



**UPPER SKAGIT INDIAN TRIBE  
25944 COMMUNITY PLAZA WAY  
SEDRO-WOOLLEY, WA 98284  
360-854-7000**

June 25, 2007

Mount Vernon Community Services Office

Nancy Wolke, Administrator

To whom it may concern:

The Upper Skagit Tribal Elections were held on June 9, 2007 and while the Council members remain the same, there was a change in Council leadership.

The new Tribal Chairman is Jennifer Washington and the Vice-Chairman is Tina Talley, they will sign all contracts on behalf of the Tribe as of this date.

If you have any questions, please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Lurf". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula Lurf,  
General Manager of  
Governmental Operations

**TANF Operating Agreement  
Between the  
Upper Skagit Indian Tribe and the Mount Vernon Community Services  
Office**

June 15, 2007

This summary constitutes a record of the operational agreements reached between the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, the Mount Vernon Community Service Office (CSO), Region 3 Community Services Division, and the Everett Division of Child Support (DCS), for the implementation of the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe's TANF program (USIT TANF).

This agreement represents a starting point for the parties involved. Further cooperative agreements or operational modifications are likely as needs change.

The purpose of this agreement is to further strengthen the government-to-government working relationship between all the parties; and to assure that all mutual TANF clients receive the best possible services at all times during the transition and the day-to day operation of the TANF programs.

**1. Identification of Tribal TANF Cases:**

- A. Within the geographical area defined by the Upper Skagit Family Assistance Plan (TFAP), the Upper Skagit TANF program will serve:
  - 1. All families residing on the Upper Skagit Reservation who have at least one family household member who is an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian Tribe.
  - 2. All residents of Skagit County who have at least one family household member who is an enrolled member of the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe.
- B. Enrolled Upper Skagit Tribal Members can only receive TANF from one State or Tribal TANF program at a time.
- C. All clients meeting the above definition who apply for TANF on or after July 1, 2007 must apply through the Tribe, based on 2.C below. All current state TANF recipients who meet the above definition will be transferred to the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program from August 1, 2007 to September 1, 2007 based on Section 2.C below.
- D. When there are questions concerning appropriate program eligibility, the CSO and the Tribe will have a single point of contact to consult on

appropriate placement. Any application and supporting information will be immediately forwarded to the correct office. Initially, the contact persons for this purpose will be:

**Mount Vernon CSO:**

1. Out stationed CSO staff
2. Call Center
3. Medical Outreach Supervisor

**USIT TANF Program:**

1. The Employment Services Manager
2. General Manager of Governmental Operations
3. Director of Health and Human Services

**2. Case Transfers:**

A. The Upper Skagit Tribal TANF Program will begin operating on *July 1, 2007*.

B. **NEW TANF APPLICATIONS:** The Upper Skagit Tribal TANF Program will begin accepting new applications for the Upper Skagit TANF program on *July 1, 2007*. The Mount Vernon CSO will begin referring new TANF applications and current WorkFirst participants to Upper Skagit TANF on this date. New applicant means not currently receiving TANF.

C. **OPEN TANF CASES:** The transfer of TANF cases from the Mount Vernon CSO will begin on *August 1, 2007*.

August 1, 2007 – All new TANF and participants currently being served by Upper Skagit WorkFirst

- i. The CSO will transfer case files on new TANF cases and current participants of the Upper Skagit WorkFirst by August 15, 2007
- ii. CSO will pay the grant through August 31, 2007

September 1, 2007 – All other TANF cases

- i. The CSO will transfer case files on all other TANF cases by September 15, 2007
- ii. CSO will pay the grant through September 30, 2007

- D. On the first day of August 2007 the family will receive their State TANF grant. As early as possible in the transfer month, the CSO will:
1. Close State TANF benefits;
  2. Open Family (F04) Medical Assistance for the family, pending eligibility determinations;
  3. The CSO agrees that Childcare benefits will remain unchanged during the transfer month
  4. Send the family a letter notifying them of the termination of State TANF benefits and direct the head of household to the Upper Skagit TANF Program to have their on-going eligibility determined;
  5. Prepare a hard copy packet of information, as listed in Section 3 below, and
  6. Mail or deliver the packet to Upper Skagit TANF
- E. The CSO shall continue to provide relevant services to eligible recipients until the TANF case is transferred to the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF Program pursuant to Section 2.C.
- F. The Tribal TANF Program will notify the CSO within 2 working days if a case is determined to be ineligible for Tribal TANF.

