

**TANF Operating Agreement  
between the  
Lower Elwha Klallam Temporary Assistance for Native Families Program  
and the  
Port Angeles CSO**

**January 2011**

This summary constitutes a record of the operational agreements reached between the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, the Port Angeles and Forks Community Services Offices (CSO's), and Region 6 Community Services Division, for the continued implementation of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program.

These agreements are not static, but rather represent continuous communication between the parties involved. Further cooperative agreements or operational modifications are likely as the needs change. As long as modifications are carried out with the knowledge and agreement of the parties involved, it is to be encouraged.

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

**1. Identification of Tribal TANF Cases**

Within the geographical area defined below as the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF Service Area, the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF Program serves all families in which either:

- a) the adult head of household is a member of a federally recognized Native American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe; OR
- b) at least one person in the family is an enrolled member of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe; OR
- c) in a child-only case, a child is a member of a federally recognized Native American Indian or Alaska Native Tribe. For the purpose of determining eligibility of a Child Only case, the child's enrollment status is used, not the caretaker relative. In the case of children in caretaker relative placements, documentation of the children's biological parent(s) enrollment in a federally-recognized Indian Tribe or Alaska Native Village will suffice.

The Lower Elwha Tribal TANF Program service area is defined as the area contained within the boundaries of the Hoko River on the west; McDonald (aka McDonnell) Creek on the east; the Strait of Juan de Fuca on the north and the northern boundary of the Olympic National Park and/or National Forest on the south.

It is our desire to coordinate the operations covered by this agreement, as much as possible, with other Tribal TANF programs operating in the same geographic area, to avoid duplication of benefits or services and to minimize confusion and hardship for the families served.

Accordingly, the Lower Elwha and Quileute Tribal TANF programs have informally discussed an arrangement for families who reside in Sekiu, Clallam Bay, or Beaver. If they meet the eligibility criteria for both Tribal TANF programs they may be served by either the Lower Elwha or Quileute Tribal TANF program, at the family's option. When a family applies, the issue will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

The Lower Elwha Klallam TANF Program will assist applicants to obtain enrollment documentation.

If there is a question about which state or tribal TANF program should serve a family, every effort will be made to prevent the family from having to apply for more than one program. These efforts will, at a minimum, include making telephone contact or e-mail with one or more of the contact persons designated below.

If the question cannot be resolved by telephone or e-mail, the state or Tribal TANF program to which the family first presents itself will accept their application for TANF and will then contact the other TANF program(s) to resolve who will serve that family. If it is determined that the family's TANF application should be transferred, the transferring program will share the information gathered during the application process with the receiving program.

The Port Angeles CSO, the Lower Elwha Klallam, and Quileute Tribal TANF programs will each designate a contact person to resolve questions about which program will serve a family. Initially, the contact persons for this purpose will be:

Lower Elwha Klallam: Beverly Bennett, Benefit Manager (360) 452-8471, Ext. 225  
[bev.bennett@elwha.nsn.us](mailto:bev.bennett@elwha.nsn.us)

Quileute: Nicole Earls, TANF Program Coordinator  
(360) 374-0336 [nicole.earls@quileutenation.org](mailto:nicole.earls@quileutenation.org)

Port Angeles CSO: Patricia Busse CSO Administrator  
(360) 565-2182 [bussepa@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:bussepa@dshs.wa.gov)

Forks CSO: Andrew Pascua, CSO Administrator  
(360) 374-3506 [pascua@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:pascua@dshs.wa.gov)

DSHS Tribal Liaison Worker: Diane Mitchell,  
(360) 565-2196 [mitchmd@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:mitchmd@dshs.wa.gov)

## **2. Case Transfers**

When the Port Angeles or Forks CSO identifies an open state TANF case which meets the criteria for transfer to the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF program, the following process will take place.

On the first day of the transfer month, the family will receive their state TANF grant. As early as possible in the transfer month, the transferring CSO will:

- a) Open Family (F04) Medical Assistance for the family, pending the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF Program eligibility determination;
- b) Send the family a letter notifying them of the transfer from state to tribal TANF and directing the head of household to Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program to have their eligibility determined;
- c) Prepare a hard copy packet of information, as listed in Section 3, below;
- d) Mail or deliver the packet to Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program; and
- e) Close the state TANF grant effective on the last day of the month the case is transferred.

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program will notify the Port Angeles CSO of each tribal TANF opening and the grant and income amounts for the household. When the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF program identifies an open tribal TANF case that does not meet the criteria for service by the tribe's TANF program, the case will be transferred to state TANF as follows:

On the first day of the transfer month, the family will receive their tribal TANF grant. As early as possible in the transfer month, the tribe's TANF program will:

- a) Send the family a letter notifying them of the transfer from tribal to state TANF and directing the head of the household to the CSO to have their eligibility determined;
- b) Prepare a hard copy packet of information, containing the applicable information as listed in Section 3., below;
- c) Mail or deliver the packet to the CSO TANF program; and
- d) Close the tribal TANF grant effective on the last day of the month the case is transferred.

