



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Family Assistance

2014 Tribal TANF Case Management Meeting

**Updating Your
Professional Skills:
Case Management with
Tribal TANF Participants**

Summary Report

**September 3 - 4, 2014
Tulalip, Washington**



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2014 Tribal TANF Case Management Meeting Updating Your Professional Skills: Case Management with Tribal TANF Participants Summary Report

On September 3-4, 2014, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Family Assistance (OFA) Region X convened the 2014 Tribal TANF Case Management Meeting titled *"Updating Your Professional Skills: Case Management with Tribal TANF Participants"* in Marysville, Washington. Designed to bring together Tribal TANF case managers, supervisors and other direct service staff from across the region, this meeting provided attendees the opportunity to enhance their to service delivery, hear from peers and learn more about promising practices in case management.

Over the course of the two day meeting a number of specific topics were covered including:

- Intake and Assessment
- Client Engagement
- Tribal TANF Case Documentation
- Case Plan Development
- Overview of the Division of Tribal TANF Management
- Providing a Culture of Support with the Bridges Out of Poverty Model
- Delivering Quality Services to Tribal TANF Clients
- Strategies to Meet the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Needs of Tribal TANF Participants
- Work Participation

This report summarizes key highlights from the 2014 Region X Tribal TANF Case Management Meeting.

Day One

Welcome and Introductions

After an opening blessing provided by Mr. Leo Smith, TANF Director with the Nez Perce Tribe, Frank Shields, Regional TANF Program Manager for Region X, Cathy Adams-Bomar, Regional Administrator for Region X, and Judy Ogliore, Program Specialist for Region X, opened the meeting with remarks welcoming the attendees. Ms. Ogliore then provided Federal staff introductions, some background on the planning of the meeting and an overview of the meeting's agenda. She then introduced Holly Morales, Director of the Employment and Training Services Department at Cook Inlet Tribal Council who served as a facilitator and master of ceremonies over the course of the two day meeting.

Setting the Stage

To frame the meeting's events, Ms. Morales, presented an overview of the process of change within a Tribal TANF program. Ms. Morales walked through some background on TANF funding and how change occurs within a Tribal TANF program and the levels of approval needed for a change to be implemented. Since many attendees were direct service staff, she noted that they may occasionally see Tribal TANF administrators as "roadblocks" to potential ideas for change, like those that will be discussed in the presentations ahead and hoped her presentation took away some of that concern. She encouraged attendees to use the meeting as an opportunity for individual professional and programmatic growth. To wrap up her presentation, Ms. Morales engaged attendees in an informal quiz about the material she covered in her presentation. Following Ms. Morales presentation, attendees took part in a networking exercise to discuss certain aspects of their programs with other Tribes and Federal staff. Attendees had previously been assigned randomly to tables so that they were not sitting with their colleagues. Tribal representatives shared information about their individual programs and learned about each other's services and activities.

"Having time to discuss our programs with each other was great. I love hearing about what other programs are doing and it helps me start thinking about how we can implement similar ideas."

–Meeting Attendee

Intake and Assessment – "First Touch" in Tribal TANF

Intake and assessment are the foundation upon which the future work with Tribal TANF participants is based. Mr. Michael Kafka, Executive Director of the Department of Labor for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota presented on the importance of a positive "first touch" with each Tribal TANF participant. He began his presentation by discussing the first contact with Tribal TANF participants and encouraged attendees to reflect their traditional values of humility, empathy and respect when interacting with participants; even if the participant is presenting as difficult.

Sometimes the terms "screening" and "assessment" are used interchangeably; however they are two different things. A screen is commonly used with every applicant and helps determine who may have hidden barriers and may need a more detailed assessment and exploration of their specific needs. Mr. Kafka noted some common screens among Tribal TANF programs:

- Barriers to Employment Success Inventory (BESI);
- Job Search Attitude Inventory (JSAT);
- Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT); and
- Various screens developed by State TANF agencies to flag the need for further assessment.

Assessments are used once an applicant has been screened to determine if there may be a potential issue. The results are used for case planning and tracking participant progress. Some examples of common assessments include:

- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE);
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI);
- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS);
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®); and
- O-Net job to skills matching instruments.

