

**OWENS VALLEY CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM**



TANF PLAN

FY: 2019-2022

Revised 1/8/2019

**OWENS VALLEY CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
TRIBAL TANF PLAN**

I. TRIBAL TANF GOALS

The intent of the Owens Valley Career Development Center Tribal TANF (“OVCDC TT”) Program is to provide TANF assistance and services to eligible American Indian/Alaska Native families that are in need of temporary and appropriate assistance and services.

The OVCDC TT Program will provide eligible parent(s) or caretaker participants with job preparation, work, and supportive services to prepare them to become self-sufficient and transition off of the program. The OVCDC TT Program will comply with all federal statutes and regulations governing Tribal TANF. It is the intent of OVCDC that assistance shall be provided promptly with due regard for the preservation of family life.

The OVCDC TT Program will identify, collect and measure progress on program outcomes related to the four purposes of TANF by collecting data that describe the services provided to eligible families and individuals on regular basis.

Goals

- Increase the employability of Tribal needy families.
- Increase employment opportunities for recipients through job training and skill development.
- To better prepare and educate for healthy and planned pregnancies.
- Encourage healthy and stable two parent Tribal families.

We will measure progress toward meeting program goals in the following ways:

- We will track the federally mandated work participation rates monthly, year to date and annually, using our data management system.
- We will track participants who obtain employment, both while receiving cash assistance and when their TANF case closes. For those participants who elect to receive transitional support services for up to 24 months after case closure, they will also report information monthly, which may include wage or hours increases, promotions or job changes, and receipt of employee benefits,
- We will track program reentries after exit with income,
- We will track closed cases by reason for closure,
- We will track participants who reach milestones while receiving TANF benefits, which include but are not limited to:
 - Educational degree attainment;
 - Certification, credential or license attainment;
 - Other related milestones.

The OVCDC TT Program’s mission is to provide the opportunity for improvement in the quality of life by focusing on education and self-sufficiency while protecting, preserving, and promoting Native American culture. The approach of the OVCDC TT Program

consists of a balance of services that promote work responsibility and self-sufficiency for the families. To meet these goals, the OVCDL TT Program delivers services under the following principles:

- A system of independence not dependence
- A system of empowerment not one of enabling
- A system that demands personal responsibility and accountability
- A system that is participant and community centered

II. DESIGNATED AGENCY

The following federally recognized Indian Tribes located in Fresno, Inyo, Kings, Mono, , and Tulare counties designate, by tribal resolution, the OVCDL as the lead agency responsible for the administration of the OVCDL Tribal TANF Program:

- Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley
- Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians
- Bishop Paiute Tribe
- Bridgeport Indian Colony
- Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians
- Fort Independence Indian Reservation
- Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe
- Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe
- Table Mountain Rancheria
- Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
- Tule River Indian Tribe
- Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe of the Benton Paiute Reservation

The OVCDL is a Tribal consortia comprised of three tribes: Bishop Paiute, Big Pine Paiute, and Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone. The consortia is governed by the Owens Valley Board of Trustees, whose members are representatives from each of the consortia member tribes. OVCDL is the lead agency and grantee, and holds full responsibility for the administration of the grant. Bridgeport, Big Sandy, Cold Springs, Fort Independence, Santa Rosa, Table Mountain, Timbisha, Tule River and Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute are federally recognized tribes who have agreed via Resolution to participate in the OVCDL Tribal TANF program, but who do not have governing Board representation or affiliation; rather, each of the participating member tribes elects or appoints a representative to serve on the OVCDL TANF Advisory Committee, which provides ongoing feedback and input on program quality and service provision.

III. PERIOD COVERED BY THE PLAN

This plan covers the continued operation of the OVCDL Tribal TANF program for a three (3) year period beginning June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2019.

