

DCS Tribal Relations

Program Description

The Division of Child Support respects Tribal sovereignty and promotes government-to-government relationships with the 29 federally recognized Indian Tribes in Washington state. Relationships founded on trust and mutual respect have led to increased understanding, shared vision and improved services for children and families. DCS works with Tribal nations, Urban Indian Organizations, stakeholders and partners to develop and deliver programs, policy and services that meet the needs of Native families in a culturally appropriate manner.

DCS Tribal Relations Employees

- Facilitate DCS' government-to-government commitments that help to build and strengthen relationships with Tribal nations and programs, partners, and stakeholders.
- Partner with eight Tribal child support programs and 12 Tribal TANF programs within Washington state.
- Coordinate American Indian Policy (DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01) planning for DCS and encourage Tribal input on proposed DCS legislation, policies and documentation.
- Advocate for policies, procedures and laws that respect Tribal sovereignty.
- Provide culturally relevant guidance and resources that educate employees and colleagues to recognize and honor Tribal jurisdiction.
- Draft, negotiate and monitor 13 DSHS data-sharing agreements, 10 formal child support agreements and seven federal treasury offset services agreements with Tribal programs.
- Serve as statewide regional contacts to Tribes and Urban Indian Organizations, provide outreach, and represent DCS at policy meetings, Tribal events, conferences and other cultural gatherings.



Highlights

- During state fiscal year 2025, child support collections on DCS' Tribal cases exceeded \$8.5 million.
- DCS is committed to include Tribal representatives when hiring for key positions that work with customers affiliated with Tribes and were pleased to have Tribal program employees participate on several interview panels this year.
- To improve services and strengthen our relationships with Tribes outside of Washington state, DCS adopted a new policy and processes from a yearlong pilot project to centralize intergovernmental cases involving out-of-state Tribal child support programs.

¹ DCS/EMAPS, July 2025. DCS Statewide and Tribal Collections, SFY 2025. Assignment #136. This data now includes intergovernmental cases referred to and from Tribal child support programs outside the state of Washington.

More information:

Chris Franks, *DCS Tribal Relations Team*

Phone: 360-338-2917

Email: chris.franks@dshs.wa.gov