. If reassumption of jurisdiction creates a problem in this regard, the tribal plan should state how the tribe plans to deal with it.

(15) A number of comments were received concerning the requirement in § 13.12 that the affected territory must have been previously subject to tribal jurisdiction. Commenters pointed out that such a requirement would exclude lands and communities that acquired reservation status after passage of legislation giving the state jurisdiction. This subsection has been revised to require only that the land be a reservation as defined in the Act and that it be presently occupied by the tribe.

(16) Paragraph (a)(4) has been modified by using the term "tribal court, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903(12)," to assure that tribes have as much freedom as possible in establishing procedures.

(17) One commenter objected to paragraph (a)(5) requiring a tribe to have available support services for *any child* who must be removed from the parents as it imposes a heavy burden on tribes since just one severely handicapped child may require extraordinary assistance, the availability of which the tribe may not be able to establish in advance. This provision has been modified to require only that support services be available for *most children.* Tribes, like states, can make special arrangements when especially difficult cases arise. There will be no requirement for an advance showing that facilities are available for the most severe problems. Also, in response to comments, paragraph (a)(5) has been revised to require only that services be in place by the time of reassumption. They need not be in place before that time.

(18) Paragraph (a)(6) has been modified to require only that a procedure be established for identifying persons who will be subject to the tribe's jurisdiction rather than for identifying all tribal members. The Act contemplates that jurisdiction may be reassumed, if the tribe wishes, only over a portion of the total membership of the tribe. Where the reassumption of jurisdiction is so limited, a procedure is needed only to identify those members or persons eligible for membership who will become subject to tribal jurisdiction.

(19) Upon the recommendation of one commenter, a new subsection (b) has been added specifically providing for assistance by the Department to a tribe that may wish to reassume partial jurisdiction if it is unable to develop a feasible plan for total reassumption of jurisdiction. The subsection also provides for Departmental assistance in negotiating agreements with the state under 25 U.S.C. 1919.

(20) In response to comments on § 13.14(b) copies of the notice of reassumption of jurisdiction will be sent to the governor and the highest court in the state as well as the attorney general of the affected state or states to improve the likelihood that all affected state agencies are informed of the change in jurisdiction.

(21) In response to comments on § 13.15 responsibility for the initial decision has been shifted from the Secretary to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs. This change has been made to provide for an administrative appeal before a decision is made that is final for the Department and reviewable in the federal court.

B. Changes not adopted

(1) Some commenters objected to requiring the citation of the statute or statutes which have provided the basis for state assertion of jurisdiction. The objection is based on concern that citation of such a statute might be construed as an admission that state assertion of jurisdiction was legally authorized. The language of this requirement has been modified to make it more clear that it is the state—not necessarily the tribe—which asserts that a particular statute granted the state jurisdiction. This requirement has been retained because it is good legislative practice to know what statutes may be affected when taking action that may result in their effective repeal.

(2) One commenter recommended language to the effect that these regulations establish the right of tribes to reassume jurisdiction. This recommendation has not been adopted because it is the statute—not these regulations—which establishes that right. The regulations merely provide a procedure by which a tribe can exercise the right established in the statute.

(3) A comment recommending use of the term "assertion of exclusive jurisdiction" instead of "reassumption of jurisdiction" has not been adopted. "Reassumption of jurisdiction" is the term used by the Act and it would be unnecessarily confusing to use a different term in the regulations. The concern of the commenter that the term "reassumption" might implicitly concede that the reservation of a petitioning tribe has ever been subject to exclusive state jurisdiction is effectively answered by the explicit language of the section. A tribe need not admit that a state actually has jurisdiction. A petition may be filed if a state has been asserting jurisdiction, regardless of whether such assertion is valid.

(4) A comment that the regulations provide that tribes may regain jurisdiction lost because of a federal adjudication has not been adopted. Section 108 of the Act authorizes reassumption only when jurisdiction has been conferred on a state pursuant to a law. Strictly speaking, jurisdiction is not conferred on a state through court decisions. The decisions simply conclude that a certain law has caused a transfer in jurisdiction.