IV. SERVICE POPULATION

The OVCDL Tribal TANF program will provide Tribal TANF assistance and support services to all eligible members of federally recognized tribes, members of the California Judgment Roll, Alaska Natives, their descendants and families who reside in the off reservation areas of Inyo, Kern, Tulare, Fresno, Kings, Mono, and Ventura Counties. OVCDL Tribal TANF Program will also provide Tribal TANF assistance and support services to eligible members of federally recognized tribes, the California Judgment Roll, Alaska Natives, and eligible members of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley, Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, Bishop Paiute Tribe, Bridgeport Indian Colony, Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians, Fort Independence Indian Reservation, Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe, Table Mountain Rancheria, Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, Tule River Indian Tribe, and the Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe of the Benton Paiute Reservation, their descendants, and families who reside on one of the aforementioned tribe's reservations. OVCDL will exclude all North Fork Rancheria Tribal members who reside in the off-reservation areas of Fresno County from its service population, as per written agreement.

V. SERVICE AREA

The OVCDL TT Program will provide Tribal TANF assistance and support services to all eligible members of the approved service population, their descendants and families who reside in the off- reservation areas of Inyo, Kern, Tulare, Fresno, Kings, Mono, and Ventura Counties, and to all eligible members of the approved service population, their descendants and families who reside on the reservation or rancheria lands of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley, Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, , Bishop Paiute Tribe, Bridgeport Indian Colony, Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians, Fort Independence Indian Reservation, Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe, Table Mountain Rancheria, Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, Tule River Indian Tribe, and the Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe of the Benton Paiute.

VI. REVIEW AND COMMENT ON OVCDL TRIBAL TANF PLAN

The OVCDL TT Program has provided a 45 day public comment period on the Tribal Family Assistance Plan ("TFAP") prior to the submission of the TFAP. The public comment period included public presentations to participants and stakeholders and individual presentations to our tribal partners.

The OVCDL TT Program held a series of three public hearings at our office locations in Bakersfield, Bishop and Fresno to obtain feedback and input from participants, the

community, tribal members, and local stakeholders, and to allow them to review the plan. These public hearings occurred on the following dates in the following locations:

- January 17, 2019 - Bishop
- January 22, 2019 - Fresno
- –January 29, 2019 - Bakersfield

The OVCDC TT Program also met individually with the Tribal Councils of our respective partner tribes to solicit feedback and comments regarding our Tribal Family Assistance Plan (“TFAP”).

- January 24, 2019 – Big Sandy Rancheria
- January 24, 2019 – Cold Springs Rancheria
- – Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe
- January 26, 2019 – Bishop Paiute Tribe
- January 30, 2019 Tule River Indian Tribe
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- – Bridgeport Indian Colony
- – Fort Independence Indian Tribe
- – Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley
- – Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe of the Benton Paiute
- – Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
- – Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe

VII. ELIGIBILITY FOR TANF ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

Eligibility for OVCDC TT Program assistance and services is as established in the Tribe's approved Tribal TANF Plan. Only needy families, as defined in the TANF plan may receive (a) any form of federal or State Maintenance of Effort (“MOE”) funded "assistance" (as defined at 45 CFR 286.10); or (b) any benefits or services pursuant to TANF purposes 1 or 2, regardless of the purpose served. "Needy" means financially disadvantaged, according to income and resource (if applicable) criteria established in the TANF plan by the OVCDC TT, to receive the particular "assistance", benefit or service. The OVCDC TT may use segregated federal TANF funds to provide services that do not constitute "assistance" (as defined at 45 CFR 286.10) to individuals and family members who are not financially disadvantaged but who need the kinds of services that meet TANF purposes 3 or 4. Objective criteria will be used and applied to establish eligibility for participation in these services and activities. Unless the State instructs otherwise, the Tribe may also use MOE funds to pay for non-assistance pro-family activities for individuals or family members, regardless of financial need.

VIII. NEEDY AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE FAMILIES

The OVCDC TT Program shall define eligible needy American Indian/Alaska Native families as those families with total family income equal to, or less than 200% of the federal poverty guideline for cash assistance services.