**3. Transfer of Information:**

- A. Information necessary to affect a smooth transfer from State to Tribal TANF will be copied by the CSO and sent in hard copy to the Upper Skagit TANF program at least 20 calendar days prior to the date the case is transferred. The information to be transferred includes:
1. Demographic information (a copy of the most recent application or Eligibility Review);
  2. Income and resources;
  3. Native American status (as declared by the household);
  4. Relationship of household members to the Native American member(s);
  5. Citizenship;
  6. Place of residence (if different from mailing address)
  7. Pregnancy due date;
  8. Identification and Social Security number;
  9. Absent parent information;

10. Number of months the family has already received State or Tribal TANF and the number of months the family resided on an Indian Reservation while receiving TANF, if known;
  11. Status of 60 month extension (if applicable);
  12. Current Individual Responsibility Plan;
  13. Component history screen.
  14. All information related to a current SSI applicants
- B. The CSO will make any information available to the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program needed to facilitate a case transfer; however, the parties agree that the routine information to be transferred will be limited to Automated Client Eligibility (ACES), Jobs Automated System (JAS), Incapacity Case Management System (ICMS), and Document Management System (DMS) screens which contain the information listed above, three (3) months of documentation, and permanent record identification.

**4. Ongoing Transfer of Cases:**

- A. When a TANF case is transferred to the Mount Vernon CSO from another CSO in the State, the Mount Vernon CSO will screen for Upper Skagit Tribal TANF eligibility. If there is a question about which state or Tribal TANF program should serve a family, the CSO will immediately contact the other TANF program(s) to resolve who will serve that family.
- B. If a current state TANF client approaches the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program to have his/her case transferred from the CSO, the Upper Skagit TANF program will screen for eligibility. If eligible, Upper Skagit TANF will notify the CSO to transfer the case.
- C. When a Tribal TANF family leaves the Upper Skagit Tribe's service area, Upper Skagit TANF will notify the Mount Vernon CSO and Everett DCS.
- D. Pregnant women in their first two trimesters of pregnancy served under the state TANF program who meet the eligibility criteria of the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program will be transferred to the Upper Skagit TANF program 100 days prior to the due date.
  - i. Payment will be made by the state until the first full month of their last trimester.

**5. DSHS Out-stationed Employee(s)**

The CSO will continue to provide access to medical assistance and other services through a DSHS employee out stationed at the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe's clinic on the Reservation as long as funding is available. If funding is terminated, this section will be reviewed.

**6. Cases that Transfer with Open Basic Food (Food Stamps) and Medical**

On-going Basic Food eligibility will be determined by the CSO using the Upper Skagit Tribe's grant standards and any other earned or unearned income that will affect Basic Food eligibility. The CSO will keep Basic Food open on transfer cases through the current certification period provided the household remains eligible for assistance.

The CSO determines eligibility and opens Family (F04) Medical Assistance for the family, pending Upper Skagit Tribal TANF eligibility determination. Reporting change of circumstances information to the CSO is the client's responsibility.

**7. Ongoing Exchange of Information:**

The ongoing exchange of information will be covered through a data sharing agreement for the three (3) years of the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF plan. This exchange of data can be used in any situation where exchange of information is needed by either program to administer TANF, Basic Food,, Medical Assistance, Child Support, Child Care, or General Assistance programs. However, reporting change of circumstances information to the CSO is the client's responsibility.

**8. Child Support:**

A. The Division of Child Support (DCS) has an associated child support case(s) for each existing TANF case. Child support is currently being collected on some of these cases and will be forwarded to the Upper Skagit TANF program through electronic funds transfer. In order for DCS to timely and accurately transfer child support payments to the Upper Skagit TANF program:

1. Before or during the transfer month, the Mount Vernon CSO will notify the Everett DCS Field Office of cases being transferred to the Upper Skagit TANF program. Notification will include the name and Social Security Number of the custodial parent.

