Clayton W. Fulton
Chief of Staff
Indian Health Service

Clayton W. Fulton, an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation, is the chief of staff for the Indian Health Service, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The IHS is the principal federal health care advocate and provider of health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

As chief of staff, Fulton oversees the coordination of key agency activities and supports the Office of the Director in a broad range of duties related to the development and implementation of IHS initiatives and priorities.

Raised in Indian Country, Fulton has been shaped by the close connection between tribal communities and their lands. His work reflects a commitment to building strong communities and creating opportunities that grow from the ground up. His passion for Indian Country economic development began during an internship with Cherokee Nation Businesses, where he saw how tribal governments use investment and planning to help Native communities thrive.

Fulton earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and a Master of Business Administration in Native American Enterprises from Northeastern State University. He went on to earn his Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan Law School, where he served on the national board of the National Native American Law Students Association. While in law school, he twice earned the annual Doolin Prize for Scholarship in Indian Law Student Scholarship.

After law school, Fulton served as an assistant attorney general with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office. His work included supporting the development of tribal utility infrastructure, code drafting, and close collaboration with the Office of Self-Governance and the Grants Department. Fulton developed a specialty in civil regulatory authority, intergovernmental cooperative agreements, and complex commercial matters, ensuring that tribal programs and initiatives were backed by strong legal and operational structures.