The mission of the DSHS Economic Services Administration (ESA) is to transform lives by empowering individuals and families to overcome barriers and increase economic stability. In 2016, ESA updated its strategic plan to better align our Administration and the work we do to achieve a common unifying goal – to reduce poverty. ESA’s unified goal is to reduce the number of individuals and families living in poverty (below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) by 50 percent by 2025. This is an ambitious goal; one that is achieved one family at a time, one individual at a time. Success will be achieved by optimizing customer-focused service delivery, building a culture of fully engaged and culturally competent employees, achieving excellent communication, providing world-class technology solutions, serving as ethical and efficient stewards of our resources, and by nurturing and expanding partnerships. ESA’s strong working relationships and partnerships with Indian Nations and Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIO) are critical in successfully reducing poverty in our communities.

In this Executive Summary, we are pleased to report some of the highlights of ESA Headquarters state/tribal work and activities to reduce poverty, eliminate barriers, strengthen state/tribal government-to-government relationships and partnerships, and improve services to individuals, children, and families.

**A. Office of the Assistant Secretary (OAS)**

The OAS Statewide Tribal Relations Administrator (STRA) coordinates tribal activities to ensure timely, consistent, and respectful interactions between ESA and Tribes, in order to improve services for the individuals and families we mutually serve. The OAS STRA works with Executive Leadership, Headquarters program experts (Martin Bohl, CSD, and Georgia Payne, DCS Tribal Relations Team), and ESA Regional and Field Office staff, to strengthen our government-to-government relationships and partnerships with tribes.

The OAS STRA provides structural/organizational assistance by setting-up and managing an ESA Tribal Relations SharePoint site for OAS, CSD, and DCS Headquarters to better store, organize, and track state/tribal work, meetings, communications, and negotiations.

To improve ESA communications, coordination, and negotiations with Tribes, the OAS STRA leads and facilitates a bi-weekly Tribal TANF Workgroup of subject matter experts from OAS, Budget, Fiscal, Accounting and Internal Control, CSD Tribal, CSD Communications and Community Relations, and the DSHS Office of Indian Policy. The OAS STRA also helps track state/tribal actions and correspondence, and Co-Chairs and facilitates the quarterly IPAC ESA Subcommittee meeting and ESA’s presentation at the quarterly IPAC meeting.
The OAS STRA worked closely with CSD to develop an expanded CSD Tribal Relations Directory listing both CSD and Tribal contacts, and placed it on a SharePoint site where ESA staff can easily keep it updated. Identification of CSD Tribal Liaisons on the SharePoint site also allows ESA HQ to better share tribal-related information and training with Regional staff. Recognizing the importance of getting more staff trained on Government-to-Government principles, the OAS STRA worked closely with ESA Tribal Liaisons and Management, and the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), to schedule ten (10) GOIA Government-to-Government trainings in ESA offices throughout the State between February and June. Additionally, the OAS STRA, with the Office of Indian Policy Director, provided a 3-hour Tribal training to over 90 ESA Managers at the ESA Senior Leadership Academy. To increase cultural awareness, the OAS STRA also wrote an ESA News article to encourage ESA staff to participate in and volunteer for the 2018 Paddle to Puyallup.

The OAS STRA worked with ESA Tribal TANF Workgroup members, Tribes, and sometimes ACF Region 10, the ESA Assistant Secretary, and CSD Regional staff to facilitate the finalization of numerous State/Tribal Intergovernmental Agreements (Tribal TANF IGAs, Tribal TANF Operating Agreements, ACES/SEMS Web Data Share Agreements, BVS DSAs, and Washington Connection DSAs). STRA lead efforts to develop an ESA Computer Systems Contact and Resources Matrix for Tribes and to update the 27-page State-Tribal TANF Plan Guidelines document.

The OAS STRA and the DCS Senior Manager Tribal Relations, plan to co-lead a Workgroup to streamline the process for tribes to efficiently obtain and maintain access and data from ACES Online and SEMS Web, ensure necessary ESA staff are informed, ensure status updates are effectively communicated, and that families are best served.