Necessary Qualities of Best-Practice Instruments

- Standardized
- Relevant
- Reliable
- Valid

Screens and assessments are used because they provide objective information on participant issues, help create plans for moving forward and allow both the service provider and participant to look back and see their progress. When deciding what instrument to use there are a number of considerations including the cost, the length of the test, how it needs to be administered (one on one or group), whether a specially trained person needs to administer the tests or interpret the results, and if the instrument is statistically valid. An important consideration for direct service workers using screens and assessments is to be sure to maintain confidentiality and never release the data and results without the written consent of the subject of the data.

At the end of his presentation, Mr. Kafka had attendees review an assessment of an example client and create planning notes for their client and then discuss with their table. There were a variety of example clients so each table had multiple clients to discuss.

Client Engagement: The Importance of Interviewing Skills

This session, also lead by Mr. Kafka, continued to build upon the discussion in the previous session. To begin, Mr. Kafka emphasized the importance of operating from a strength-based approach to case management; operating with the belief that every person is capable of change with a focus on strengths instead of barriers and labels. This approach helps nurture positive change in participants and places value on what the client sees as important, not the service provider. He also pointed to the work of Dr. Beau Washington on intergenerational trauma and "trickster" or "coyote" thoughts – negative thoughts that may enter a person's mind as they contemplate change throughout a social service process. This could be used with participants as a helpful cultural framing of the importance of holding to native values and avoiding negative thoughts that can derail change.

Keeping in mind the stages of change (see Figure 1) is helpful when working with Tribal TANF clients. People don't change in a day; the process can take a long time. It is also important to remember that relapse can occur and should not be seen as a failure. Often, those who relapse can get back to their previous stage quicker than a "new" participant just entering the change process. The stages of change are helpful for both participants and service delivery professionals to have benchmarks of both the current stage of the participant and the previous stages they have moved through.

Motivational Interviewing was presented as a promising approach to engaging Tribal TANF participants. The core themes of motivational interviewing mesh well with native values as the focus for the service provider is always on the participant; never on themselves. The main principles to Motivational Interviewing are:

- Express empathy,
- Develop discrepancy,
- Roll with resistance, and
- Support the participant's belief that they can change.



Figure 1

One of the main goals of Motivational Interviewing is to develop discrepancy with a participant; meaning they are confronted with two true statements that can't happen at the same time. For example, a participant wants to become a nurse but does not want to attend college. This creates cognitive dissidence within the participant and often allows the person to be open to suggestions from the service provider. As the service provider actively listens to the participant talk about their goals and feelings, it is important to listen for "change talk"; anything indicating that they are considering a change or think they may be capable of it. The basic skills of Motivational Interviewing are:

- Asking opening ended questions;
- Affirming things the client values;
- Reflecting what they are saying (their change talk); and
- Summarizing their thoughts and goals.

"I intend to use the motivational interviewing skills in my TANF/GA meetings with clients and focus on simplifying their plans."

– Meeting Attendee



After learning about Motivational Interviewing and its basic skills, attendees were given an opportunity to practice these skills. Mr. Kafka used real life examples from his work and attendees responded with skills they would use in each situation and if they could point out any evidence of change talk in the examples.

Promising Practices in Quality Tribal TANF Case Documentation

Recognizing that case documentation is an important detail that can sometimes be overlooked in the busy day to day of case management, this session provided participants with information on consistent and proper documentation and why it matters. This session featured presentations from both Sam Stitt, Financial Operations Specialist, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Region X and Roxanne Lincoln, Compliance Eligibility Specialist, within the Athabascan Self-sufficiency Assistance Partnership (ASAP) Department at the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

Mr. Stitt began the session with an overview of the Office of Grants Management (OGM). OGM handles financial reporting, audit resolution and technical assistance for ACF grants. Audits are performed on an annual basis as prescribed in OMB Circular A-133 and test for eligibility, allowable grant activities and allowable costs. The cost of an audit is considered an allowable expense and sanctions may be issued if a grantee does not comply with an annual audit. The audit process begins when the TANF program is chosen for an audit and case files and financial records are reviewed. The final audit is forwarded to Tribal leadership and the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. The audit is then sent to various regional offices, including the appropriate OGM regional office, who will work with the Tribe to resolve any outstanding findings. The OGM regional office works with the Tribe to see if any corrective action is needed and help the Tribe ensure there are no repeat findings. Tribes can be assessed penalties if it was determined that funds were used in violation of the grant program. Mr. Stitt then went over some common audit findings among Tribal TANF programs and how each is resolved. One participant noted that as a case manager, this information was very helpful to know as they go about their daily work.