2. Upper Skagit TANF will require that the custodial parent sign a form assigning his/her right to collect child support to the Upper Skagit TANF program. Upper Skagit TANF will send or fax the signed form to DCS.
  3. The Upper Skagit TANF program will set up an electronic funds transfer account and provide the account number to DCS.
- B. DCS will provide child support services for new Upper Skagit TANF cases, after receiving a completed referral and an assignment form(s) from the Tribe to DCS.
- C. Upon receipt of a child support assignment:
1. DCS will share with Upper Skagit TANF child support case information necessary for documenting and tracking child support payments.
  2. Both DCS and the Upper Skagit TANF will exchange case information necessary to coordinate services.

**9. Child Care for Upper Skagit Tribal TANF:**

TANF related childcare assistance is available through the DSHS to clients receiving Tribal TANF benefits. TANF recipients access childcare through:

- a) The call center at 360-416-7444
- b) The out stationed DSHS employee located at Upper Skagit Tribal Health Clinic

The Upper Skagit TANF Program will need to contact the out stationed employee or the call center to verify Tribal TANF participation and hours.

**10. Basic Food and Medical Assistance for New Upper Skagit TANF Program applicants:**

- A. Applicants approved for Tribal TANF by the Upper Skagit TANF program who want Medical Assistance eligibility will be automatic once approved for Tribal TANF. Upper Skagit TANF will refer the client to the out stationed CSO staff to process their benefits. The Upper Skagit TANF program will provide copies of available verification of income, identification, household composition and address.
- B. Applicants approved for Tribal TANF by the Upper Skagit TANF program who want Basic Food assistance can apply at the Upper Skagit Health Clinic with the out stationed CSO staff or at the Mount Vernon CSO.

- C. The applicant can contact the Mount Vernon CSO to obtain an EBT card for Basic Food benefits. If requested, the EBT card can be mailed to the client.
- D. If an applicant needs retroactive Medical Assistance, they are required to submit a state application to either the Mount Vernon CSO or the out stationed CSO staff at the Upper Skagit Health Clinic.
- E. The Mount Vernon CSO agrees to keep the Upper Skagit Program apprised of current CSO application procedures.
- F. The Tribe will provide monthly verification of Tribal TANF cases to the CSO and DCS including the client's names, dates of birth, client ACES number, grant amounts in order to calculate the Basic Food and Medical Assistance benefits, and Child Support related matters.

**11. Change of Circumstances:**

- A. The client is responsible for reporting changes to both the Mount Vernon CSO and the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program. However, the CSO may request information about resources and income verification from Upper Skagit TANF to facilitate determination for Basic Food, Medical Assistance and Working Connection Child Care.
- B. When an Upper Skagit Tribal TANF recipient reports changes in income or circumstances, Upper Skagit TANF will forward the information to the Mount Vernon CSO within five (5) working days. If the client reports changes in income or circumstances to the Mount Vernon CSO, the CSO will forward the information to Upper Skagit TANF within five (5) working days.

**12. Over Payments:**

If an office opens a second TANF grant for an applicant who is already receiving benefits through another office, the office opening the second TANF grant will be responsible for establishing an overpayment and will coordinate with the other office(s) to immediately terminate duplicate benefits.

**13. Terminations:**

- A. As soon as possible and no longer than five (5) working days of terminating a client's Tribal TANF benefits, Upper Skagit TANF will

notify the Mount Vernon CSO and specify the reason for termination.

- B. When an Upper Skagit Tribal TANF family leaves the Tribe's service area, Upper Skagit TANF will notify the Mount Vernon CSO and DCS within five (5) working days.

**14. Sanctions:**

The Mount Vernon CSO will not approve a TANF application for a TANF recipient who is in sanction status with the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program. Upper Skagit TANF will notify the CSO of clients in sanction status.