The OVDCD TT Program shall define an eligible American Indian/Alaska Native family as one comprised of biological children, step-children, adopted children, or relative children (including non-American Indian/Alaska Natives) up to the age of 18 living with an eligible adult. At least one member of every family must be American Indian/Alaska Native. The term American Indian/Alaska Native shall be defined as members or descendants of federally recognized Tribes, members or descendants of the California Indian Judgment Roll, or Alaska Native. In addition, eligible American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) families must possess one or more of the following characteristics:

- AI/AN/non-AI/AN parent with eligible AI/AN child(ren), or;
- AI/AN single parent in her third trimester of pregnancy with an eligible child, or;
- AI/AN/non-AI/AN two-parent families with eligible children, or;
- AI/AN/non-AI/AN non-needy caretaker with eligible child(ren); must be related by blood, tribal culture or tradition, or by legally conferred guardianship from a tribal, federal or state court, or;
- AI/AN/non-AI/AN parent(s) with SSI eligible child(ren), or;
- AI/AN/non-AI/AN Timed Out parent(s). (State MOE funds will be used to extend assistance to the children in Timed Out families.)

IX. ELIGIBLE AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE FAMILIES MOVING INTO THE SERVICE AREA

All eligible American Indian/Alaska Native families moving into the approved service area will receive the same amount of cash assistance and/or support services as current OVDCD Tribal TANF program participants who reside in the same region of the service area.

X. TRIBAL TANF ASSISTANCE

The OVDCD TT Program will provide eligible needy families with monthly assistance as defined in 45 CFR 286 in the form of cash, checks, payments, vouchers, and other forms of benefits designed to meet family's ongoing basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items and general incidental expenses. This includes childcare and transportation for those TANF participants engaged in work activities but not employed. Participants must develop a Family Self Sufficiency Plan (FSSP) to assist in reaching their goals to self-sufficiency and transitioning off of government assistance.

XI. VARIANCE ACROSS SERVICE AREA

The OVDCD TT Program will provide cash assistance and related services to all eligible American Indian/Alaska Native families in an equitable and fair method.

In order to accommodate for higher costs of living in some counties in the approved service area, maximum monthly assistance grant amounts may be higher in those counties with documented higher costs of living. Maximum monthly assistance grant amounts will be regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure reasonableness and equity, and all monthly assistance schedules will be approved by the OVBT.

XII. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The OVCDCTT Program may provide the following supportive services to TANF Cash Aid eligible families:

- A) Justifiable job related or educational costs including but not limited to books, uniforms, tuition, educational supplies, work related clothing or other costs related to employment, employment training, or education;
- B) Referral and access to domestic violence services such as counseling, domestic violence shelter;
- C) Culturally relevant support services and educational activities that promote self-identity/self-esteem and family formation, and which contribute to improved executive function, integrity, and employability. .
- D) Child care costs for participants engaged in approved work activities as identified in the FSSP.
- E) Transportation costs for participants engaged in approved work activities as identified in the FSSP.
- F) Teen pregnancy prevention education and educational services (tutoring, mentorship, counseling/assessment referral(s)).
- G) Non-medical substance abuse services, non-medical mental health services, and other non-medical services that remove barrier(s) to employment and are not covered by Medi-Cal, insurance, IHS, State, or Tribal Medical service programs.
- H) Marriage Incentive: OVCDCTT cash-assisted program participants may receive a onetime \$2,000 marriage incentive, for successful completion of marriage education and counseling program. This incentive is intended to encourage the formation of two-parent families, and will be exempted as an available asset or resource. (As funds permit.)
- I) A once in a lifetime payment of up to \$1,000 toward non-federal undergraduate education loans that are in default. (The recipient must be within 12 months of graduating a post-secondary school to be eligible).
- J) A one-time payment of up to \$2,000 toward traffic related fine(s), as a barrier removal activity to assist a participant in obtaining a driver's license. This payment is limited to once in a lifetime, as funds permit.
- K) Extended Case Management (ECM): The OVCDCTT Program will provide supportive services to families who are no longer eligible for Tribal TANF because of a mix of earned and unearned income, to assist the family in transitioning off of TANF assistance and maintaining employment. Supportive services may be approved when an employed adult in a TANF family assistance unit needs a particular supportive service to retain their paid job or to increase their skill set to be eligible for a promotion and/or wage increase. Extended case management support services may include assistance with child care, transportation costs, and employment-related expenses. ECM is limited to a maximum of 24 months.

