

## DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01: Best Practices Resource

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A 7.01 meeting serves as an informal form of consultation and collaboration with Tribes and RAIOs and communications from these meetings are documented in a 7.01 plan and progress report. Formal consultation involves a different level of activity that requires a process to occur between decision makers of DSHS and Tribal government leaders (see [DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01](#) Attachment 2, Communication Protocol and Consultation Protocol, and Attachment 3, Consultation Flowchart).

DSHS 7.01 meetings and plans benefit DCS, Tribes, and the families we serve by:

- Strengthening state/tribal relationships,
- Building mutual trust and understanding,
- Identifying and removing barriers,
- Improving services to families by developing/expanding informal processes and cooperative agreements, and
- Supporting tribal interest in applying for IV-D funding.

Before you meet with a Tribe or Recognized American Indian Organization (RAIO), the District Manager and Tribal Team should have an internal planning meeting.

### Who to invite:

OIP staff usually schedule and coordinate 7.01 meetings. If this is not the case in your region, always invite your local [OIP Regional Manager](#) to attend 7.01 meetings, and the DCS Tribal Relations Team (to support field office efforts). The Tribe decides if they will attend and who will attend on their behalf, but be sure to inform/invite your tribal child support contacts to the meeting. Be mindful of “overloading” meetings with state staff.

When deciding who to invite from state agency(ies), it’s important to know the type of relationship DCS has with the Tribe and the topics of discussion for the meeting.

- For instance, if a Tribe has its own IV-D program, formal processes are usually addressed in regulations so many of the topics at 7.01 meetings may focus on informal processes, collaboration and policies. In this scenario, inviting staff who are involved in daily interactions with Tribal IV-D programs as well as staff who are well-versed in Tribal policy is important.
- If a Tribe doesn’t have a IV-D program but has an agreement with DCS to provide child support services, topics may involve formal and informal processes, as well as policies and collaboration. In this instance, inviting staff who are involved in daily interactions as well as staff who are well-versed in Tribal policy and agreements is important.

### When to invite:

- Ideally, send the meeting invitation to participants at least 30 days prior to the meeting along with a meeting agenda.
- If the meeting will be hosted virtually, be sure to send an electronic meeting invitation along with the virtual platform (Teams, Zoom, etc.) log in information to all participants.

### Before the meeting:

- If you are setting-up the meeting, reach out to your contact to ask if a tribal representative would like to open the meeting in prayer.

- Consider sending a draft 7.01 plan for the current year and a copy of any DCS agreements with the Tribe (Treasury Offset, ACES/SEMS Web Data Sharing, Cooperative Child support agreement) to all relevant participants so they can prepare for the meeting.
- It's a good idea to send additional documents listed in the 'What to provide or bring' section below if materials are needed to supplement discussion and/or decision-making during the meeting.
- Confirm meetings a day or two before the scheduled meeting.
- For in-person meetings, offer to bring food.

#### Things to consider for virtual meetings:

- Invite tribal representatives to introduce themselves before DCS representatives.
- Go over virtual meeting housekeeping and etiquette before the meeting begins.
- Explain to participants the reason why DCS staff are not allowed to have cameras on their monitors (due to laws regarding safeguarding data and confidentiality).

#### What to provide or bring:

- Provide a basic overview of DSHS, ESA, DCS, your office, tribal team, etc.; Bring applicable [DSHS/ESA/DCS Organizational Charts](#) and [ESA Overview Document](#). Provide a copy of the current [ESA Strategic Plan](#), the [DCS Strategic Plan](#), and the [DCS Strategic Plan 1-page Summary](#).
- Copies of the [TRT Brochure](#), the 1-page [Summary of Tribal Programs and Agreements](#), and [the DCS State Tribal Relations Team Directory](#) (verify that DCS has the correct child support contacts listed for each Tribe).
- A copy of [DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01](#). Provide a brief summary to tribal representatives who are new to the process.
- Copies of the [prior 7.01 plan\(s\)](#). Share that all DCS and CSD 7.01 plans are on the [DCS Tribal Relations Website](#) under "Washington State Policy".
- An updated draft 7.01 plan for the current year. Review the plan and celebrate successes. Identify any remaining (or new) challenges/barriers. Discuss and record how to address them.
- At least one copy of any [DCS agreements](#) with the tribe (Treasury Offset, ACES/SEMS Web Data Sharing, Cooperative child support agreement). Be prepared to review and discuss the Agreements and any concerns about them. Be familiar with any *informal* processes and agreements with the Tribe.
- Caseload demographics for each Tribe. Suggestions include:
  - Tribal-member case counts, total CP's and NCP's, collection rates, dollars collected, paternity rates, amount of arrears owed, average order amount, total TANF arrears owed, etc. (Explain the data and its meaning to children and families. Provide some other general caseload data to put these numbers in perspective).
  - Data may be used as a "starting point" to explore and brainstorm options for improved services and to address any challenges (i.e. service of process, paternity or child support establishment, modifications, getting copies of tribal orders, verifying enrollment, wage withholding issues, seeking tribal assistance in securing child support payments from an NCP, etc.).
- *Admin Policy 7.01 meetings may be a great forum to share [ESA's Strategic Plan](#) and/or [Human-Centered Future Road Map](#) and discuss ways in which ESA (DCS/CSD) and Indian tribes can better work together to*

*reduce the number of individuals and families living in poverty.*

### Considerations for the 7.01 meeting:

1. Share formal options to address or improve child support services:
  - Tribes may operate their own federally-funded child support program ([8 in WA](#)).
  - Tribes may enter into or expand [Cooperative Agreements](#).

