

## TANF OPERATING AGREEMENT

Between the  
Tulalip Tribal TANF Program  
and the Smokey Point & Everett Community Service Offices.

January 2005

This summary constitutes a record of the operational agreements reached between the Tulalip Tribes and the Smokey Point, Everett, and Sky Valley Community Service Offices, and the Region 3 Community Services Division (CSD), for the implementation of the Tulalip Tribes TANF Program (TTTP)

These agreements are not static, but rather represent a starting point for the parties involved. Further cooperative agreements or operational modifications are likely as 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 transition and the day-to-day operation of our TANF programs.

### 1. Identification of Tribal TANF Cases:

- A. Within the geographical area defined by the Tulalip Tribal Family Assistance Plan (TFAP), the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program (TTTP) will serve:
1. All families including at least one adult or child who is an enrolled member of a federally recognized American Indian Tribe or Alaska Native Organization residing on the Tulalip Reservation.
  2. All families with at least one adult or child who is an enrolled member of the Tulalip Tribes residing in North Snohomish County which overlaps the current service areas of the Smokey Point, Everett, and Sky Valley Community Service Offices. The zip codes served by these offices are as follows: 98271, 98270, 98259, 98206, 98287, 98201, 98292, 98223, 98285, 98205, 98207, 98203, 98291, 98204, 98208, 98290, 98296 and 98272.
- B. Enrolled Native American and Alaska Native families can only receive TANF from one TANF Program, state or tribal, at a time.
- C. All clients meeting the above definition who apply for TANF on or after March 1, 2005 must apply through the Tribe. All current state TANF

recipients who meet the above definition will be transferred to the tribal program from March to May 2005 based on Section 2.C.

- D. When there are questions concerning the appropriate program eligibility, each CSO and the Tribes will have a single point of contact to consult on appropriate placement. Any application and supporting information will be immediately forwarded to the correct office. Initially, the contact persons for this purpose will be:

**Smokey Point, Everett & Sky Valley CSOs: Financial Eligibility Supervisor**

**Tulalip Tribal TANF Program: TANF Supervisor for the Tulalip Tribes**

**2. Case Transfers:**

- A. The Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will commence operation on March 1, 2005.
- B. NEW APPLICATIONS: Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will begin accepting new applications for the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program on March 1, 2005. The Smokey Point CSO and Everett CSO will begin referring new TANF applicants to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program on this date. A new applicant means not currently receiving TANF.
- C. OPEN TANF CASES: All CSO's within the service area defined herein will transfer identified and appropriate Tulalip cases to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program in the following manner:

March 2005	New cases and all cases that are currently active in the Tulalip Workfirst program. The Tribes will provide a list no later than February 15, 2005. This excludes cases that are currently in sanction or exempt status with the state.
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April 2005	All child only cases.
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May 2005	All remaining cases.
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- D. DSHS will close state TANF effective on the last day of the month a case is transferred. DSHS will issue a grant on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the transfer month. The Tulalip Tribal TANF program will begin to serve the transferred cases on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the transfer month.
- E. 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 CSO will:

1. Close State TANF benefits;
2. Open Family (F04) Medical Assistance for the family for twelve (12) months;
3. Send the family a letter notifying them of the termination of State TANF benefits and direct the head of household to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program to have their on-going eligibility determined;
4. Prepare a hard copy packet of information, as listed in Section 3., below and;
5. Deliver packet to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program.

F. The CSO shall continue to provide relevant services to eligible recipients until the TANF case is transferred to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program pursuant to Section 2.C.

**3. Transfer of Information:**

A. Information necessary to affect a smooth transfer from state to Tribal TANF will be copied by the CSO's and sent to Tulalip Tribal TANF Program in hard copy 1 month in advance of the case being transferred for the transfer months of April and May. The information to be transferred includes:

1. Demographic information (copy of the most recent application or Eligibility Review);
2. Income and resources;
3. Native American status (as declared by the household);
4. Relationship of household members to the Native American member(s);
5. Citizenship;
6. Place of residence (if different than mailing address);
7. Pregnancy / due date;
8. Identification and social security number;
9. Absent Parent information;
10. Number of months the family has already received state or Tribal TANF and the number of months the family resided on an Indian Reservation while receiving TANF, if known;
11. Status of 60 month extension (if applicable);
12. Current IRP;
13. Component history screen.

B. The CSO's will make any information available to Tulalip Tribal TANF Program needed to facilitate a case transfer; however, the parties agree that the routine information to be transferred will be limited to Automated Client Eligibility (ACES) and Jobs Automated System (JAS) screens

which contain the information listed above, three (3) months of documentation, and permanent record identification.