To further strengthen our relationships and partnerships with each other, ESA met with several tribes to discuss ways we can strengthen state/tribal relationships and partnerships, ESA’s successes and areas of opportunities, ways that ESA can better support tribal efforts, and discuss how we can better partner together to reduce the number of individuals and families living in poverty. ESA continues to discuss these questions with Tribes at various meetings.

OAS STRA initiated and drafted a Tribal SharePoint page for ESA staff.

The OAS STRA worked with the CSD Director and the 11 Tribal TANF Directors to plan and facilitate the first TANF Director’s meeting. The meeting was a great success, and provided Directors the opportunity to build relationships, share information, provides updates, discuss mutual issues, and brainstorm solutions. The OAS STRA will work with the Directors to schedule and facilitate meetings every six months.

B. Community Services Division (CSD)

The Community Services Division (CSD) carries the DSHS Economic Services Administration (ESA) mission to transform lives into its working relationship with Tribal Nations, governments, communities and Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIO) throughout the State. DSHS American Indian Policy 7.01 follows a government-to-government approach to engage representatives of tribal governments in policy development and service program activities.
The Policy 7.01 General Guidelines direct that programs and services be culturally relevant and in accordance with controlling Federal Law and relevant agreements, statutes and tribal, federal and state laws. The specific duties and responsibilities the State and tribes coordinate and collaborate on are periodically evaluated through the Policy 7.01 process.

The annual DSHS Policy 7.01 Plan and Progress Report provides accountability and measures of progress throughout the year, as well as indicates areas where goals were accomplished. Moreover, the annual Plan and Progress Report reflects the dedication of the Community Services Office (CSO) staff who engage their counterparts at the tribes to improve the direct and timely provision of services to American Indian and Alaskan Native clients and their communities throughout the State.

These activities serve the broader ESA 2020 Vision to reduce the percentage of families living under 200 percent of the federal poverty level by 20 percent by 2020 and by 50 percent by 2025 in a way that eliminates disparities. Among the objectives critical to achieve these goals are to optimize customer-focused service delivery, build a dynamic culture of fully engaged and culturally competent employees, nurture and expand partnerships and government-to-government relationships and collaboration, provide world-class technology solutions, and achieve excellent communication in all forms.

Every meeting in the course of preparing the Policy 7.01 reports provides an opportunity for state and tribal staff members to learn about each other’s programs, services, and successes, and exchange ideas on how to better support each other’s efforts and leverage resources to reduce poverty. CSD efforts to transform case management practices, implement a two-generation approach to poverty reduction and do so in a way that eliminates disparities will include the expertise of those most impacted by poverty. This past year has provided numerous community forums to enhance efficiency, identify barriers and find solutions in support of attaining the numeric goals and creating lasting and systemic change.

**Implementing technology and Data Sharing**

Technology plays an increasing role in state-tribal coordination and planning. Work groups employ shared drive, Skype, and Washington Connection as tools for scheduling and participating in meetings. These enhanced lines of communication also promote the exchange of information and data. Data Sharing Agreements (DSA) includes research and statistics from tribal sources to assist state efforts to better identify specific barriers to self-sufficiency, while respecting confidentiality and privacy.

The Belltown CSO will be developing a Data Share Agreement with the Chief Seattle Club in order to measure program participation and ensure that services meet the needs of Urban Indian community members.

Tribal newsletters disseminated on-line or shared with CSD staff announce events and community gatherings that center on health and wellness. Many CSOs provide staff or information at these events to promote knowledge about their programs and familiarity with staff. CSO staff gain a better understanding of the unique barriers the local tribal members face in achieving self-sufficiency.

