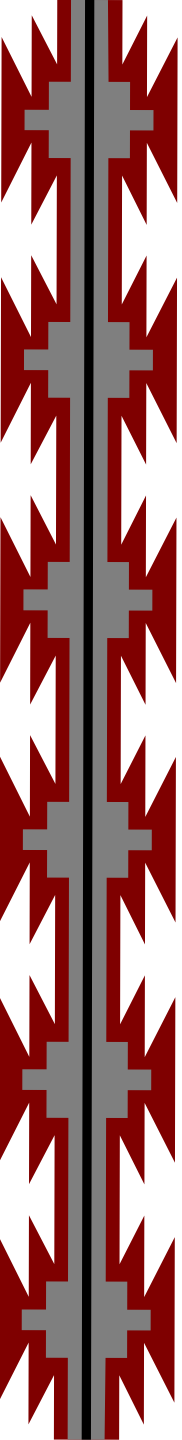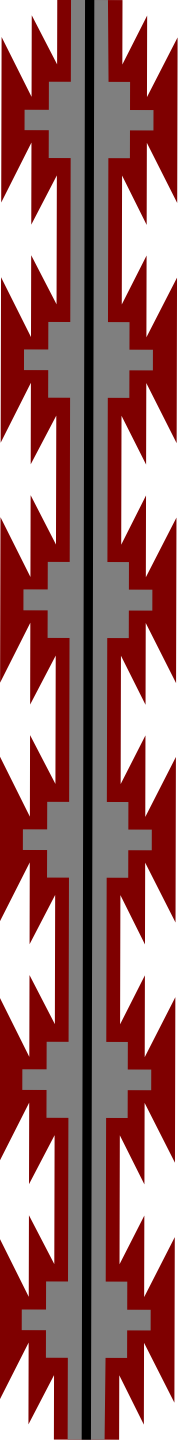# Managing TANF Policies and Procedures
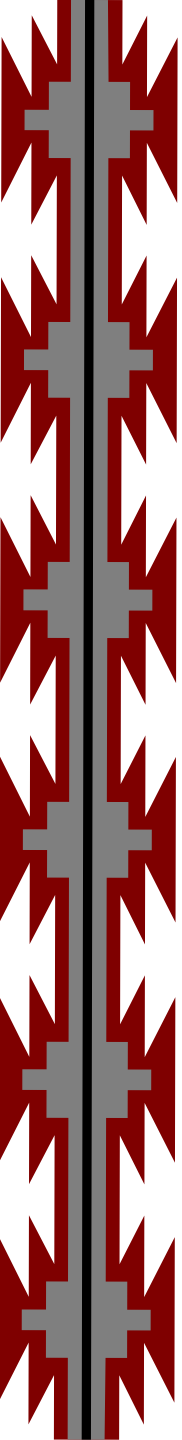
August 2017

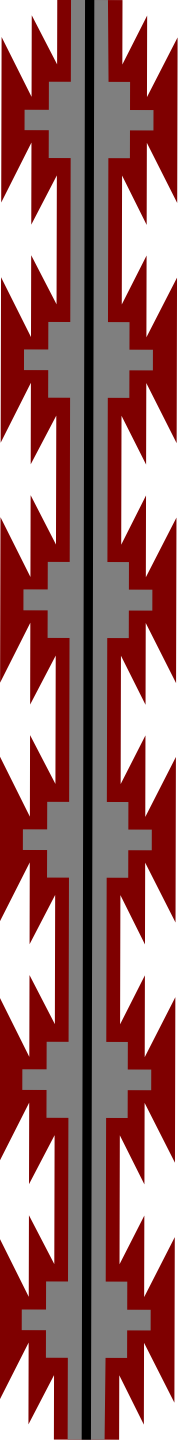# Recommendations/considerations to ensure TANF policies and procedures are current, effective, implemented and useful

- Once developed and implemented, policies and procedures should reflect "real-time" program operations.

- Policies and procedures should be in accordance with the program regulations and funding requirements, yet be in accordance with tribal regulations.

- Approval date by the Tribal Council or governing authority should be documented and recorded.

- The program should appoint one person to oversee the policies and procedures, to keep them current and updated as necessary as well as be able to train/retrain employees on content.

- Policies and procedures should have a regularly scheduled review period with detailed process to follow with all users involved in the process.

- When a revision is made, identified staff member or program manager should have the responsibility of immediately updating the policies and seeing that all who need to know of the changes, are notified.

- All new hires must have an orientation by a trained staff person on the policies and procedures and sign a form acknowledging they have received a copy and attended an orientation.

- Employees need to understand the program's expectations and requirements, and be aware of their specific roles and responsibilities as well as employment policies: leave, disciplinary actions, holidays, etc.

- There should be a copy of the policies and procedures available in each program section/department, including tribal legal department.

- If email messages are used to notify staff of changes, there needs to be a way to document they received the email to avoid "I didn't get the email" excuse.

- All revisions and updates should be tracked, dated with copies kept either in a main file or as part of the document, creating a document history.

- The original policies and procedures should be kept in a secure place with a back up copy either in paper or electronically.

- Backup procedures and security policy may be included in the administrative information.

- Ensure that policies reflect technologies currently used by the program.

TIPS TO REMEMBER

- Policies and procedures should be feasible for the program

- The program should have the necessary resources to consistently enforce developed policies and procedures

- Policies can increase a program's liability if the program develops written policies but doesn't follow them, or if the program has "bad policies"

Additional Tips

- Keep what you write simple-remember those who read them or have to try and interpret them may not be familiar with your program.

- Make sure they are "family or client friendly"

- Keep the words clear and unambiguous; it they are over-detailed, they won't be read…. or followed.

- Leave out acronyms.

- Keep them general enough and flexible enough so that the goals of the program are still met and changes don't have to be made every time a new circumstance arises.

In Summary

Even in your program has the best written policies and procedures, if they are not implemented or just kept on the shelf, and not implemented at the individual-level with awareness and accountability, there will be failures (lawsuits, losses, employment fraud, etc.) adapted from: infosecisland.com)

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