### **3. Transfer Information**

Information necessary to effect a smooth transfer from state to tribal TANF will be copied by the Port Angeles CSO and sent to Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program in hard copy at the time each case is transferred.

The information to be transferred may include, at the request of the tribe or CSO:

- a) Demographic information (copy of the most recent application or Eligibility Review)
- b) Income and Resources (to include Per Capita)
- c) Native American Status (as declared by the household)

- d) Relationship of household members to the Native American member(s)
- e) Citizenship
- f) Place of residence (if different than mailing address)
- g) Pregnancy / due date
- h) Identification and Social Security enumeration
- i) Absent Parent information
- j) Number of months the family has already received state or tribal TANF; the number of months the family resided in Indian country while receiving TANF, if known; and the name of the reservation, if known.
- k) Unemployment Compensation, if known.

The parties to this agreement will make any information available that is needed to facilitate a case transfer; however, the parties agree that the routine information to be transferred may be limited to the data base system which contains the information listed above, three (3) months of documentation, and permanent record identification.

#### **4. Ongoing Transfer of Cases**

When a TANF case is transferred to the Port Angeles or Forks CSO from another CSO in the state, the Port Angeles or Forks CSO will use the criteria described in Section 1, above, to determine if the household may be eligible for the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF program. If so, the CSO will transfer the case to the tribal TANF program.

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program will notify the CSO and send the CSO a hard copy file which contains the information listed in Section 3, above. The CSO will transfer their record and the information provided by Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program to the CSO in the area to which the family moves. A written log of these transfers, and telephone contact at the time of transfer, is encouraged in these circumstances.

When a tribal TANF family leaves the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF service area and moves into another tribal TANF service area, the Lower Elwha Klallam TANF program will transfer the case directly to the appropriate tribal program.

#### **5. Ongoing Exchange of Information**

The parties have an ACES & SEMS Web Data Share Agreement (10/1/2010-9/30/2013). This agreement will be used for exchange of information needed for either program to administer their TANF, Basic Food, Medical, Child Care or General Assistance program(s), to ensure that all programs are able to issue timely and accurate benefits.

The agreement will be used to share information provided during the application/ongoing eligibility process when a new applicant whose TANF case was not transferred as provided in Section 2., above, may be transferred from one program to the other (see Section 1, above).

## **6. Basic Food Assistance**

Tribal TANF recipients will apply for Basic Food through the CSO unless they have opted to apply for commodities. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program may assist a client to initiate a Basic Food application by sending the CSO a FAX copy of Page 1 of the DSHS application form. The Lower Elwha Tribal TANF Program will send, hand carry or FAX a written notification. The application process may also be initiated by submitting an application online through the Online CSO. This notification will include the beginning date of tribal TANF and the total household income, including the grant. The CSO will complete the interview by phone or in person between 8am and 3pm.

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program will also emphasize to the client the need to report changes in income, resources or household composition to the Statewide Customer Service Center at 1-877-501-2233 or online at <http://onlineapp.dshs.wa.gov>.

## **7. Medical Assistance (Title XIX)**

Upon approval of a family's application for Tribal TANF, the Lower Elwha Tribal TANF Program will send, hand-carry or FAX to the CSO a written notification of the approval. Person(s) who receive Tribal TANF are eligible for Family medical. The person's medical eligibility will continue as long as they remain eligible for a Tribal TANF grant.

When Tribal TANF terminates due to:

- a) Increased earned income: transitional medical assistance will be authorized for twelve months following eligibility criteria.
- b) Increased Child Support: transitional medical assistance will be authorized for four months following eligibility criteria.

If Tribal TANF terminates for any other reason family medical assistance continues until eligibility is redetermined based on the change in circumstances. If the family is determined not to be eligible for continued family medical the CSO and the Statewide Customer Service Center staff will re-determine the family's eligibility for any other medical programs.

If the Tribal TANF applicants requests 3 months of retroactive medical assistance (the family did not receive Tribal TANF in these months), they must apply for Family medical assistance through their local Community Service Office (CSO) and meet all the categorical and financial eligibility criteria.

The CSO will ensure the family's receipt of Family (F04) Medical Assistance, based on the information furnished by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program.

For three-month retroactive Medical Assistance for adults, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program will, upon request by a CSO, determine if the adult applying for Medical Assistance would have been eligible for a tribal TANF grant during those three retroactive months, and advise the CSO.

Application and review forms for Food Assistance, Medical Assistance and Working Connections Child Care are available at the DSHS web site

<https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/f2ws03esaapps/onlinecso/applying.asp>.