Next, Ms. Lincoln began with a brief overview of the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) and noted that their service area is very large, serving 42 federally recognized tribes across much of Alaska's interior. There are a variety of forms of documentation needed within Tribal TANF programs. Ms. Lincoln went through 14 different points of documentation needed to determine Tribal TANF eligibility and gave examples of what TCC uses for each point. She also shared an intake checklist that she developed for her staff so that they can be sure they have every necessary piece of documentation during intake.

From her experience, Ms. Lincoln offered some tips on how to obtain income verification. Having an employer fill out a work statement (when accompanied by a release of information from the participant) is



one way TCC is able to document income without traditional documents such as pay stubs and tax returns. An additional resource is to check with the State's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to see if that agency has current work information. Ms. Lincoln highlighted the importance of creating working relationships with other social service agencies such as SNAP, the State TANF program, social security office, department of labor, and child support agency and creating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) so that information can more easily be shared. At TCC, case reviews are done on a regular basis by Ms. Lincoln. She routinely pulls four or five cases and checks for compliance.

Team Time

During Team Time, Tribal teams had a chance to discuss amongst themselves the information they heard over the course of the day and strategize about how these ideas could be applied in their programs. Each Tribal Team was given an action planning template to assist them in thinking through new ideas for their programs. Tribes had been seated separately over the course of the day to increase networking opportunities so this dedicated time was appreciated. Ms. Morales facilitated a short discussion following the time, during which teams were given the opportunity to share something they identified on their action plans to tackle once they returned home. Cook Inlet Tribal Council shared that they were planning to connect with their local police department to see if they can set up an MOU to have background checks completed free of charge, like San Carlos Apache has shared they had done for their TANF participants.

Meaningful Case Plan Development

A strong case plan is part of the foundation that guides the engagement of Tribal TANF staff with participants. It outlines the needs, strengths, goals and responsibilities agreed upon by the case manager and participant and acts as a roadmap for all parties to follow. This session featured a presentation from Bernadine Andrade, Assistant TANF Director for the San Carlos Apache Tribe in Arizona followed by an interactive activity for attendees facilitated by Ms. Morales.

A core principle of case planning is that a successful case plan is created when participants are empowered to use the plan to develop the path they see for themselves and their family. It is important for case managers and other direct service staff to get out in the community and know the resources available to participants. It is also important, particularly in more remote Tribal communities to have a sense of resources available outside the community for those who may need or want to leave to find employment.



Knowing the resources available to participants will also allow case managers to most effectively work with participants to remove employment barriers.

Following Ms. Andrade's presentation, attendees were given two different client scenarios to discuss creating a case plan for at their tables. Each attendee was given the handout "Key Points for Case Plan Development" and a sample case plan to fill in as they discussed the scenarios with their tables. Ms. Andrade and Ms. Morales then elicited feedback from attendees on the case plans they developed for each client.

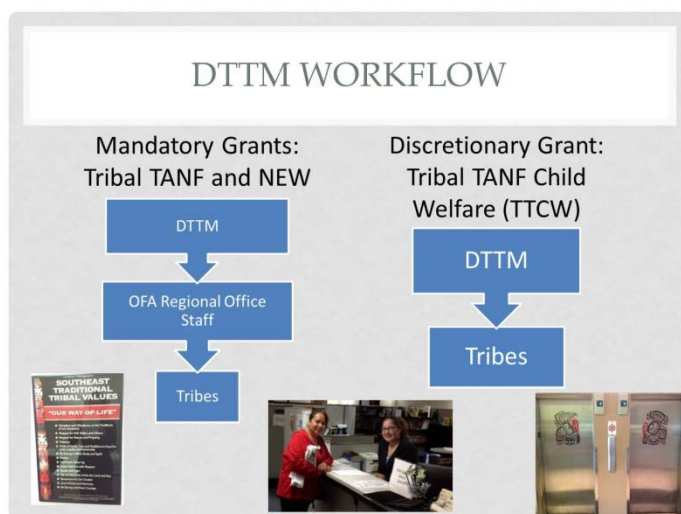
"I particularly enjoyed the scenario activity because it gave us a chance to see what other individuals and programs would do in the same scenario. Best one yet!"