**15. Time Limits and Extensions:**

- A. Upper Skagit Tribal TANF recipients are exempt from the 60-month time limit for receipt of TANF benefits if they live on the reservation and the reservation meets the federal definition for Indian Country disregard. Under federal law, State and Tribal programs must not count these months towards the 60-month TANF time limit. The Tribe must include toward the 60-month time limit any months counted by the State when the recipient was on State TANF.
- B. Recipients who meet the definition of hardship will be exempted from participation, as defined in the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF Plan.
- C. Upper Skagit TANF recipients who reach the 60-month TANF time limit and are not exempt under the disregard, will be reviewed for an extension under the Upper Skagit TANF extension criteria for hardship or family violence.
- D. Upper Skagit TANF will serve TANF recipients beyond the 60-months using the State's criteria for extensions.
- E. If an Upper Skagit TANF recipient does not meet the Tribe's criteria for an extension, the State will serve them under the State's extension criteria.

**16. Communication and Referrals:**

To assure high quality communication and to quickly resolve emergencies, the contact persons designated in Section 1, above, will also provide liaison and assistance between the offices for Food Assistance, Medical Assistance, Child Support, Child Care and General Assistance.

**17. Technical Assistance and Training:**

- A. Region 3 Community Services and Everett Department of Child Support are committed to providing technical assistance and training to tribal TANF staff whenever possible and appropriate. This may include training on SSI facilitation, Child Care, child support distributions and other topics relevant to case management and TANF service delivery. Upper Skagit TANF has also expressed their willingness to share training with Mount Vernon CSO staff whenever possible and appropriate.
- B. In acknowledgment of the intent of all parties:
1. The Mount Vernon CSO, the Everett DCS and Upper Skagit TANF will, upon request, arrange an orientation to their offices and basic programs and services.
  2. The Mount Vernon CSO, Everett DCS and Region 3 Community Services will invite Upper Skagit TANF staff to any appropriate local or regional training.
  3. Upper Skagit TANF staff, the Mount Vernon CSO, Everett DCS and Region 3 Community Services will share and exchange written materials and information about resources (journals, research papers, web sites, etc.) which appear relevant to TANF administration and service delivery.
  4. Upper Skagit TANF staff, Mount Vernon CSO staff, and Everett DCS staff will meet with each other to clarify, refine and further improve the operation of their programs and their government-to-government relationship.

**18. Data Share Agreement:**

- A. DS HS and the Upper Skagit Tribe will sign a data share agreement to last for the three-year period of the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF plan. The data share agreement will include available data for:
1. The initial transfer of TANF cases described in Sections 1 – 4.
  2. The initial transfer of an application for TANF as described in Section 1.
  3. The ongoing exchange of information for cases described in Section 7.
- B. All parties understand and agree that the sharing of any information about individual clients and case circumstances will be limited to information needed for the proper administration of appropriate CSO, DCS and Tribal assistance programs. All parties will maintain nondisclosure statements signed by staff that has access to the

data on file. All parties will make the nondisclosure agreements available to one another as requested.

- C. As required under federal law, data sharing will help prevent clients from receiving duplicate assistance.

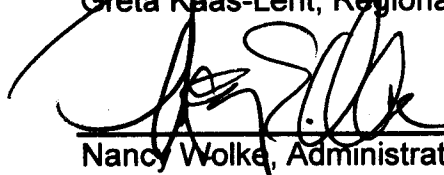
**19. Mutual Cooperation, Trust and Support:**


It is the intent and commitment of the parties to this agreement to encourage and cultivate a professional, positive, cooperative, and mutually respectful relationship between our agencies and staff. We believe this spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and good will is critical to the success of the Upper Skagit Tribal TANF program and will result in the best service and outcomes for all of our mutual clients.

This Agreement may be modified at any time by mutual agreement of the parties.

  
Jennifer Washington, Tribal Chair, Upper Skagit Tribal Council      6/25/07  
Date

  
Greta Kaas-Lent, Regional Administrator, Region 3 CSD      6-26-07  
Date

  
Nancy Wolke, Administrator, Mount Vernon CSO      6/26/07  
Date

  
Deborah Doyle, District Manager, DCS Everett Field Office      6/29/07  
Date