**Outstation Personnel**

In addition to expanding collaboration efforts through technology, the CSOs and tribes continued with existing scheduling of CSD outstation personnel to serve tribal clients at locations on their reservations. This practice contributes to administrative efficiency and client convenience. CSD staff are able to serve a block of clients who can schedule time for services and assistance around other required activity. More tribes are interested in providing this service to their members in order to address transportation barriers, and CSOs will be looking for more opportunities to bring their workspace to the clients.
The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation requested continuation of the Outstation agreement with the Okanogan CSO to promote higher utilization of health services by their Native American population, and want to explore the ability to provide a worker in Inchelium, located in east Ferry County. CSD and Tribal staff will update their Outstation agreement during the coming year. The Auburn CSO outreach staff currently work on the Muckleshoot Reservation three days per week, and an Outstation worker is scheduling time to serve Quinault Indian nation tribal members at locations in Taholah, Hoquiam and Queets. In addition, seven of eight Regional Tribal Coordinating Council tribes have scheduled to continue or begin hosting outstation staff on the reservations of the Lummi Nation, and Nooksack, Sauk-Suiattle, Samish, Swinomish, Tulalip, Upper Skagit Tribes.

**Mobile Community Services Office**

The Mobile CSO staff attended meetings to share their interest in bringing their mobile office to tribal events to promote familiarity. Many of the state’s tribes are located in areas with limited accessibility that face seasonal challenges from the weather. Flooding and wildfires can leave clients stranded and in need of immediate assistance. Early discussion over situations, locations and specific needs ensure the mobile CSO can provide an appropriate and timely response.

A Mobile Unit attended the Chehalis Tribal Health Fair and provided a tour of the facility. The MCSO continues to work with the Snoqualmie Valley Food Bank in North Bend to provide services to Snoqualmie Tribal members.

**WorkFirst Local Planning Areas (LPA)**

In addition, more tribes are interested in participating in WorkFirst Local Planning Area Partnerships (LPA). Through the LPA network, local partners stay informed as to changing WorkFirst policies, programs, and priorities. Participants also have the opportunity to assist in developing promising practices and learn from each other. Tribes participate to share the perspective of their community members and offer recommendations to address specific needs.

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe is an active participant in Port Angeles meetings, and the Makah Tribe is working with LPA Partners including CSD to improve tribal member access to state-issued benefits.

**Community Services Division and Tribal Staff work together**

Tribes are taking advantage of invitations to serve on CSD interview panels for hiring staff at local CSOs, and are requesting DSHS ESA/CSD job announcements to share with their members. Possible training opportunities for CSD staff that may be open to tribal staff are under discussion as well. Both tribal and CSD staff are interested in job shadowing so that each have an opportunity to experience client services as provided by their counterparts. Tribes would like training for their staff on the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program, and how to provide access to their members. The Suquamish Tribe recently received information about BFET at a 7.01 meeting, and will receive continued information and resources.

A full-time Tribal Liaison from the Port Angeles CSO coordinates and provides communication between the Hoh, Lower Elwha, Jamestown S’Klallam, Makah and Quileute Tribes and the Local CSOs that serve them. The Kalispel Tribe and Region 1 CSD staff will provide reciprocal training to improve understanding of career opportunities and hiring systems, and an outstation worker schedules time at the Native Project in Spokane. A full-time outstation worker continues to serve Nisqually tribal members and families, and CSO staff will work with Yakama Nation NakNuWeSha staff to resolve questions and concerns and quickly process client benefits.
Increased Government-to-Government and Policy 7.01 training

An increasing number of CSD staff completed the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) Government-to-Government training, and DSHS Office of Indian Policy (OIP) DSHS Policy 7.01 training.

All CSD Customer Service Contact Center (CSCC) staff in the Kelso and Columbia River offices have completed 7.01 online training, and all Port Angeles and Forks CSO staff attended Government-to-Government training this past year.

The Pierce County CSOs are coordinating annual training with the Puyallup Tribe to both increase awareness of DSHS programs, and familiarity with Tribal culture, history and services.

