



DRAFT MEETING NOTES

IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee Meeting

**Squaxin Island Tribe, Little Creek Resort
September 15, 2008**

The IPAC ESA/DVR Subcommittee Meeting convened on September 15, 2008 at the Squaxin Island Tribe, Little Creek Resort.

▶ **In Attendance**

The following tribes/organizations were in attendance:
Nooksack Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, SPIPA, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, and Upper Skagit Tribe participated via conference call.

Representatives from the Economic Services Administration (ESA) included staff from:

State Tribal Relations Office (STRO), Division of Child Support (DCS), Community Services Division (CSD), Operations Support (OS), Office of the Assistant Secretary (OAS).

Representatives from the DSHS Indian Policy Support Services (IPSS) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) were also in attendance.

▶ **Welcome & Introductions:**

Sarah Colleen Sotomish, STRO Administrator for ESA, welcomed everyone to the IPAC ESA Subcommittee Meeting and asked for introductions.

▶ **State Tribal Relations Office Update:**

- Sarah Colleen Sotomish provided an update on behalf of the State Tribal Relations Office (STRO).
- STRO has finalized the TANF contract renewal with the Tulalip Tribes. This is the second contract the Department has completed with the Tribe. The current contract with the Spokane Tribe will expire February 2009 and the contract with the Quinault Indian Nation will expire October 2009. The STRO will be working with both tribes to renew these agreements. ESA STRO is focusing on tribal members who are not accessing any of the 11 tribal TANF programs to ensure they are receiving equitable access to ESA services in the upcoming year.
- Since the start of ESAs Tribal TANF WAC Development project last year ongoing concerns have been expressed by tribes with the intent and scope of this initiative. ESA is committed to working with tribes on a government-to-government basis and to draft the rules in partnership. A letter was sent to Tribal Chairs on September 10th explaining these challenges and asking for recommendations on next steps. ESA hopes to receive a response by September 19, 2008 to help us determine next steps.

► ESA Policy and Legislative Update:

- ESA Community Services Division (CSD) Director, Leo Ribas, shared that beginning October 1, 2008, the income limits will increase for Basic Food, Washington's food stamp program, allowing more people to participate in the program. He also distributed helpful resource material surrounding the Basic Food program, shared that the call center has a specific "food line" to help eligible participants how they can get connected to services, and requested that tribes help us meet our mission to reduce hunger in the State of Washington by encouraging participation with Basic Food.
- Division of Child Support (DCS) Legislative Manager, Nancy Koptur, reviewed legislative proposals for 2009. There are three agency requests that focus on Eliminating the "60-Day Rule" for Back Child Support, Medical Support Enforcement, Child Support Obligations of Incarcerated Noncustodial Parents. If they do pass, the earliest they will be implemented will be the summer of 2009.

► ESA Budget Proposals:

- ESA's Fiscal Chief, Babette Roberts, discussed the 2009 ESA budget proposals. The three requests include: funding to help support Federally Qualified Health Clinics, request to add Federal funding for the Food Stamp Program, and funding for an Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES) feasibility study.

► ESA Strategic Plans:

- Roxie Schalliol reviewed the 2009-2013 Strategic Plan for ESA. She explained that this document communicates our priorities and guides our directions in a changing environment. She indicated that the plan is built on the 2007 – 11 plan, which involved a great deal of staff and stakeholder input. She emphasized that this is a dynamic process, rather than a stagnant document, so it may always be revised as needs change. The plan can be accessed through the DSHS Intranet at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/strategic/currentplan.htm>.
- Leo Ribas discussed CSD's 2009 - 2011 Strategic Plan. He emphasized the strategic plan is a single meaningful document which helps CSD identify their measures and mission. He discussed CSD's focus for 2009 – 2011, to streamline processes, increase the number of people who access services and meet WorkFirst participation requirements.

► Division of Vocation Rehabilitation Updates:

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Community Relations Administrator, Avreayl Jacobson, introduced herself and explained her role as DVR's statewide state office contact for Tribal Governments and Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIOs).
- She shared DVR's current 7.01 planning activities and recent training that will support DVR doing 7.01 planning with all Federally Recognized Tribes and RAIOs in Washington State. She distributed a Washington State DVR map which includes office locations, three main area, and the contact information for the three Area managers to acquaint the committee with DVR's field service operations structure and provide lead Area contacts for 7.01 planning.

- She reminded participants DVR eliminated its waiting list in February, 2008 which means DVR is able to serve eligible individuals who apply for services with no waiting.
- Several possible presentations were offered for future committee meetings, including: how new Ticket to Work regulations warrant Tribal programs and/or business considering becoming an employment network; showing DVR's new DVDs on our general and transition services; and information on DVR's transition services, assisting high school students with disabilities plan for their transition from school to work. DVR has many other presentations Tribes and other RAIOS may wish to request such as making reasonable accommodations and disability awareness.

► Next Steps:

- Sarah Colleen Sotomish led the discussion. She explained that at our initial ESA Subcommittee Meeting in June we agreed to meet monthly for the next several months and then consider quarterly meetings thereafter. She asked meeting participants if they would like to revisit the frequency of the meetings before scheduling the next IPAC ESA Subcommittee Meeting. A tribal representative suggested that this discussion be distributed for conversation via e-mail for those who weren't able to attend today's meeting before any decisions are made. Another meeting participant suggested quarterly all-day meetings (perhaps starting at 10:30 to accommodate those who travel long distances to attend) to get more tribal participation. If we change to quarterly meetings, the meeting would be held on the first Monday of the month, every three months.

The next Tribal – State IPAC ESA Subcommittee meeting is to be determined.

Follow up assignments include:

- Contact the tribes to discuss the frequency of future meetings.
- Schedule another IPAC ESA Subcommittee meeting upon feedback from tribes.
- Obtain future ESA Subcommittee meeting agenda items.
- IPSS will complete and distribute the revised matrix.
- Make arrangements to involve DVR at future meetings.