



## BULLETIN

**No. 2026-01**

**January 13, 2026**

### **Subject: Agency Operations in the Absence of an Acting or Permanent Chair**

Effective May 6, 2024, the Secretary of the Interior appointed Sharon M. Avery as an Associate Commissioner of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC). Effective May 15, 2024, the President appointed Commissioner Avery to serve as the agency's Acting Chair. Acting Chair Avery's term expired January 12, 2026. Therefore, on January 13, 2026, Ms. Avery resumes her appointment as Associate Commissioner.

In February 2024, prior to his departure NIGC, former Chair E. Sequoyah Simermeyer delegated his authorities under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), 25 U.S.C. § 2707, to Vice Chair Jeannie Hovland. Since Sharon Avery's term as Acting Chair expired, Chair Simermeyer's prior delegation of authorities to Vice Chair Hovland resumes January 13, 2026. This delegation includes the Chair's authority over hiring and supervision of staff and procurement of necessary goods and services.

Former Chair Simermeyer further delegated his authorities under 25 U.S.C. § 2705 to Vice Chair Hovland for use only in the event of an emergency. This includes the authority to issue temporary closure orders and propose civil fine assessments for violations of the IGRA, NIGC regulations, and approval of tribal gaming ordinances.

Although the full range of authorities of the Chair cannot be delegated, the resumption of Chair Simermeyer's delegation ensures Vice Chair Hovland can manage day-to-day functions to allow the agency to continue as normal and address any serious, unexpected situations demanding an immediate response.

This delegation remains in effect until such time as an acting chair is appointed or a permanent chair is confirmed, at which point that person will assume all the authorities of the Chair.

For any questions about this bulletin, please contact the Office of General Counsel at (202) 632-7003.

The Agency previously provided additional information on delegation of authority in [NIGC Bulletin 2024-01](#).