

## Phillip Francisco chosen as New Navajo Nation chief of police

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Phillip Francisco, 40, of Farmington, has been chosen as the new Navajo Nation chief of police.

The chief of police position has remained vacant for nearly eight years. Director of the Navajo Division of Public Safety Jesse Delmar said hiring a permanent chief of police has been a top priority for the Begaye-Nez administration.

“President Begaye and Vice President Nez had given me a directive to hire a chief of police since I was first appointed as director of the Navajo Division of Public Safety,” Delmar said. “I am very excited to announce today our selection of Phillip Francisco from Farmington, N.M. as the next chief of police for the Navajo Police Department.”

Francisco currently serves with the Farmington Police Department as a patrol and training officer. He has experience working with the Aztec Police Department and the San Juan County Sheriff’s Office, where he was a patrol corporal training officer. He has combined experience of nearly 18 years as an officer.

His clans are Bilaganna born for Ha’shtl’ishnii. His maternal grandfather is Bilaganna and his paternal grandfather is To’da’chii’nii.

Francisco said he wants to make positive changes in leadership for officers on the Nation who are working long hours, covering large areas, and working with understaffed departments

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“The first thing I want to do is review policies to make sure they fit the needs of the citizens on the Navajo Nation. This way we can have our officers serve the citizens more effectively and efficiently,” he said.

President Russell Begaye said the search for a new chief of police has been long and extensive. Having a chief of police in place will ensure that the Nation’s communities will have proper protection and that existing vacancies can now be filled by new officers.

The president said the Nation’s public safety facilities are underutilized in proportion to high crime rates that exist.

“The Nation has gone for eight years without a chief of police, and the search has finally ended with the hiring of a Navajo officer from Farmington, N.M.,” President Begaye said. “Bringing on a new Chief will provide stability to our police force while reinforcing to the public that we are serious about protecting them.”

According to Delmar, Francisco will start in early August.