-Meeting Attendee

Overview of the Division of Tribal TANF Management

The Division of Tribal TANF Management, within the Office of Family Assistance at the Administration for Children and Families is the federal office responsible for administering Tribal TANF. Amelia Popham, Program Specialist within the Division of Tribal TANF Management (DTTM) gave attendees a broad overview of the Division's purpose and work. As of October 1, 2014 there are 69 Tribal TANF programs in the United States. The total amount of annual funding for Tribal TANF is \$186,628,585. The purpose of Tribal TANF is to give federally recognized Tribes flexibility in the design of programs that promote self-sufficiency, work, and strengthen native families. In addition to Tribal TANF, the DTTM oversees the Native Employment Works (NEW) program and Tribal TANF Child Welfare Coordination grants. NEW is a mandatory program that provides funding for Tribal organizations to create work activities for unemployed

or underemployed clients within their service area. The Tribal TANF Child Welfare Coordination grants are a discretionary grant program that began in 2011 and provides funds for Tribes to increase coordination and positive outcomes between their Tribal TANF and Indian Child Welfare programs. Region X has the highest number of grantees for all three programs.



In addition to providing oversight of the three grant programs, the DTTM also offers technical assistance to grantees and



prospective grantees. In 2013, the DTTM sponsored a National Tribal TANF Summit and in 2014 held two additional meetings for Tribal TANF leaders and Healthy Marriage/Responsible Fatherhood and Tribal TANF Child Welfare grantees, respectively. The Division also offers webinars and has three online training modules currently in development for Tribal TANF programs. In 2015, DTTM plans to develop new webinars based on technical assistance requests from Tribes, release the online training modules, host two national Tribal TANF meetings, provide guidance on subsidized employment and work experience and connect Tribes to the Welfare Peer TA Network.

Day Two

Ms. Andrade opened Day Two of the meeting with a special blessing in her native language. Following the blessing, Ms. Ogliore welcomed attendees back for a second day of learning and networking before introducing the day's first speaker.

Providing a Culture of Support with the Bridges Out of Poverty Model

Bridges Out of Poverty is a model that offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the dynamics that cause and maintain poverty from the individual, organizational and community levels. Andrew Freed, Senior TANF Manager at Cook Inlet Tribal Council is a trained Bridges Out of Poverty facilitator and provided an interactive session to attendees on the basics of the model and how his program has utilized it.

To begin the discussion about poverty, Mr. Freed shared his personal story of growing up in poverty in Cleveland, Ohio before joining the Air Force which he credits as helping him establish his own career and economic stability. Bridges Out of Poverty teaches people to view economic class through three different lenses: individual, institution and community. A mental model is the way a person views poverty because of their personal experiences and it frames how people in poverty are seen. This is often subconscious but stills drives individual behavior. Mr. Freed provided an example from his own life; he remembers growing up with a scarcity of resources and because of this pays great attention to his personal finances and conserving money (such as turning out the lights when leaving a room). His daughter, however, has grown up in the middle class and is used to an abundance of resources and feels no anxiety about not having enough to go around. They each have different mental models that drive their behavior.

Mr. Freed asked attendees to think of a person they know in generational poverty and think through a day in their life. Attendees then shared issues this person may deal with as they live their everyday lives. These included:

- Finding transportation;



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- Dealing with food insecurity;
- Accessing healthcare when needed;
- Using entertainment as an escape.

In the poverty class, a focus and importance is placed on relationships and the here and now. This focus on the immediate is called the “tyranny of the moment”. This is often reflected in the types of businesses that are seen in impoverished communities: rent-to-own stores, check cashers, liquor stores, pawn shops and fast food businesses. Attendees were then asked to discuss the floor plan of a home of a person living in poverty. It was noted that there may be multiple families squeezed into a small two bedroom apartment because of the lack of resources or affordable housing options.

In the middle class, the focus is on achievement and success and on planning and saving for the future. Businesses available in middle class communities include shopping malls, fitness centers, banks, places where disposable income can be spent. When thinking about child care in both class settings, the middle class focus on the quality of the child care while the poverty class consider the availability.