C. Division of Child Support (DCS)

The Division of Child Support (DCS) is committed to maintaining a government-to-government relationship with Washington State Tribes, respecting Indian sovereignty while developing and delivering culturally appropriate child support services. The Tribal Relations Team (TRT) leads DCS’ tribal relations efforts in partnership with DCS leaders, statewide tribal liaisons, DCS staff, the 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington State, and seven Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIOs) to help improve the lives of Native children and families. The Tribal Relations Team advocates for policies and laws that respect tribal sovereignty and develop processes and agreements to address child support. Additional information about state/tribal child support efforts and agreements is available on the DCS Tribal Relations Website at www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/division-child-support/tribal-relations.

To help improve child support services for Native families, TRT and DCS staff partner with eight Tribes in Washington State that operate their own child support programs (Lummi, Nooksack, Tulalip, Port Gamble S’Klallam, Suquamish, Puyallup, Colville, and Quinault), and 10 tribes and one RAIO that operate tribal TANF programs. We also partner with other Tribes and RAIOs in the State, and Tribes in the bordering states of Idaho and Oregon.

The DCS Tribal Relations Team (TRT) and the CSD State Tribal Relations Unit (STRU) maintain Data Share Agreements with 13 Tribal TANF and Tribal IV-D programs. These agreements provide limited read-only access to State IV-A and IV-D computer data. TRT maintains Treasury Offset Agreements with six Washington State Tribal IV-D programs and one out-of-state Tribal IV-D Program (Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska) to offer Federal Treasury Offset services on certain cases. DCS has intergovernmental child support agreements in place with nine Tribes, and informal child support processes with numerous other Tribes.

Tribal Liaisons

Tribal cases are assigned to 35 specially-trained DCS Tribal Liaisons around the state. They manage DCS “Tribal Cases” and serve as the local point of contact for Tribes in their region. DCS Tribal Liaisons provide outreach services, training and technical assistance to staff and local Tribes. Another 15 Tribal-related staff include Policy (4), IT (1), Central Services (2), Claims Officers (5) and TRT (3). All Tribal Liaisons attend the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs’ Government-to-Government training and the DSHS Office of Indian Policy’s 7.01 training. Tribal Liaisons often attend and participate in tribal cultural events like Pow Wows, tribal health fairs, job fairs, conferences, and other community events at the invitation of their tribal partners. Participation in these activities serves to increase cultural competency, strengthen relationships and partnerships, and improve services through coordination with Tribes. The Tribal Relations Team continues to develop an on-boarding training plan for new Tribal Liaisons. In
addition to receiving resource documents, TRT follows up in 60 days to discuss the resource materials, and provide additional information regarding state/tribal relations. TRT extends the invitation to participate in the 60-day follow up to the Tribal Liaison’s entire Tribal Team.

Tribal Liaison Meetings
The Tribal Relations Team conducts a quarterly WebEx with all DCS Tribal Liaisons around the state. This quarterly meeting serves to keep staff current regarding policy and procedural changes, and provides an opportunity to discuss problems, challenges, and successes in each region. In addition to the quarterly meetings, TRT hosted an annual DCS Tribal Liaisons in-person meeting in September 2017 at DCS Headquarters. Over 50 Tribal Liaisons and staff associated with tribal work attended. The annual meeting provides DCS Tribal Liaisons an opportunity for training, sharing information and best practices, discussing tribal and staff issues, and proposing solutions. TRT will host the 2018 meeting for one and a half days to allow time to cover the variety of topics for all job classes and provide adequate time for discussion and networking.