(5) A comment that reassumption include jurisdiction over child welfare services and investigative and preventive interventions in the homes of Indian children has also not been

adopted. The Act only authorizes reassumption over child custody proceedings. It is not the intent of the Act to exclude anyone from providing services to Indian families. It is only when such services may involve placing the child with someone other than his or her parents or Indian custodian that the Act becomes involved. Where jurisdiction is reassumed, social service agencies must comply with the requirements of a tribal court—not a state court—when placing a child.

(6) One commenter objected generally to the amount of information requested on the ground that it discriminates against tribes that have been subjected to state jurisdiction since those tribes already exercising jurisdiction are not required to provide similar information. Most of the information requirements have been retained because such "discrimination" is mandated by the statute. Under 25 U.S.C. 1918 those tribes that wish to reassume jurisdiction are required to submit a "suitable plan to exercise such jurisdiction" and the Secretary is to determine the "feasibility" of the plan. Congress has imposed no similar requirements on tribes already exercising Indian child custody jurisdiction.

(7) One commenter asked that the regulations be more specific as to which entity is the "governing body" of a tribe. The regulations cannot be more specific because the internal organization differs from tribe to tribe.

(8) One commenter objected to the requirement that the tribe establish a procedure for determining who is a member of a tribe on the grounds that it is the obligation of the parties and the court to make that determination. This recommendation has not been adopted. A method of determining membership was one of the items specifically listed in 25 U.S.C. 1918(b) as a factor the Secretary may consider in determining the feasibility of a plan. It is true that the legal burden for determining whether the Act applies to a particular child is on the parties and the court. This provision does not change that burden. It merely asks that the tribe have a procedure for cooperating with the court or the parties in meeting their burden. Since the tribe is in the best position to know who its own members are, it seems reasonable to ask it to cooperate in that respect. Because of the special needs of children, promptness and certainty are more important in child custody proceedings than they are in most other litigation. Tribal cooperation in this respect will help assure that its members receive the benefits of the Act and will impose only a minimal burden on the tribe.

(9) Some commenters recommended that the Bureau accept without question a tribal governing body's conclusion that the tribe has authorized it to exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters. Under 25 U.S.C. 1918, the Secretary is to determine whether the exercise of jurisdiction is feasible. The exercise of such jurisdiction by an entity that has not been authorized by the tribe to exercise it is clearly not feasible. It has been a longstanding general principle on the part of the Department of the Interior that the Indian tribes are empowered to interpret their own governing documents. Consequently, when this Department is called upon to decide an issue that requires the interpretation of tribal governing documents, it will give great weight to any interpretation of those documents made by an appropriate tribal forum. However, the Department is not necessarily bound thereby. The Secretary cannot accept or acquiesce to a tribal interpretation which is so arbitrary or unreasonable that its application would constitute a violation of the right to due process. *See* Letter decision of Forrest J. Gerard, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, dated August 28, 1978, 5 Indian Law Reporter H–17, 18 (1978). Exercise of jurisdiction by an entity not authorized to exercise it would constitute a violation of the right to due process. Accordingly, the requirement of a citation to the provision in the tribal constitution or other governing document, if any, that authorizes the governing body to exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters has been retained so the Department will have the information it needs in order to make the determination of feasibility. The tribal governing body's conclusion on that point will be given great weight and will be upheld if its interpretation is not arbitrary or unreasonable. If the tribal electorate wishes its governing body to exercise such authority despite the Department's conclusion that its constitution or governing document does not authorize the governing body to do so, the constitution or governing document can be amended. Non-tribal courts are sometimes called upon to interpret tribal laws. *See e.g., Quechan Tribe of Indians* vs. *Rowe*, 531 F. 2d 408 (9th Cir. 1976); *Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation* vs. *Washington*, 591 F. 2d 89 (9th Cir. 1979). Clarification of the governing body's authority prior to reassumption of jurisdiction will avoid delays later on when the custody of specific Indian children is being decided by the court.

