



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

DSHS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 7.01

JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020 - PLAN & PROGRESS REPORT

ESA HEADQUARTERS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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*. 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 in a way that eliminates disparities. This is an ambitious goal; one that is achieved one family at a time, one individual at a time. To succeed, we will need to optimize customer-focused service delivery, build a culture of fully engaged and culturally competent employees, achieve excellent communication, provide world-class technology solutions, serve as ethical and efficient stewards of our resources, and by nurture and expand partnerships. ESA's strong working relationships and partnerships with Indian Nations and Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIO) are critical in successfully reducing poverty in local communities.

This Executive Summary highlights some of the 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. You can find local state/tribal work and activities by reading each of the individual 7.01 Plans.

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, Headquarter 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 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 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.

The OAS STRA is ESA's lead contact with the Office of Indian Policy (OIP), co-chair and facilitator of the quarterly Indian Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) ESA Subcommittee meeting, and ESA's lead for

quarterly IPAC meetings.

The OAS STRA oversees the Community Services Division (CSD) Tribal Relations Directory, which identifies both CSD and tribal contacts, and ensures it is accurate. Identification of CSD Tribal Liaisons on the SharePoint site also allows ESA HQ to better share tribal-related information and training with CSD Regional staff and share information with tribal contacts.

In an effort to increase ESA staff awareness and knowledge of tribal sovereignty and state/tribal relations and partnerships, OAS STRA Manages a Tribal SharePoint page that includes links to tribal relations staff, useful websites, key policies, state/tribal intergovernmental agreements, articles and other resources.

Recognizing the importance of getting more ESA 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 several GOIA Government-to-Government trainings in Olympia and in ESA offices throughout the State. The OAS STRA also provided a 3-hour Tribal training to the Region 1 CSD Skill Builder's Class, and a Tribal Overview presentation to the Region 2 CSD Expanded Leadership Team and to staff from the Office of the Assistant Secretary's Project Management Office (PMO). To increase cultural awareness, the OAS STRA wrote an ESA News article to encourage ESA staff to participate in and volunteer for the Tribal Canoe Journey.

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, and ACES/SEMS Web Data Share Agreements). OAS STRA leads negotiation efforts with SPIPA to add Shoalwater Bay to their Tribal TANF service area.

The OAS STRA sponsored an ACES and SEMS Web Project and Value Stream Mapping (VSM) event to streamline the process for tribes to efficiently obtain and maintain access and data from ACES Online and SEMS Web, and ensure: necessary ESA staff are informed, status updates are effectively communicated to tribes, and families are best served.

In various forums (state/tribal meetings, 7.01 meetings, IPAC and IPAC ESA Subcommittee meetings, the Yakama Valley Community Foundation Listening Forums, and others) ESA meets with tribes to learn from them, discuss ways we can strengthen state/tribal relationships and partnerships, celebrate successes, identify areas of opportunities, and discuss how we can better partner together to reduce the number of individuals and families living in poverty.

In 2018, to better track and support the Goals and Activities identified in ESA 7.01 Plans, ESA HQ began asking for and reviewing 7.01 Mid-Year Status Reports.

The OAS STRA worked with CSD Leadership and the 11 Tribal TANF Directors to plan and facilitate the two State/Tribal TANF Director's meetings in 2018. These meetings continue to be very successful, and provide a great forum to build relationships, strengthen partnerships, share information, provide updates, discuss mutual issues, seek feedback, and brainstorm solutions.

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 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 Division (CSD) 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. Work focused and highlighted in individual 7.01 plans regarding collaboration and outreach exemplify this commitment. Collaboration and outreach support ESA's 2025 goal to reduce the percentage of families living under 200 percent of the federal poverty level by 50 percent by 2025 in a way that eliminates disparities.

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.

One example of how CSD is enhancing collaboration efforts, is the creation and coordination of the newly formed State Tribal TANF Director's meeting. Biannually, Tribal leaders and the State TANF Director meet to discuss and brainstorm ways we can better work together. Upcoming meetings will focus on a targeted topic. In May 2019, the meeting will focus on transportation challenges and provide participants an opportunity to strengthen relationships and develop potential new partnerships in this area.

Another way that CSD is focusing on collaboration includes CSD creating a new workgroup to expand Tribal SNAP eligibility determination. Currently, the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe is the only tribe determining SNAP eligibility, which they have done so through a demonstration project.

The federal USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) is now open to allowing tribes to determine SNAP eligibility without the requirement of a waiver. CSD is putting together a workgroup to draft an implementation plan on how Tribal SNAP eligibility determination would work in WA, and are inviting Tribal TANF programs to participate.

