

Community Services Division Tribal Relations

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Economic Services Administration · Community Services Division

Program Description

The Department of Social and Health Services Economic Services Administration's Community Services Division supports government-to-government relationships with Washington tribes. CSD focuses on recognizing tribal sovereignty in developing and delivering programs and services consistent with the Centennial Accord and DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01, American Indian Policy.

The CSD Tribal Relations Program Administrator serves as the lead resource regarding Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs and provides technical assistance and guidance to state and tribal leadership and staff. CSD shares information and collaborates with tribes and Recognized American Indian Organizations at the Indian Policy Advisory Committee, the ESA IPAC subcommittee and DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01 and other meetings. CSD partners with all federally recognized tribes and RAIOS in Washington state to share information, discuss and resolve issues, provide training and coordinate services.

CSD has oversight and program development responsibilities for the state's TANF program and other public assistance and related employment and training programs. CSD works closely with 11 TANF programs (involving 15 federally recognized tribes). Tribal TANF programs are designed to address the specific and unique needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native families within their service areas. Washington provides a fair and equitable share of State Maintenance of Effort, or MOE, funds to Tribal TANF programs per RCW 74.08A.040. CSD negotiates Intergovernmental TANF Agreements, Operating Agreements and Data Share Agreements with Tribal TANF programs.

Highlights

- In November 2020, CSD submitted a comprehensive plan to the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services for approval to expand a demonstration project that would allow interested tribes to determine SNAP eligibility. CSD recognizes that tribes are in the unique position to better serve tribal members in their area and that some community members face barriers in accessing SNAP services, but could access those services if offered by a tribal program. The plan follows the successful and ongoing demonstration project that started in 2009 with the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe.
- In 2021, CSD established a project team to develop a process and agreement for CSD staff to issue Electronic Benefits Transfer cards at selected tribal outstations. This project is anticipated to move forward once CSD staff return to in-person services following the Governor's Roadmap to Recovery plan.

Tribal TANF Programs

- Colville Confederated Tribes (2001)
- Quinault Indian Nation (2001)
- Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe (1998)
- Lummi Nation (2007)
- Nooksack Indian Tribe (2005)
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe (1998)
- Spokane Tribe of Indians (2003)
- South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency: Nisqually, Squaxin Island, Skokomish (2004), Shoalwater Bay (2019) and tribal members on the Puyallup Reservation
- Quileute Nation (2001)
- Tulalip Tribes (2005)
- Upper Skagit Indian Tribe (2007)

More information:

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