In the wealthy class, the focus is on connections and family legacy is highly valued. The wealthy have so many resources that there is no need to worry about the future because they are financially secure.

“The topic was new to me. Now I’m anxious to learn more about this model to improve my dealings with the population I serve.”

-Meeting Attendee

In relation to Tribal TANF, understanding the mentality of the poverty class is particularly important. Part of a case manager’s job is to help participants suspend the “now” to see a future choice. Additionally there are hidden rules to each class and if a person is going to transition from one class to another, they need a mentor from the other class to guide them as they navigate the new social class. It is also important to understand that hidden rules are embedded in the way institutions operate. Schools and businesses operate from a middle class norm. Additionally, each class has hidden rules about employment. In the middle class a rule is to not quit your job before you have another one. In the poverty class, a rule is do not disrespect someone in their job. These two rules can come into conflict with one another if a TANF participant feels disrespected at their job and abruptly quits. One function of Tribal TANF staff is to help participants understand these hidden rules of the middle class.

**Research About Language in Children, Ages 1 to 4,
 in Stable Households by Economic Group**

Number of Words Exposed to	Economic Group	Affirmations (Strokes)	Prohibitions (Discounts)
13 million words	Welfare	1 for every	2
26 million words	Working class	2 for every	1
45 million words	Professional	6 for every	1

Source: Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children (1995) by Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley.

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Language is also affected by social class. The middle class uses a formal register when speaking while the poverty class often uses a casual register. This can present problems if a Tribal TANF participant uses the wrong register at their job. Additionally, in research about language in children aged one to four, it was found that children in poverty hear two negative statements for every one affirmation, the working class, one negative statement for every two affirmations and in the professional class six affirmations for every one negative statement.

To end the session, Mr. Freed let participants know that this was just an overview of the Bridges Out of Poverty Model and to go through the entire training is a two day process.

Delivering Quality Services to Tribal TANF Participants

The delivery of case management services is a core function of every Tribal TANF program and each tribe approaches it differently. Mr. Freed presented this interactive session and began by soliciting suggestions from attendees on what quality service delivery looks like. Suggestions included:

- Good communication;
- Treat participant like a favorite relative;
- Fast and efficient service;
- Empowering for the participant; and
- Giving back to the community.

A working definition of service delivery that was used to frame the session is: service provided by a clearly defined customer-based model that offers a reliable and readily accessible system. High quality service delivery communicates to the participant what to expect from a service, how it operates, and helps that person understand the service's scope. It is key to deliver what is communicated! Communication with participants is a process consisting of both verbal and nonverbal communication; 90% of communication is nonverbal. There can be many barriers to communication with participants; one of which is communication overload. At the beginning of the session Mr. Freed asked four volunteers to each remember three different words. Then, about 45 minutes later, he asked the volunteers to recall them. All could recall their words but it took a minute. Mr. Freed explained that this is because they were taking in so much other information listening to the presentation it made those initial words hard to recall. This can happen to Tribal TANF



participants too as they work with their case managers and are given a list of instructions, rules, responsibilities and tasks to complete and then have a hard time executing given the overload of information.

“Heart Talk” refers to the ability for a participant to sense a service provider’s attitude and demeanor as they work with them. The heart can communicate a positive attitude, passion, confidence and humility. Maintaining a positive attitude and passion for Tribal TANF work can sometimes be difficult. Attendees offered suggestions for maintaining a positive attitude such as remembering that case managers are not responsible for their client’s missteps or successes and making sure to take time off to prevent burnout. Passion for the work is found when a person is operating within their intended purpose.

Strategies to Meet the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Needs of Tribal TANF Participants

Chemical dependency, mental health, and co-occurring disorders are barriers that many Tribal TANF staff are forced to address during the course of their work. This session was composed of a panel of presenters who each offered a different perspective on how their Tribe handles substance abuse and mental health needs of Tribal TANF participants. The panel included Kailey McNeil, TANF Program Specialist, and Heidi Stutes, Workforce Development Specialist, both from Kodiak Area Native Association; Marilyn Scott, Vice Chair of Health, Education and Social Services for the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe and Diane Henry, Acting Executive Director of Tulalip Health and Human Services.

Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) is located on Kodiak Island and many of the outlying villages the program serves are only accessible by boat or plane. KANA provides a range of services including: behavioral health, medical care, community services, purchased and referred care, a pharmacy and dental care. Tribal TANF falls under the Community Services Division and when a participant needs to be referred out, they are referred to Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR), Behavioral Health/Children and Family Services or a variety of community partners. TVR works with participants who may have an unidentified or hidden issue that TANF has not been able to address and prepares participants for employment.

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KANA's Behavioral Health program offers a wide variety of services including chemical dependency, mental health, meth and suicide prevention and tobacco cessation. Due to confidentiality rules, a completed behavioral health release of information form must be signed by the participant and sent over to department before they may interact with the TANF participant. Behavioral health maintains a priority of services to ensure those who most need help receive it:

1. Psychiatric emergencies
2. Injection drug users, OCS (Office of Children Services) urgent referrals and substance using pregnant women
3. Clients whose substance abuse and/or mental health problems is threatening physical well-being
4. Clients experiencing high subjective distress and high motivation for treatment
5. Mandated referrals



To reach the villages and rural communities, KANA has visiting clinicians and a traveling behavioral health aid that both make trips during good weather. Additionally, video conferencing is used if the weather is poor. In addition to behavioral health services, others services such as a home visiting program, family youth integrity program and children's play therapy are available to Tribal TANF families. Three of KANA's important community partners are the Kodiak Island Housing Authority, Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center and the Office of Children's Services.

Ms. Scott spoke next about how Upper Skagit handles these services. Washington State has expanded Medicaid which now allows many to get access to benefits such as substance abuse and mental health treatment that they could not before the Affordable Care Act was implemented. Upper Skagit coordinates their services both within the tribe and with neighboring tribes. Previously, the Tribal government and social services programs recognized barriers that participants were facing around chemical dependency, suicide and mental health and decided they needed to find a way to assist participants in complying with TANF but also overcome their barriers. A drug and alcohol screen was mandated at TANF intake as well as in other social service programs. If an individual is applying for TANF and the screen comes back positive, that participant is referred to chemical dependency services.

To end the session, Ms. Henry presented on Tulalip Behavioral Health's chemical dependency process. To access services, clients can walk in or call and have their appointment scheduled with regards to the

explanation of urgency. In addition to a standard business hour phone line, there is an after-hours crisis line that accepts phone calls as well. Before services begin, clients complete an assessment with a chemical dependency professional and the agency then decides what services to offer based on the assessment results. Youth are handled slightly differently; they are immediately addressed and do not wait for help. Additionally a parent or family member can seek help for the youth. Other services provided by Tulalip Behavior Health include a suboxone clinic, a wellness warriors group for men, traditional sweats, talking circles, and treatment for problem gambling.

Engaging Participants in Meaningful and Countable Work Participation

The final session of the day was focused on creative ways to meet and maintain work participation. Work participation is a necessary component of a Tribal TANF programs and this session explored ways to ensure Tribal TANF participants gain necessary work skills through meaningful opportunities, creating partnerships with employers and supportive services and ensuring these activities count towards overall program work participation.

Ms. Ogliore began the session with a brief presentation on allowable work activities. Unlike states, each tribe may negotiate their work participation rate based on economic conditions and resources available for participants. Tribes may also define what activities count as work within the confines of the statute and establish the number of work hours required for participation. In addition to the standard allowable work activities as prescribed by the law, Tribes can include different or additional activities such as:

- Work experience or job sampling;
- Vocational education – without limitation;
- Participation in barrier removal activities;
- Participation in basic life skills training (e.g. financial management, health, and hygiene practices) that will contribute to family wellness and individual's readiness for the job market;
- Traditional subsistence activities (e.g. hunting, fishing, gathering, trapping, etc.);
- Traditional work activities (e.g. pottery making, weaving, wood carving, jewelry making, farming, herding, etc.);
- Teaching cultural activities; and
- Work involved in or supporting traditional cultural activities.

"It has been really great to hear from other TANF programs from other tribes and what methods & talks they have used that worked."

-Meeting Attendee

These allow Tribes greater flexibility in designing creative work activities for their Tribal TANF participants.