The Tribal Relations Program Administrator (TRPA) works in CSD's Office of Communications and Community Relations. The broad role of the TRPA is to provide ESA and CSD staff in carrying out the government to government relationship provided for in DSHS Administrative Policy No. 7.01. Contributions include both administrative and policy support generally, and with respect to specific State – Tribal agreements.

The TRPA performs primary administrative oversight of eleven Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) with ten tribes and one Recognized American Indian Organization (RAIO) that provides administration for three additional tribal TANF programs.

Tribal relations administration requires facilitating contact between CSD staff and tribal partners to provide program information on BFET, Washington Connection, and training on setting up Secure Access Washington (SAW) and Client Benefit Accounts. Direct communication with the tribes ensures that unique circumstances are understood and addressed at effective levels within the tribe and provide a foundation for continued communication and progress.

CSD Tribal TANF administration includes maintenance of Data Share Agreements (DSA) and Operating agreements. DSAs enable the state and tribes to share information and prevent duplication of services while maintaining the security and confidentiality of client information. DSAs also provide for out-stationing of staff and resources at tribal facilities in order to make eligibility determinations and initiate services at tribes without a tribal TANF program.

CSD supports collaboration efforts by facilitating outstation staff to serve tribal clients at locations on their reservation. Staff determine eligibility and can also assist with other required activities. The ready access to tribal unemployment data in specific areas also aids in identifying potential gaps in services between tribal members and the general population.

Operating Agreements provide an agreed upon procedure for the transfer of cases, and ensure a smooth transfer of services between tribes and local Community Services Offices (CSO) in the event a client changes primary residence.

The DSHS Policy 7.01 collaboration and reporting process supports comprehensive customer service through regular meetings with each of the twenty-nine federally approved tribes and several RAIO that provide specific but limited services to American Indians and Alaskan Natives (AI/AN) in need throughout the state.

During the past year, CSD placed emphasis on encouraging and facilitating contact between tribes and WorkFirst Local Planning Areas (LPA). Recent Policy 7.01 reports show that tribes throughout the state participate in meetings to design appropriate community service plans, and learn how other organizations strategized to overcome local and regional barriers.

Tribal Relations Program Administration reports at Indian Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC) meetings and IPAC ESA Subcommittee meetings to keep tribes informed on program development and changes in policy that may affect services. Dialogue and follow-up from these meetings works to develop enhanced partnerships on issues in shared service areas.

Other work in the past year includes research and support in a variety of areas, such as:

- Provided background in developing Tribal Liaison job descriptions and duties consistent with state law and existing protocol while meeting the needs of local tribes.
- Provided information on the process for initiating a tribal TANF program through federal agencies and in accord with federal law and applicable state law and protocol.

Work in progress and continuing will result in eight new IGAs and the possible addition of one or more tribes on the list of Tribal TANF programs.

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 Tribal 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 Nation, Nooksack Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Puyallup Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and Quinault Indian Nation). Ten tribes and one RAIO also 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 programs and 8 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, the Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA), to offer Federal Treasury Offset services on certain cases. DCS has intergovernmental child support agreements in place with 9 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. Liaisons manage those 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. Many meet weekly or monthly with their tribal partners, or have regularly scheduled dates when they are available on site for tribal clients and staff. An additional 15 Tribal-related staff work in Policy (4), IT (1), Central Services (2), as Claims Officers (5) and in 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, annual canoe journeys, tribal health fairs, job fairs, conferences, and other community events at the invitation of their tribal partners. DCS Tribal staff volunteered at the 2018 Paddle to Puyallup Canoe Journey, July 28 - August 4, 2018; and attended the Community Partners for Transition Solutions Summer Institute Reentry Conference, August 23-24, 2018 in Spokane, WA.

Participation in these activities serves to increase cultural competency, strengthen relationships and partnerships, and improve services through coordination with tribes. The Tribal Relations Team provides an on-boarding training plan for new Tribal Liaisons, Program Managers, and any staff that interacts with Tribal programs or is involved with tribal cases. The on-boarding process includes historical resource documents, tribal policy, and links to tribal internet resources. TRT follows up in person or via WebEx after 60 days to discuss the resource materials, and provide additional information regarding state/tribal relations. The invitation to participate in the 60-day follow up is extended to the entire Tribal

Team. TRT also provides training annually to Central Service staff on how to determine tribal connections on incoming applications. Training was presented to Central Service staff on February 26, 2019.

Tribal Liaison Meetings

The Tribal Relations Team hosts a quarterly WebEx meeting with all DCS Tribal Liaisons around the state. This meeting serves to keep staff current regarding policy and procedural changes, and provides an opportunity to discuss concerns, challenges, and successes in each region. In addition to the quarterly meetings, TRT hosts an annual DCS Tribal Liaisons in-person meeting. The last meeting was September 26-27, 2018 at DCS Headquarters. The one and a half day annual meeting provides DCS Tribal Liaisons an opportunity for training, sharing information and best practices, discussing tribal and staff issues, and proposing solutions. The meeting allows time to cover a variety of topics for all job classes and provide adequate time for discussion and networking. Over 50 Tribal Liaisons and staff associated with tribal work attend. TRT will host the 2019 meeting September 24-25, 2019 at the Tacoma DCS Office.