**4. Ongoing Transfer of Cases:**

- A. When a CSO in the designated service area receives a transfer in, they will screen for Tulalip Tribal TANF Program eligibility.
- B. If the case appears to be eligible, the CSO's will then follow the procedures outlined in Section 2 and 3, for transfer of the case to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program.
- C. When a client presents at a Tulalip Tribal TANF Program service area to request transfer to Tribal TANF, Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will screen for Tulalip Tribal TANF Program eligibility. If eligible, Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will notify appropriate CSO to request transfer.
- D. When a Tribal TANF family leaves Tulalip Tribal TANF Program's service area, the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will notify the local CSO of transfer within 10 days. The local CSO will then transfer the records to the appropriate CSO in the new area or as requested by the CSO, Tulalip Tribal TANF Program or the client.
- E. The CSO's will not approve a TANF application from an identified Tulalip Tribal TANF Program recipient who is in sanction status with Tulalip Tribal TANF Program. The Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will notify the CSO's of clients in sanction.

**5. Ongoing Exchange of Information:**

- A. The ongoing exchange of information will be covered through a data share agreement for the 3 years of the tribe's plan. This exchange of data can be used in any situation where exchange of information is needed for either program to administer their TANF, Basic Food Plan, Medical Assistance, Child Care or General Assistance program(s), to ensure that all programs are able to issue timely and accurate benefits.

**6. Child Support:**

- A. The Division of Child Support (DCS) has an associated child support case(s) for each existing TANF case. Child support is currently being collected on some of these cases and will be forwarded to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program.

The Division of Child Support (DCS) and Tulalip Tribal TANF Program shall establish a process to electronically distribute to the Tulalip Tribal

TANF Program the child support collected on former state TANF cases that become Tribal TANF cases.

It will include at a minimum the following criteria:

1. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will request that the custodial parent sign a form assigning his or her right to collect child support to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program,
2. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will forward the assignment form to DCS, and
3. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will set up an electronic funds transfer account and provide the account number to DCS.

If the above conditions are not met beginning on the first day of the first month of the TTANF grant, DCS will forward the child support to the custodial parent.

- B. If the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program wants DCS to provide child support services for new tribal TANF cases, Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will send a completed referral and assignment forms(s) to DCS.
- C. Before or during the transfer month, the CSO's will notify the DCS Field Office of cases being transferred to Tulalip Tribal TANF Program. Notification will include the name and Social Security Number of the Custodial Parent.
- D. The Division of Child Support (DCS) will share available data on an on-going basis during the 3-year plan concerning the associated child support case information for the TANF cases being transferred by the CSO to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program upon receipt of the child support assignment.

7. **Cases That Transfer with Open Basic Food Program (Food Stamps):**

On-going Basic Food Program eligibility will be determined by the CSO's using the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program grant standards and any other earned or unearned income that would affect Basic Food Program eligibility. The CSO will keep Basic Food Program open on transfer cases through the current certification period providing the household remains eligible for assistance.

**8. Cases That Transfer With Open Child Care:**

Tulalip Tribal TANF Program cases will continue to receive TANF-related childcare through the CSO's Call Centers. This includes all new and transferred cases.

**9. TANF Related Basic Food Plan (Food Stamps)/Medical Assistance:**

- A. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program applicants approved through the Tribal TANF Program who want Basic Food Plan and/or medical assistance will have their application forwarded to the appropriate CSO. The application may be sent electronically, faxed, or mailed to the CSO. The Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will provide copies of available verification of income, identification, household composition and address.
- B. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will provide monthly verification of Tribal TANF grant amounts to the CSO with the client's name, date of birth, social security number, grant amount and zip code by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month in order for the CSO's to calculate the Basic Food benefits.
- C. For Medical, the CSO will process the application for medical provided that the CSO has the names, addresses, social security numbers and date of birth information necessary.
- D. For Basic Food applicants, the CSO's will arrange for an interview either via telephone or face-to-face either at the time the application is received or will schedule a telephone or office interview and mail a letter to the client that includes date, time and telephone number the CSO will call or the office address where the interview will be held. If the client has no telephone available, the client may request to access a phone through Tulalip Tribal TANF Program. If additional items of verification are needed to complete the application, either the client or the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program can provide them.
- E. If a potential Tulalip Tribal TANF Program TANF applicant walks into a CSO, the CSO should process the Basic Food application. If the household is expedited, the CSO will provide Basic Food Plan according to expedited timelines. If the client is not expedited, an interview will be scheduled. In either situation, the CSO will then fax the application to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program
- F. If an applicant needs retroactive medical assistance, the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will determine if the adult applying would have been eligible for a TANF grant during the three retroactive months and advise the CSO's.

