

ACF Region IX State and Territorial TANF Strategic Session
September 15-16, 2010 | San Francisco, California



**ACF Region IX State and Territorial
Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF)
Strategic Session**

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Administration for Children and Families
Region IX
"Region IX State/Territorial Meeting"
San Francisco, CA
September 15-16, 2010

FINAL REPORT

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Meeting Goals and Participants

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) San Francisco Regional office held its TANF Technical Assistance Meeting in San Francisco, CA, September 15-16, 2010. There were several goals for the meeting:

- To provide an opportunity to bring together States, Guam and Federal staff working with the TANF Program in Region IX to meet face to face on common issues;
- To receive current updates and new directions;
- To learn how the TANF system works for family violence victims and collaboration between TANF agencies and domestic violence program partners;
- Provide an opportunity for a roundtable discussion on how States/Guam have collaborated with agencies using ARRA funds to meet the needs of clients;
- To participate in a demonstration of the Online Work Readiness Assessment (OWRA) and learn about the pilot sites who have used OWRA; and
- Explore approaches to strategic planning for meeting the needs of TANF participants – particularly the hard-to-serve.

Thirteen individuals participated in the meeting. They represented:

- ACF San Francisco Regional Office
- ACF Office of Family Assistance Central Office
- Region IX States and Guam Administrators from Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii and Nevada.

Opening Session

Dan Baker, TANF Program Manager, ACF Region IX opened the meeting on the first day with greetings and introductions. Followed by the meeting Facilitator, Dr. Jeanette Hercik of ICF International Inc. providing an overview of objectives for the two-day meeting. Ms. Sharon Fuji, ACF Regional Administrator provided additional welcoming remarks and introduced Dr. Earl Johnson, Director, Office of Family Assistance. Mr. Johnson addressed his vision, current priorities, and the future direction of TANF.

Current Developments in Region IX

Following opening remarks, the first session focused on current perspectives and developments in Region IX jurisdictions. Each State and Guam provided brief updates regarding important priorities and challenges impacting their programs. Dr. Hercik captured this session by using the flip chart to illustrate the challenges

and solutions that will apply to the strategic planning she will offer in the last session of the meeting. The common themes among all the States and Guam were high unemployment rates, budget deficits, staff furloughs, reduction of staff and poor morale, increasing caseloads and the challenge of meeting WPR.

Domestic Violence – Not Enough: What TANF Offers Family Violence Victims

Grace Huang, Public Policy Coordinator, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, provided a presentation taken from a report ([Not Enough: What TANF Offers Family Violence Victims](#)) which describes a national survey conducted by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) and Legal Momentum in the Fall of 2009. Ms. Huang provided the background and statistics on who participated in the survey - along with key results and making TANF more effective. The survey showed that TANF works well for some victims in some locations however, lacks in other areas that may be unsafe for victims. Suggestions were presented along with resources.

Region IX Roundtable Discussion

The afternoon session focused on the State and Guam Roundtable discussion. This interactive discussion centered on collaboration with other agencies using ARRA funds, etc. to meet the needs of clients. Each jurisdiction described new programs and partnerships that were created with ARRA funds. For example, Hawaii highlighted the Summer Youth Employment and Summer Feeding Program and how they reached out to Department of Defense, Department of Education, City and County of Honolulu, Community College of Maui and the University of Hawaii to help expend ARRA funds. California discussed their Subsidized Employment program and Summer Youth Employment program by teaming with Workforce Investment Board and Private Employers. They also partnered with First Five for the Summer Feeding Program as well. The State Community College System was another partner whereby subsidized employment was expanded to the work study program using ARRA funds. Guam did not apply for ARRA funds. However, they discussed the close collaboration efforts that are being done on the island with the Work Force Investment Board and One-Stop offices along with the Military build up to provide employment opportunities for TANF clients. Nevada used all of their ARRA funds for basic assistance. Arizona has partnership agreements in place but has not used ARRA funds for any new programs due to budget shortfalls. Arizona has a strong relationship with WIA.

Federal Partners Panel Reaction – ACF, DOL, and USDA

Local Federal partners joined the meeting and reacted to the roundtable discussion by adding ideas, policy questions and presented “promising practices”. The local federal partners consisted of Karen Jirsa from USDA

(SNAP), Rosemary Cowan from DOL (WIA) and Libby Albert USDA (FNS). Ms. Jirsa informed the group of the “Trusted Partners SNAP Outreach Program” that Nevada is currently using to address low SNAP participation rates and providing benefits to those in need. There was great interest in this program and Ms. Jirsa agreed to provide the resources to ACF and grantees. Ms. Albert commented on the importance of school meals and summer feeding program for each State. Ms. Cowan from DOL highlighted the Subsidized Employment programs in California and Hawaii and provided a list of WIA and TANF collaboration for the Summer Youth Employment program using ARRA funds. The list included six separate sites in the State of California.

Presentation by Professor Susan Curnan – “What Makes a Great Partner?”

The last session of the day was facilitated by Professor Susan Curnan of The Heller School of Social Policy and Management. Professor Curnan captured the overall essence of the Roundtable Discussion and Federal Partners Reaction and presented her research view on the partnerships needed to facilitate client success.

Current Developments in Region IX

The second day’s first session was focused on the continuation of current developments for the remainder of States. During this session the States and Guam had an opportunity to ask Dr. Earl Johnson, Director of OFA questions and voice concerns for their TANF Program. Dr. Hercik continued illustrating challenges and solutions in order to set the stage for the last session of the day – Strategic Planning to meet the goals of their TANF program.

On Line Work Readiness Assessment (OWRA) Demo and Lessons Learned

Damon Waters, Senior Associate, ICF International, Inc. provided a presentation of OWRA a web-based tool to assist caseworkers and agencies in improving delivery of service and engaging recipients. Mr. Waters explained how the tool worked and demonstrated modules 1 and 2, which have been piloted. Modules 3 and 4 are in the process of being piloted. He conveyed that modules 1 and 2 were available to download from the website and technical assistance is available at the following website: <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/tanftc>.

“Where We Are and Where We Are Going: TANF, the Recession and Moving Beyond ARRA”

Dr. Hercik, Vice President, ICF International, Inc. facilitated this final session regarding strategies for meeting the needs of TANF participants and other clients despite the challenges. Dr. Hercik provided a strategic planning guide and resources to all the participants. The goals in this session were as follows: outline potential strategies for meeting the needs of TANF recipients –

particularly hard-to-serve, to clearly articulate technical assistance needs and next steps in supporting TANF families once the ARRA funding has terminated and through the recession. Dr. Hercik lead the group through the planning guide and pointed out some of the partners that were not mentioned but may impact the TANF program when thinking about challenges around the TANF program.

Close-out and next steps

Dan Baker closed the meeting by thanking all presenters and participants for the input that was captured during this successful meeting. He thanked everyone for taking the time out of his or her busy schedules to participate in the event. Mr. Baker acknowledged ICF International for helping in the management of the meeting.