

## **Report to the Legislature**

### **Department of Social and Health Services State-to-State Relationship—Indian Tribes**

Senate Bill 6175 Chapter 122, Laws of 2012

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During the 2012 Regular Session of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, Senate Bill 6175 passed and was signed into law by Governor Gregoire on March 29, 2102. The State-to-State Relationships – Indian Tribes law requires an annual report by state agencies to report on activities with the Federally Recognized Tribes of Washington State. Activities to be reported on include collaboration, communication, establishment of a direct report to the head of the state agency, and training of state employees.

## **INDIAN POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Department of Social and Health Services (Department) has had in place an advisory committee to the Secretary since the early 1980's. In 1991 the Indian Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC) formulated their By-laws which state the following:

*The 29 Federally Recognized Tribes exercising their sovereign Indian authority and Recognized American Indian Organizations (here after RAIO) exercising their rights as Indians and citizens of the state of Washington, establish the Indian Policy Advisory Committee (here after called IPAC) to guide the implementation of the Centennial Accord, and Administrative Policy 7.01. The IPAC does not circumvent the sovereign authority of Tribal Governments. The objective of IPAC is to assist the collective needs of the Tribal governments and other American Indian organizations to assure quality and comprehensive service delivery to all American Indians and Alaska Natives in Washington State.*

Membership to IPAC is done by Tribal resolution from the governing body of the Federally Recognized Tribes, and by letter of delegation from a board of directors from a RAIO which is chartered and organized under IRS 501 (c) (3) ruling.

Meetings are held on a quarterly basis with the department. During these meetings, each of the administrations provide an update of activities occurring that may have a direct impact to the tribal government and or to tribal citizens. On a semi-annual basis, each of the department's Assistant Secretaries make these presentations. A component of the agenda time is also reserved for an open dialogue with each administration. During these presentations, issues of significance and urgency can be raised by either the tribal or state governments.

In addition to the full IPAC meetings sub-committees meet on a scheduled basis between the full IPAC meetings. These meetings are designed to be attended by IPAC delegates, tribal and department program staff. Program staff for the department will make presentations on upcoming program operations, policy changes and fiscal changes. In preparation for formal consultation, sub-committee time can be dedicated toward the required roundtable meetings.

Innovative projects have been raised at both the full IPAC and sub-committee meetings. Since April 2012, some of these projects include; Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families WAC development, Casey/Indian, Child Welfare conference, annual lump sum payments, Tribal Centric Mental Health.

### **SENIOR DIRECTOR**

The department has had, as a member of the Executive Leadership Team, the Senior Director for the Office of Indian Policy. This position provides leadership across the department regarding Tribal-State relations. The Senior Director is a direct report to the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Administration & External Relations office. Additionally each administration of the department has staff that are classified as Tribal Liaisons. The Senior Director provides leadership to these Tribal Liaisons and serves as a resource to them in their partnering with the Tribes and RAIO's.

### **COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION**

The department established their Communication and Consultation protocols in June 2006. These protocols were developed in collaboration with the DSHS Cabinet (Cabinet) and IPAC. In 2006 the Cabinet was comprised of the Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Directors, including the Director for Indian Policy and Support Services. They were presented during the 2006 Centennial Accord meeting and have been signed off on by Tribal Chair(s), Governor Gregoire and Secretary Robin Arnold-Williams.

In adherence with the communications protocol, all correspondence regarding contracts, monitoring visits and reports, meetings, policy changes, budget and consultations are mailed to each of the twenty-nine Tribal Chairs. Electronic copies of letters are distributed to the IPAC

delegate and relevant subcommittee members. This approach has proven to be an excellent method to respect both the reverence of sending formal communications to the Tribal Leaders, at the same time keeping programmatic staff informed of current, and often time sensitive, matters.

Since April 2012, the department has held seven formal consultations with the tribes. Each of these also had the required two roundtable meetings in advance of the consultation.

## **TRAINING**

The department has various Administrative Policies. The one specific for our work with Tribes and RAIO's, is the American Indian Policy, Administrative Policy 7.01. Embedded within this policy is the requirement for any staff with direct working responsibility, to receive Administrative Policy 7.01 training. To be certain that all DSHS employees will have a baseline understanding of Government-to-Government relations, the Office of Indian Policy developed an on line training. This was submitted to the Human Resourced Division in August, it is anticipated go live April 15, 2013. This will require all DSHS employees to receive this training.

## **CONFERNCES**

The Office of Indian Policy has partnered with the University of Washington and Casey Family Programs to put on two conferences.

From April 5-6, 2012 in partnership with the University of Washington a conference titled "Washington Tribes and Recognized American Indian Organizations Health Priorities Summit" the focus of this meeting was to look at the health care needs across ages of the Native American population. The full report of this meeting is on the University of Washington web site:

<http://ada.washington.edu/tribal/conferencereports/>

From October 9-10, 2012 a statewide conference was held in partnership with Casey Family Programs on the Indian Child Welfare titled: "Tribal and State Justice to Strengthen Indian Families" this conference focus was to bring together, tribes, state and judicial partners to discuss how Indian Child Welfare is addressed in Washington.

