

FORT SILL APACHE TRIBE
Tribal Headquarters: Apache, OK



A brief history

The Chiricahua Apache are one of seven different groups of “Apache” whose historic territory extended from southwestern New Mexico, southeastern Arizona, northern Sonora and Chiricahua, Mexico.

Led by Cochise and Geronimo, this group was one of the last to resist the United States in the southwest. Encroachments by settlers and miners caused many Chiricahua to die from armed attacks, disease, and starvation. Continued western expansion resulted in a near constant state of war between the U.S. and the Chiricahua from 1863 to the 1880s.

In 1872, a separate Chiricahua Apache Reservation was established, but only remained open for four years. All Apaches were moved to the San Carlos Reservation in southeastern Arizona in 1877. Many Chiricahua refused to be confined to the reservation and continued military campaigns until 1886 when they surrendered. They were exiled to Florida, Alabama and Oklahoma and most of the remaining Chiricahua were moved to the Fort Sill Military Reservation in Oklahoma. After Geronimo’s death in 1909 they were allowed to return to a reservation in Arizona. Those who stayed behind became known as the “Fort Sill Apache.”

The tribe reorganized its government in the mid 1970s. The tribe has approximately 650 members.

About the flag

The flag of the Chiricahua's has the tribe's seal centered on a yellow field. The outer rim of the circular seal is a thick red band. The words "The Fort Sill Apache" circle the top of the red ring, while the word "Oklahoma" also in red, rings the bottom. In the spaces around the words are two sets of crossed arrows and two eagle heads, both in black. A thinner yellow band with stylized crosses located at the four directions of the compass and stylized triangles on the bottom half of the band surrounds the center picture featuring a black and white depiction of Geronimo in traditional dress holding a rifle. In the background is a landscape that reflects the Chiricahua's ancestral home in Arizona, including a green Saguaro cactus.

Educational Activity

The Fort Sill Apache were moved to Oklahoma and chose to stay when many of their tribe returned to their reservation in Arizona. Why do you think they would stay? How does their flag represent their history?