(10) Some commenters also objected to requesting a copy of any tribal ordinances or court rules establishing procedures for exercising child custody jurisdiction. Exercise of jurisdiction by a tribe that has not thought through how it is going to handle the cases that come to it cannot be said to be feasible. The most basic element of due process is the existence of a procedure on which the parties to a dispute can rely as the basis for their rights. Accordingly this requirement has been retained.

(11) A number of commenters objected to the requirement that the tribal court that is established be capable of deciding child custody matters in a manner that meets the requirements of the Indian Civil Rights Act. One commenter argued that after the Supreme Court's decision in *Santa Clara Pueblo* vs. *Martinez*, 436 U.S. 49 (1978), the question of how the Indian Civil Rights Act applies to tribal government activities should be left exclusively to the tribe. In footnote 22 the Court in *Martinez* specifically noted that it may be appropriate to consider Indian Civil Rights Act issues when the Department exercises its approval authority. This Department will not exercise its approval power in a manner that authorizes violations of civil rights. A plan that does not provide for exercise of jurisdiction in a manner that protects rights guaranteed under the Indian Civil Rights Act is not a feasible plan as required by the Indian Child Welfare Act.

(12) One commenter recommended that a tribe only be required to show that it is able to establish the necessary support services. This recommendation has not been adopted. Services should be available at least by the time reassumption occurs. Such services need not be organized in the same fashion as services from traditional social services agencies. Such services need not be funded or controlled by the tribe. All that is necessary is that they be available.

(13) One commenter recommended that reassumption of jurisdiction not be approved unless the tribe could show that it is in "the best interests of children" that jurisdiction would be reassumed. Such a standard is not authorized by the Act. The Act only requires that tribal jurisdiction be "feasible"—not that it necessarily be shown to be better for the children than state jurisdiction. Although the findings in the Act indicate that Congress believes tribal jurisdiction will, in most cases, be better for Indian children, it

did not require that each tribe reassuming jurisdiction prove that point. States are not denied jurisdiction over child custody matters relating to their residents simply because a neighboring state could handle the cases better. Tribes should not be required to compete with neighboring jurisdictions any more than states are.

(14) A recommendation that paragraph (a)(4) be modified to define in precise terms what is meant by "the requirements of the Indian Civil Rights Act" has not been adopted because it would be virtually impossible to do so in sufficiently complete fashion. The most important requirement of that Act in this context is the due process provision, which requires that disputes be handled in a manner that is fair. An effort to define "fairness" in detail would tend to unnecessarily restrict tribal options. The Department will look for guidance on that issue to the existing body of caselaw defining what "due process" or "fairness" means in specific situations.

(15) One commenter objected to the requirement in § 13.14 for **Federal Register** publication of the fact that a petition has been received prior to taking action on the petition. The commenter argued that publication would place on tribes an undue burden of having to respond to adverse comments on their petitions. The purpose of publication is not to solicit comments but to give the public and affected officials and agencies some advance notice that a change in jurisdiction may be coming. Although comments will not be solicited, any that are volunteered will be considered and made available to the petitioning tribe or tribes. The primary author of this document is David Etheridge, Office of the Solicitor, Department of the Interior; (202) 343–6967.

Note.—The Department of the Interior has determined that this document is not a significant rule and does not require a regulatory analysis under Executive Order 12044 and 43 CFR Part 14.

Subchapter B, Chapter 1, of title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended by adding a new Part 13, reading as follows:

PART 13—TRIBAL REASSUMPTION OF JURISDICTION OVER CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDINGS

Subpart A—Purpose

Sec.

13.1 Purpose.

Subpart B—Reassumption

13.11 Contents of reassumption petitions.
13.12 Criteria for approval of reassumption petitions.
13.13 Technical assistance prior to petitioning.
13.14 Secretarial review procedure.
13.15 Administrative appeals.
13.16 Technical assistance after disapproval.

Authority: 25 U.S.C. 1952.

Subpart A—Purpose

§ 13.1 Purpose.