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Ms. Andrade, then spoke about creative ways to engage participants and offered some examples from her program. She noted that it is imperative that case managers know their TANF policies, what is considered acceptable and how many hours participants are required to be involved in work activities. Some solutions that San Carlos Apache has been able to find for their participants include creating a file clerk crew which provided filing services through the Tribal government and a laborer crew that did odd jobs and basic maintenance for the government. When working directly with employers, it is important to work closely with them to get participants in their doors and appropriately placed in positions. San Carlos Apache has also used a variety of activities to ensure participants are meeting their work participation requirements. These include counting education, training and associated homework (up to two hours), unpaid work experience, having participants clean up the homes of the elderly in the community and allowing a medical excuse for physical therapy appointments. Though there wasn't time to present them, Ms. Andrade included additional information on San Carlos Apache's Tribal TANF program, called "Nnee Bich'o Nii" for attendees who would like more information.

Following Ms. Andrade's presentation, three of the attending Tribes gave short presentations about unique ideas they've implemented to fulfill TANF work requirements.



Marlene Andrews, TANF Program Manager at Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) explained the Tribe's traditional subsistence and gardening program. The cost of living in rural Alaska is very high since many goods needed travel great distances to reach these outlying communities and transportation to major cities is expensive. Traditionally, Alaska Natives have lived off their land by hunting, gathering, fishing and gardening. BBNA decided to reteach these skills to their community while satisfying TANF work requirements

and began their saves a great deal independence project began to 2010 with their first gave basic local gardens and gardening could project has composting,

BBNA Gardening Project Partners

- University of Alaska, School of Natural Resources
- Private Foundations
- Diabetes Prevention Program
- Sea Grant Alaska
- American Seafoods
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service

gardening project. Gardening not only of money on groceries but also creates from changing market prices. The engage the community in September Southwest Garden Symposium which information on gardening, showcased gave participants an idea of what look like in Southwest Alaska. As the continued, BBNA has offered classes in practical gardening and harvesting and

preserving food. They have even built geodesic dome greenhouses to garden year round.

Next, Stacy Mills, Family Assistance Program Manager at the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe spoke about her program's creative work solutions. The majority of Port Gamble S'Klallam's residents are between the ages of 18 and 34 and the community was concerned that without many elders the Tribe's cultural traditions would not live on. To address this, the Tribal TANF program created a cultural work activities program in which Tribal TANF participants teach cultural activities to community youth. In addition, Port Gamble S'Klallam has a reentry program for ex-offenders which is funded with \$70,000 in employment and training dollars through the Tribe's 477 program. The goal of the program is to put those with a criminal history back to work and there is always a waitlist for services.

Lastly, Ms. Roxanne Lincoln gave a brief description of the Tanana Chief's Conference GILA (Let's Go) program. GILA is a training offered that prepares tribal members for immediate employment. The training includes a variety of workshops that will assist participants in their future job endeavors including; Customer Service Training, Financial Planning, CPR/First Aide Training, Interview Skills, and much more. To participate in the program, Tribal members travel to Fairbanks to participate in a group setting.

Wrap Up

Before the meeting ended, Ms. Morales and Ms. Ogliore addressed some of the issues and questions that had been placed in the "parking lot" and opened them up to attendees to comment. Topics included allowing medical appointments to count towards work participation; guidelines for hardship exemptions; how to approach a participant with difficult questions about disabilities, criminal history; and handling participants who feel they've obtained self-sufficiency while living off the land, not securing employment. Additionally, Ms. Ogliore asked attendees to take a moment and think about what their technical assistance needs may be in the coming year. Attendees were informed about the OFA Peer TA Network and its ability to assist with some technical assistance request. Ideas and needs were recorded on a flip chart and included:

- Learn more about available intake, assessment and screening tools;
- Work participation;
- Categorizing activities internally to meet federal requirements;
- What does the WPR mean for each tribe and what goes into federal report;
- Data training on calculations;
- Fraud investigation;
- How tribes calculate income and how it impacts programs and participants; and
- Examples of uses of funds- situations/issues that come up and how they are addressed.



Region X recorded these needs and will consider them for next year's regional technical assistance activities. Ms. Ogliore thanked attendees for traveling to the meeting, their attention over the two days and wished them safe travels home. Leo Smith from Nez Perce gave a closing blessing and the meeting concluded.