Note: Formal options require a different level of consultation. If a Tribe is interested in a formal option **be sure to involve** the DCS Tribal Relations Team.
2. Seek to develop or expand informal agreements or processes with DCS. Examples may include:
  - Agreement to accept/honor wage withholding notices for non-tribal and/or tribal members.
  - Agreement to allow DCS to file establishment and/or enforcement actions in Tribal Court, etc.

Note: Informal agreements or processes may still need to be approved by a Tribe's leadership before implementation so be sure to ask.
3. Discuss outreach, training, and cultural awareness opportunities. Examples:
  - For Tribes: Offer to provide outreach services; a child support Q&A session, or a "Child Support 101 Training." Offer to have future meetings or meetings with interested Tribal Councils (include TRT) to further discuss child support enforcement, informal processes, cooperative agreements, and tribal IVD programs. Invite tribal contacts to participate in various segments of local DCS Training Academy classes or other training. If the Tribal IV-D or TANF program has ACES/SEMS Web access, ask if they are regularly using these programs, if they have questions, or if they are interested in receiving ACES/SEMS Web training or a refresher course on how ACES and SEMS data may assist their program. Share information about the IPAC ESA Subcommittee and ask if there are additional tribal representatives who would like to receive meeting invitations, resources and notes.
  - For DCS Tribal Liaisons and staff (to learn more about Tribes, tribal culture, and other training opportunities): Ask about possible participation in local health fairs, job fairs, Pow Wows, trainings, etc. -- subject to Covid restrictions. See if a tribal representative would be willing to share cultural/educational information at a leadership team meeting, an all-staff meeting, or a local FO celebration or event (Native American Heritage Month, luncheon, etc.).
  - Explore interest in having quarterly 7.01 meetings or periodic lunch meetings.
4. Identify and document next steps. Who will do what and by when?
5. In 7.01 plans, include the names of the Lead staff and use actual dates rather than terms like "Ongoing," "continuous," "regularly", "quarterly" or "yearly". What follow-up actions are needed?
  - Capture successes and accomplishments in addition to challenges and barriers
  - Agree on the process to finalize the 7.01 plan.
  - Include a "Completed" section with dates at the end of the 7.01 Plan, to document completed items.
6. A separate set of minutes or notes may be used to document essential discussions, conclusions and actions of a 7.01 meeting.
7. Agreed upon informal processes (procedures, steps, guidelines, etc.) should be underlined, highlighted or outlined at the bottom of the 7.01 plan (or in a separate document) for easy reference and tracking over time.
8. Schedule next meetings (as appropriate). If you identify short term activities, consider meeting quarterly or bi-yearly, instead of annually.
9. Solicit support from the Tribe to assure timely completion of the 7.01 plan and Progress Report. The plans are usually due to TRT by the end of March, the ESA Assistant Secretary towards the beginning of April, and to the DSHS Secretary and OIP by the end of April.

10. You must submit a 7.01 plan even if you are unable to meet with the Tribe or RAIO, if your meeting is scheduled after the deadline for submitting the 7.01 plans, or if the Tribe has not finalized the plan.
- Clearly document in the plan, whether or not you met with the Tribe or RAIO and whether or not you received tribal input regarding the plan. If you have not yet met with the Tribe, or if the Tribe has not yet provided feedback on the plan, then list “Draft” on the plan.
  - Your plan might simply document your current interactions with the Tribe or RAIO. Describe some of your current processes that are in place, or outline some of the services you are providing.
  - It might also be a draft plan that you would further update and submit after you meet with the Tribe and/or receive their feedback. Notify the DCS Tribal Relations Team of subsequent updates or finalization of 7.01 plans.
  - Combined meetings should still result in separate plans for each of the attending tribes/RAIOs
11. Throughout the year, regularly work with the Tribe or RAIO to address items in 7.01 plans and notify the DCS Tribal Relations Team of things that they may assist with.

### **Glossary of Terms**

**7.01 Plan** - The matrix submitted annually to the assistant secretaries to record the work of the regions. These plans capture successes, common issues and potential problems/challenges, and provide ways to bring attention to concerns specific to Tribes and RAIOs.

**Cooperative Agreement** – Authorized in [RCW 26.25.020](#), DSHS may enter a cooperative agreement with an Indian tribe or tribal organization or joint or cooperative action on child support services and child support enforcement.

**Formal Consultation** – Sometimes referred to as “Big C”, formal consultation is the process of cooperation, negotiation, and mutual decision-making between two or more sovereigns related to policy, regulations or program decisions that directly or indirectly have an impact on tribal governments or their members/citizens. For more information, see <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/rpau/ap/DSHS-AP-07-01-Internet-official.pdf> Attachment 2, Communication Protocol and Consultation Protocol, and Attachment 3, Consultation Flowchart).

**Formal Process** – Negotiated and mutually-decided administrative, legislative and programmatic matters that can be documented in a binding cooperative agreement, policy, resolution or other formal document.

**Informal consultation** – sometimes referred to as “Little c”, informal consultation is ongoing collaboration, coordination, and communication between management and technical staff to share information and develop relationships and mutual trust.

**Informal Process** – Negotiated and informally agreed to operational matters that can be documented in subject-specific procedures or overarching guidance and practices.