National American Indian Heritage Month (NAIHM)
In addition to the ESA 18th annual NAIHM celebration held November 2, 2017 at Headquarters, DCS held other celebrations around the state throughout the month of November. Olympia DCS celebrated with partners volunteering to make cedar roses, and sharing TED talks featuring members of the Swinomish and Tulalip tribes. The Spokane DCS had performances by the Salish School. Seattle DCS had speakers from the Office of Indian Policy, and a Tribal Program Specialist from Northwest Regional Council. The Everett DCS celebration featured a storyteller from Tulalip Tribes, and a performance by the Quil Ceda Tulalip Elementary school drummers and dancers. Wenatchee DCS featured speakers from the Colville Tribal Police Department, and a Wenatchi Bands Aboriginal Rights Coordinator. They also share the DSHS video “All My Relations”. The Tacoma DCS office shared Native American Art and drum music and a Tribal Quiz Show, and the Vancouver DCS office shared history of the local Cowlitz Indian Tribe along with a performance by Native Cowlitz Drummers.

WebEx on Final Federal Rule
DCS hosted a WebEx meeting in October 2017 for our tribal partners regarding the new federal rules dealing with medical support definitions. The WebEx provided an opportunity for DCS to have a conversation with our tribal partners on how the new rule would be implemented, and to receive input on drafting legislation for the new Final Rule. The WebEx was well attended and DCS received excellent feedback from our tribal partners. DCS also shared proposed policy changes for implementing other parts of the final rule regarding Continuation of Services, Closure of cases referred based on IHS medical only, and modification procedures for incarcerated parents.

Bi-Annual Tribal Directors Roundtable Meeting
DCS meets with the eight Tribal Child Support Directors twice annually to share updates, discuss legislative proposals, policy changes, etc. DCS hosted meetings with the Tribal IV-D Directors on November 13, 2017, and again on March 29, 2018. Tribal Directors received updates on conference boards requested by tribal members, and the conference board process, inappropriate referrals, credit bureau reporting procedures, policy changes and legislative proposals, and DCS projects. These meetings are well attended, informative, and scheduled to continue.

New Treasury Offset Agreements
TRT maintains Treasury Offset Agreements with six Washington State Tribal IV-D programs and one out-of-state Tribal IV-D Program (Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska) to offer Federal
Treasury Offset services on certain cases. DCS drafted new language for the Treasury Offset Agreements per IRS Publication 1075 regarding not sharing Federal Tax Information (FTI) with Tribal Child Support Programs. The new Agreements went into effect January 2018.

**Colville Tribal Child Support Program (CTCSP) transition from SEMS to the Model Tribal System (MTS)**
The CTCSP successfully transitioned their cases and payment processing to MTS in March 2017. The CTCSP cases have been successfully scrubbed from the DCS Support Enforcement Management System (SEMS) and are no longer identifiable in SEMS. DCS is in the process of updating the DCS Handbook to reflect the changes regarding CTCSP cases. CTCSP used SEMS from the 2007 pilot to 2017. DCS continues to work closely with CTCSP on intergovernmental and Treasury Offset cases.

**Amendment to WAC 388-14A-5006 re Per Capita Payments**
DCS has filed a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to amend [WAC 388-14A-5006](#) to provide an exception to “the algorithm” for distribution of payments received from tribal benefit payments. When a noncustodial parent has more than one case, payments are distributed to cases per the algorithm unless an exception exists in the DCS rules that govern how payments get applied within a single case and across multiple cases. DCS does not attach tribal benefit payments, but Tribes sometimes send benefit payments to DCS with the intent that the payment be applied to a particular child support case. In order for DCS to make any exception to the current distribution requirements; that exception must be specified in the DCS rules. The public rulemaking hearing is scheduled for May 8, 2018. The Rulemaking Order will then be filed and published in the Washington State Register.

**Canoe Journey and Upcoming Conferences**
In addition to the above activities DCS Tribal staff plan to participate in the 2018 DCS Conference; the 2018 Paddle to Puyallup Canoe Journey, July 28 - August 4, 2018; and the Community Partners for Transition Solutions Summer Institute Reentry Conference, August 23-24, 2018. DCS Tribal Relations has also been invited to present at Oregon’s Tribal Conference May 2-3, 2018 in Pendleton. This is an excellent opportunity to share our successes regarding Washington’s Tribal program, and to learn from our partners in bordering states.