(a) The regulations of this part establish the procedures by which an Indian tribe that occupies a reservation as defined in 25 U.S.C. § 1903(10) over which a state asserts any jurisdiction pursuant to the provisions of the Act of August 15, 1953 (67 Stat. 588) Pub. L. 83–280, or pursuant to any other federal law (including any special federal law applicable only to a tribe or tribes in Oklahoma), may reassume jurisdiction over Indian child custody proceedings as authorized by the Indian Child Welfare Act, Pub. L. 95–608, 92 Stat. 3069, 25 U.S.C. § 1918.

(b) On some reservations there are disputes concerning whether certain federal statutes have subjected Indian child custody proceedings to state jurisdiction or whether any such jurisdiction conferred on a state is exclusive of tribal jurisdiction. Tribes located on those reservations may wish to exercise exclusive jurisdiction or other jurisdiction currently exercised by the state without the necessity of engaging in protracted litigation. The procedures in this part also permit such tribes to secure unquestioned exclusive, concurrent or partial jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters without relinquishing their claim that no federal statute had ever deprived them of that jurisdiction.

(c) Some tribes may wish to join together in a consortium to establish a single entity that will exercise jurisdiction over all their members located on the reservations of tribes participating in the consortium. These regulations also provide a procedure by which tribes may reassume jurisdiction through such a consortium.

(d) These regulations also provide for limited reassumptions including jurisdiction restricted to cases transferred from state courts under 25 U.S.C. § 1911(b) and jurisdiction over limited geographical areas.

(e) Unless the petition for reassumption specifically states otherwise, where a tribe reassumes jurisdiction over the reservation it occupies, any land or community occupied by that tribe which subsequently acquires the status of reservation as defined in 25 U.S.C. § 1903(10) also becomes subject to tribal jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters.

Subpart B—Reassumption

§ 13.11 Contents of reassumption petitions.

(a) Each petition to reassume jurisdiction over Indian child custody proceedings and the accompanying plan shall contain, where available, the following information in sufficient detail to permit the Secretary to determine whether reassumption is feasible:

(1) Full name, address and telephone number of the petitioning tribe or tribes.

(2) A resolution by the tribal governing body supporting the petition and plan. If the territory involved is occupied by more than one tribe and jurisdiction is to be reassumed over all Indians residing in the territory, the governing body of each tribe involved must adopt such a resolution. A tribe that shares territory with another tribe or tribes may reassume jurisdiction only over its own members without obtaining the consent of the other tribe or tribes. Where a group of tribes form a consortium to reassume jurisdiction, the governing body of each participating tribe must submit a resolution.

(3) The proposed date on which jurisdiction would be reassumed.

(4) Estimated total number of members in the petitioning tribe or tribes, together with an explanation of how the number was estimated.

(5) Current criteria for membership in the tribe or tribes.

(6) Explanation of procedure by which a participant in an Indian child custody proceeding may determine whether a particular individual is a member of a petitioning tribe.

(7) Citation to provision in tribal constitution or similar governing document, if any, that authorizes the tribal governing body to exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters.

(8) Description of the tribal court as defined in 25 U.S.C. § 1903(12) that has been or will be established to exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters. The description shall include an organization chart and budget for the court. The source and amount of non-tribal funds that will be used to fund the court shall be identified. Funds that will become available only when the tribe reassumes jurisdiction may be included.

(9) Copy of any tribal ordinances or tribal court rules establishing procedures or rules for the exercise of jurisdiction over child custody matters.

(10) Description of child and family support services that will be available to the tribe or tribes when jurisdiction reassumed. Such services include any resource to maintain family stability or provide support for an Indian child in the absence of a family—regardless of whether or not they are the type of services traditionally employed by social services agencies. The description shall include not only those resources of the tribe itself, but also any state or federal resources that will continue to be available after reassumption of jurisdiction.

(11) Estimate of the number of child custody cases expected during a year together with an explanation of how the number was estimated.

(12) Copy of any tribal agreements with states, other tribes or non-Indian local governments relating to child custody matters.

(b) If the petition is for jurisdiction other than transferral jurisdiction under 25 U.S.C. 1911(b), the following information shall also be included in the petition and plan:

(1) Citation of the statute or statutes upon which the state has based its assertion of jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters.

(2) Clear and definite description of the territory over which jurisdiction will be reassumed together with a statement of the size of the territory in square miles.