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, and service issues, etc. DCS hosted meetings with the Tribal IV-D Directors on October 8, 2018, and again on March 18, 2019. Tribal Directors receive updated information on conference boards requested by their tribal members, the conference board process, inappropriate referrals, credit bureau reporting, policy changes and legislative proposals, and DCS projects. The meetings are well attended, and informative. It has been proposed that a standard list of agenda items be adopted and that an implementation plan from the Director level be included in the Regional 7.01 plans. This group collaborated on issues around reporting debts to the credit bureaus and implemented a plan to delay reporting a week later than usual. This change allowed more time for payments to be received from our tribal partners (many send payments to DCS by check) and has resulted in more payers being reported as current. The Directors continue to work on credit reporting issues and automatic letters sent to tribal members inappropriately.

DCS Conference – Tribal Speakers from OIP

DCS held their annual all staff conference June 27-28, 2018 at the Hotel RL in Olympia. The conference theme was “Think Globally, Transform Locally.” The focus was on inspiring and engaging staff. We reserved 8 slots for our 8 tribal child support program partners. One of our tribal partners from Tulalip attended the conference. OIP Regional Managers, Aimee Gone and Brenda Francis-Thomas were invited as presenters during the Tribal session which was well attended and well-reviewed by session attendees.

Amendment to WAC 388-14A-5006 regarding Tribal benefit Payments

Effective 7/1/18 DCS amended [WAC 388-14A-5006](#) that provides an exception to “the algorithm” for distribution of payments received from tribal benefit funds. DCS does not attach tribal benefit payments, but tribes often send benefit payments to DCS with the intent that the payment be applied to a particular child support case per their tribal code and not per the DCS distribution algorithm. This exception allows DCS to apply tribal benefit payments according to tribal code.

Tribal TANF Program Access to Employment Security Data

Tribal TANF Programs with DSHS Data Share Agreements (DSA) are contracted to receive unemployment data from Employment Security Dept. (ESD) through the ACES system. Because ESD data was coupled with Social Security Administration data in ACES, access was blocked, which prohibited Tribal TANF

Program access to ESD data. To comply with our contractual obligations, DCS was able to complete programming changes to enable Tribal TANF programs to view ESD data through SEMS Web. This new method of access, however, will require changes to the Data Share Agreements regarding how ESD information is accessed. DCS will be working with CSD and tribes to update these Agreements.

ACES Online / SEMS Web access Workgroup

ESA convened a workgroup in January 2019 to streamline the process for tribes to efficiently obtain and maintain access to ACES Online and SEMS Web, to ensure necessary ESA staffs are informed and tribes have appropriate points of contact, that status updates are communicated effectively, and families are well served. Workgroup staff are currently working on recommendations from the workgroup that include a central point of contact via the Contract Manager, a new combined form to request access, a process checklist, customer training, and a SharePoint site for staff to review status of the process.

Oregon's Tribal Conference

DCS was invited to attend and present during last year's conference, May 2-3, 2018 in Pendleton Oregon. We received great reviews from their child support and Dept. of Justice staff. DCS has been invited to present again at the 2019 conference in Chiloquin, Oregon on May 1-2, 2019. This conference is an excellent opportunity to share our successes regarding Washington's Tribal program, and to learn from our partners in Oregon.

National Tribal Child Support Association Conference

DCS approved two staff to attend the National Tribal Child Support Association (NTCSA) Conference in Prior Lake, MN June 10-14, 2018 that included a TRT member and a tribal team member from the Olympia DCS Office. This conference is held annually. DCS is planning to send two staff again this year including a tribal team member from a DCS field office. The conference will be held at the Pechanga Resort & Casino in Temecula, CA June 23 – June 27, 2019.

National American Indian Heritage Month

[ESA's 20th annual NAIHM celebration](#) was held November 6, 2018 at DCS Headquarters with over 100 in attendance. DCS, CSD, and OAS host this celebration annually. Tribal partners from Chehalis assist in making the fry bread. Arts and crafts were facilitated by Vickie Pankretz, Alutiiq Indian of Alaska, and Dana'e Marshall, a member of Navajo Nation and also an employee of ESA. Traditional songs and dances were performed by the *Wa He Lut* Coastal Drum and Dance Group from the Wa He Lut Indian School on Washington's Nisqually River Delta. In addition, DCS celebrations are held around the state throughout the month of November by local Tribal Liaisons. These activities help to raise cultural awareness and increase cultural competency of all ESA staff.