In addition, the Port Angeles and/or Forks CSO will provide Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF with a supply of hard copy state applications and review forms, so they can help their clients apply for these programs. An application or review can also be completed online at the DSHS website:

<http://onlineapp.dshs.wa.gov>.

## **8. Child Care**

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program and the CSOs will utilize the Customer Service Center by calling the toll-free number of 1-877-501-2233. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF program has also been given a list of District 6 Customer Service Center contacts for Child Care and Medical when the toll free number does not provide the needed information. Final determination of financial eligibility and co-payment will be made by the Statewide Customer Service Center (CSC) Working Connections Childcare (WCCC) Team based on work activity hours identified within the Tribal TANF Family Service Plan prior to authorizing payment. DSHS retains the fiduciary responsibility for correct payments. The Statewide CSC WCCC Team and/or the Statewide CSC Provider Team will provide training to tribal staff as needed.

## **9. Communication and Referrals**

The contact persons designated by the parties in Section 1 will also provide liaison and assistance between the offices for Basic Food Assistance, Medical Assistance, Child Care and Disability Lifeline, to make sure emergencies are quickly resolved and in general to assure that high quality, professional communication takes place. FAX and e-mail will also be used, as available.

Application for Food Assistance, Medical Assistance and Working Connections Child Care are available at the DSHS web site (<http://onlineapp.dshs.wa.gov>). In addition, the Port Angeles CSO will provide the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program with a supply of hard copy state applications, so they can help their clients apply for these programs.

Application for tribal TANF, commodities, and tribal childcare assistance will be provided to the CSO's so they can help their clients apply for these programs.

An extension to the 60 month TANF time limit may be authorized if the child/children in the home has/have been placed in care for the first time. In the process of reviewing the extension, the CSO will review any possible extension issues. For tribal placements, the CSO will contact the Tribal ICW Worker or the Tribal TANF Case Manager.

## **10. Technical Assistance and Training**

Region 6 Community Services is committed to providing technical assistance and making training opportunities available to Tribal TANF staff when possible and appropriate. This may include training on SSI facilitation, Child Care, ACES On-line and other topics relevant to case management and TANF service delivery.

The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program is also committed to providing technical assistance to the CSO's whenever possible and appropriate.

In acknowledgement of the intent of both parties:

- a) The Port Angeles and Forks CSO's and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program will, upon request, arrange an orientation to their offices and basic programs and services, to help each other provide better client service;
- b) The Port Angeles and Forks CSO's and Region 6 Community Services will invite the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program staff to any appropriate local or regional training;
- c) The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program, the Port Angeles and Forks CSO's and Region 6 Community Services will share and exchange written materials and information about resources (journals, research papers, web sites, and so on) which appear relevant to TANF administration and/or service delivery; and
- d) The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal TANF Program and the Port Angeles and Forks CSO staff will, on a periodic basis as needed, meet with each other to clarify, refine, and further improve the operation of their programs and their government-to-government relationship.

## **11. Data Sharing Agreement**

- a) The Port Angeles and Forks CSO's will share available data concerning the number of Native American Indian, Alaska Native individuals and households receiving DSHS assistance in the service area, upon request of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe.
- b) All parties understand and agree that the sharing of any information about individual clients and case circumstances will be limited to that information needed for the proper administration of CSO and/or Tribal assistance programs. All parties will maintain signed Authorization to Release Information forms on file, and make these available to one another, as requested.
- c) As provided by the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Port Angeles and Forks CSOs and Lower Elwha Tribal TANF programs will exchange information, on a routine and ongoing basis, about currently open TANF cases which is sufficient to enable each program to determine that no individual or family is concurrently receiving assistance from two TANF programs. If participating in reunification program some members can be open on two TANF grants if the child is returning home within 180 days.

**12. Mutual Cooperation and Support**

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

**13. Child Support**

Lower Elwha agrees to work with the State regarding child support.

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

Francis G. Charles 02-08-12  
Francis G. Charles, Lower Elwha Tribal Chairperson, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Date

Beverly J. Bennett 2-14-2012  
Beverly Bennett, Benefits Manager, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Date

Verna Henderson 2/14/12  
Verna Henderson, Human Services Director, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Date

Patricia Busse 2-29-12  
Patricia Busse Administrator, Pt. Angeles Community Services Office Date

Dan Owens 3/5/12  
Dan Owens, Regional Administrator, Region 3 Community Services Date

- cc: Babs Roberts, Director, DSHS Community Services Division
- Nicole Earls, TANF Program Coordinator, Quileute Tribal TANF Program
- gloria Marshall-Perez, Deputy Regional Administrator, /Regional Tribal Liaison
- Sonya Tetnowski, CEO Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
- Mike Mowery, DSHS Economic Services Administration State Tribal Relations Unit