10. **EBT:**

Pending or upon approval of assistance the applicant can contact any CSO to obtain an EBT card for Basic Food benefits. If requested, the EBT card can be mailed to the client from Citibank.

11. **Changes of Circumstances:**

- A. The client is responsible for reporting changes to both the CSO / call center and to the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program. However, the CSO's/call centers may request information about resources and income verification from the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program to facilitate re-determination for Basic Food, Medical and Working Connection Child Care.
- B. When a Tulalip Tribal TANF Program (TTTP) recipient reports changes in income and/or circumstances to the TTTP, the TTTP will forward this information to the CSO's call center within five (5) working days. The CSO's will do the same in the event income and/or a change of circumstances is reported to the CSO first.

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12. **Time Limits and Extensions**

As provided in the Tulalip's Tribal Family Assistance Plan, Tribal TANF recipients are exempt from the 60-month time limit if they live on the reservation and the reservation meets the 50% not employed rate for the Indian Country Disregard. Under federal law, the state and tribal programs must not count these months. The tribe must include months counted when the recipient was on state TANF towards the 60-month time limit.

If the Tribal TANF recipient is not exempt under the disregard and they reach the 60<sup>th</sup> month, they will be reviewed for an extension under the Tulalip Plan's extension criteria for hardship or family violence.

If the Tribal TANF recipient does not meet the tribe's criteria for an extension, the state will serve them under the state's 20% time limit extension policy.

13. **Overpayments:**

If an office opens TANF when TANF assistance is already being received by another office, the second office that opened TANF in error will be responsible for establishing an overpayment and needs to coordinate with the other office to terminate duplicate benefits immediately.

14. **Terminations:**

- A. The Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will notify the CSO's within 10 days of any termination of Tulalip Tribal TANF Program benefits and specify the reason for termination.
- B. When a Tribal TANF family leaves the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program service area, the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will notify the local CSO within 10 days. The local CSO will then transfer the records to the appropriate CSO in the new area or as requested by the other CSO, Tulalip Tribal TANF Program or client.
- C. Any person who is identified in this document who exits State TANF as a result of employment prior to transfer month of the case shall continue to receive supportive services from the appropriate CSO. Upon application and approval of Tulalip Tribal TANF Program Tribal TANF, CSO support services shall end.

**15. Communication and Referrals:**

The CSO's and the Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will provide liaison and assistance between the offices for Basic Food, Medical Assistance, and Child Care 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.

**16. Technical Assistance and Training:**

- A. The Region 3 Community Services Division is committed to providing technical assistance and training to Tribal TANF staff whenever possible and appropriate. This may include training on SSI facilitation, Child Care and other topics relevant to case management and TANF service delivery. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program has also expressed their willingness to share training with CSO staff whenever possible and appropriate.
- B. In Acknowledgement of the Intent of Both Parties:
  - 1. The CSO's and Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will, upon request, arrange an orientation to their offices and basic programs and services, to help each other provide better customer service;
  - 2. The CSO's and Region 3 Community Services Division will invite Tulalip Tribal TANF Program staff to any appropriate local or regional training;
  - 3. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program, CSO's and Region 3 Community Services Division will share and exchange written material and information about resources (journals, research papers, web sites,



etc.) which appear relevant to TANF administration and/or service delivery; and

4. Tulalip Tribal TANF Program, CSO, and regional 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.

17. **Data Sharing Agreement:**

- A. The CSO and Tulalip Tribal TANF Program will sign a data share agreement to last for the 3 year period of Tulalip Tribal TANF Program's Tribal TANF plan to share available data:
  - a. for the initial transfer of cases described in Sections 1 – 4,
  - b. for the initial transfer of an application for TANF as described in Section 1, or
  - c. for the ongoing exchange of information for cases as described in Section 5.
- 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 appropriate CSO, DCS and/or Tribal assistance programs. All parties will maintain signed nondisclosure statements for staff having access to the data on file, and make these available to one another, as requested.
- C. Data sharing will help prevent clients from receiving duplicate assistance as required by federal law.

18. **Mutual Cooperation, Trust and Support:**

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

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

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Stanley G. Jones, Chairman, Tulalip Tribes of Washington

Date

Steve Gobin, Director of Health and Human Services,  
Tulalip Tribes of Washington

Date

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Deb Bingaman, Assistance Secretary, DSHS-ESA

Date

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Patti Omdal, Regional Administrator, Region 3 CSD

Date

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Harry Welling, DCS District Manager, DCS

Date