
Alaska Federation of Natives

Guidelines for Research

At its quarterly meeting in May 1993, the AFN Board of Directors adopted a policy recommendation that includes a set of research principles to be conveyed to scientists who plan to conduct studies among Alaska Natives.

The principles were sent out to all Native organizations and villages in the hope that compliance by researchers will deter abuses such as those committed in the past which have lately come to light.

Alaska Natives share with the scientific community an interest in learning more about the history and culture of our societies. The best scientific and ethical standards are obtained when

Alaska Natives are directly involved in research conducted in our communities and in studies where the findings have a direct impact on Native populations.

AFN recommends to public and private institutions that conduct or support research among Alaska Natives that they have included a standard category of funding in their projects to ensure Native participation.

AFN conveys to all scientists and researchers who plan to conduct studies among Alaska Natives that they must comply with the following research principles:

- Advise Native people who are to be affected by the study of the purpose, goals and timeframe of the research, the data gathering techniques, the positive and negative implications and impacts of the research
- Obtain informed consent of the appropriate governing body.
- Fund the support of a Native Research Committee appointed by the local community to assess and monitor the research project and ensure compliance with the expressed wishes of Native people.
- Protect the sacred knowledge and cultural/intellectual property of Native people.
- Hire and train Native people to assist in the study.
- Use Native languages whenever English is the second language.
- Guarantee confidentiality of surveys and sensitive material.
- Include Native viewpoints in the final study.
- Acknowledge the contributions of Native resource people.
- Inform the Native Research Committee in a summary and in non-technical language of the major findings of the study.
- Provide copies of the study to the local people.