(3) If a statute upon which the state bases its assertion of jurisdiction is a surplus land statute, a clear and definite description of the reservation boundaries that will be reestablished for purposes of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

(4) Estimated total number of Indian children residing in the affected territory together with an explanation of how the number was estimated.

§ 13.12 Criteria for approval of reassumption petitions.

(a) The Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs shall approve a tribal petition to reassume jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters if:

(1) Any reservation, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903(10), presently affected by the petition is presently occupied by the petitioning tribe or tribes;

(2) The constitution or other governing document, if any, of the petitioning tribe or tribes authorizes the tribal governing body or bodies to exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters;

(3) The information and documents required by § 13.11 of this part have been provided;

(4) A tribal court, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903(12), has been established or will be established before reassumption and that tribal court will be able to exercise jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters in a manner that meets the requirements of the Indian Civil Rights Act, 25 U.S.C. 1302;

(5) Child care services sufficient to meet the needs of most children the tribal court finds must be removed from parental custody are available or will be available at the time of reassumption of jurisdiction; and

(6) The tribe or tribes have established a procedure for clearly identifying persons who will be subject to the jurisdiction of the tribe or tribes upon reassumption of jurisdiction.

(b) If the technical assistance provided by the Bureau to the tribe to correct any deficiency which the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs has identified as a basis for disapproving a petition for reassumption of exclusive jurisdiction has proved unsuccessful in eliminating entirely such problem, the Bureau, at the request of the tribe, shall assist the tribe to assert whatever partial jurisdiction as provided in 25 U.S.C. 1918(b) that is feasible and desired by the tribe. In the alternative, the Bureau, if requested by the concerned tribe, shall assist the tribe to enter into agreements with a state or states regarding the care and custody of Indian children and jurisdiction over Indian child custody proceedings, including agreements which may provide for the orderly transfer of jurisdiction to the tribe on a case-by-case basis or agreements which provide for concurrent jurisdiction between the state and the Indian tribe.

§ 13.13 Technical assistance prior to petitioning.

(a) Upon the request of a tribe desiring to reassume jurisdiction over Indian child custody matters, Bureau agency and Area Offices shall provide technical assistance and make available any pertinent documents, records, maps or reports in the Bureau's possession to enable the tribe to meet the requirements for Secretarial approval of the petition.

(b) Upon the request of such a tribe, to the extent funds are available, the Bureau may provide funding under the procedures established under 25 CFR 23.22 to assist the tribe in developing the tribal court and child care services that will be needed when jurisdiction is reassumed.

§ 13.14 Secretarial review procedure.

(a) Upon receipt of the petition, the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs shall cause to be published in the **Federal Register** a notice stating that the petition has been received and is under review and that it may be inspected and copied at the Bureau agency office that serves the petitioning tribe or tribes.

(1) No final action shall be taken until 45 days after the petition has been received.

(2) Notice that a petition has been disapproved shall be published in the **Federal Register** no later than 75 days after the petition has been received.

(3) Notice that a petition has been approved shall be published on a date requested by the petitioning tribe or within 75 days after the petition has been received—whichever is later.

(b) Notice of approval shall include a clear and definite description of the territory presently subject to the reassumption of jurisdiction and shall state the date on which the reassumption becomes effective. A copy of the notice shall immediately be sent to the petitioning tribe and to the attorney general, governor and highest court of the affected state or states.

(c) Reasons for disapproval of a petition shall be sent immediately to the petitioning tribe or tribes.

(d) When a petition has been disapproved a tribe or tribes may repetition after taking action to overcome the deficiencies of the first petition.

§ 13.15 Administrative appeals.

The decision of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs may be appealed under procedures established in 43 CFR 4.350–4.369.

§ 13.16 Technical assistance after disapproval.

If a petition is disapproved, the Bureau shall immediately offer technical assistance to the tribal governing body for the purpose of overcoming the defect in the petition or plan that resulted in the disapproval.

Forrest J. Gerard,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

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25 CFR Part 23

Indian Child Welfare Act; Implementation

July 24, 1979.

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Final rule.