- L) Educational Incentive(s): Educational incentives may be awarded to aided youth who complete high school or GED, aided parents who complete high school, GED, post-secondary, vocational, or any other educational milestone that will lead to employment.
- M) School Clothing Allowance for Children: School aged children in cash-assisted TANF families (grades pre-Kindergarten-12) will be eligible to receive a clothing allowance twice per year, 1) at the start of the school year with proof of enrollment; 2) if they maintain at least a 2.0 GPA and consistent attendance, as an educational incentive. Additional funding may be authorized for children dependent upon severity of weather in their specific regional area.
- N) OVDC may pay tuition/costs of vocational education/career pathways programs designed to provide the technical skills and information required to perform a specific job or group of jobs, and on-the-job training (for cash-assisted participants only.)
- O) Short term housing and transportation assistance for up to three months to attend certified training programs that are reasonably calculated to lead to employment.
- P) May provide non-cash education or training support services to a non-custodial parent of an eligible Tribal TANF family to improve the non-custodial parent's capacity to support their children.

XIII. NON-RECURRING SHORT-TERM BENEFITS

Non-recurring emergency assistance benefit may be provided to eligible needy American Indian/Alaska Native families to meet extraordinary needs that arise from an emergency, crisis situation or an episode of need beyond those intended to be covered by regular monthly assistance and/or supportive services.

As provided through 45 CFR 286.10(b)(1), non-recurring short-term benefits must meet the following criteria:

1. Designed to deal with a specific crisis situation (such as government declared disasters, mandatory evacuation, etc.) or episode of need.
2. Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs.
3. Non-recurring emergency assistance will not exceed 4 months from the start of the crisis situation.
4. There is lifetime limit of \$5,000.00 for non-recurring short-term benefits provided in any context outside of a natural disaster.

Total family income must be equal to or less than 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines to be eligible for receipt of non-recurring short-term benefits.

XIV. DIVERSION

OVCDC may provide diversion services to families at risk of dependency on government assistance for a maximum of two (2) times within 12 months (not to exceed total equaling 3 months of assistance payments.) Diversion services are cash payments and/or services provided to families who: (1) are not currently OVCDC participants; (2) are at risk of becoming dependent upon government assistance; (3) are in need of a one time or limited benefit to help them avoid becoming dependent on government assistance.

XV. INCOME AND EARNINGS

All eligible needy TANF participants' income (except the first \$500 plus 50% of each additional dollar of non-subsidized earnings) will be counted toward the OVCDC TT Program's set grant amount. The total income/earnings (after deductions) shall not exceed the OVCDC family grant amount.

The OVCDC TT Program will exclude all Indian judgment funds or other disbursements that are excluded under federal law from being counted as income.

XVI. RESOURCES AND ASSETS

The OVCDC TT Program's resource limit is \$4,000. Certain resources are excluded from the resource limit. Those include:

- The family's principal residence,
- One operating vehicle per working adult,
- Individual Development Accounts ("IDA") up to \$4,000,
- Real property located on an Indian Reservation,
- Tribal Burial funds.

Other excluded resources are the principal and interest of 401(K), 403(b) and 457 plan accounts, Individual Retirement Accounts ("IRAs"), 529 college savings plans, and Coverdell Educational Savings Accounts ("ESAs").

All other assets and resources (i.e. bank account balances minus deposited income in the month, other real property, mineral rights, stocks etc.) shall be considered available to the needy family, including equity in other vehicles, and will be counted toward the resource limit.

XVII. COORDINATING WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

The OVCDC TT Program will coordinate with other OVCDC departments, Tribal service providers, and other social service related agencies including but not limited to: Welfare to Work, Medi-Cal, CalFresh, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA") programs, childcare centers, Indian Education Centers, Early Head Start, Head Start, Vocational Education, and Indian Child Welfare Act programs to assist TANF participants in accessing and obtaining needed services. The OVCDC TT Program will coordinate with the state, regional, and local high schools, and colleges to facilitate

educational opportunities, and with local businesses and companies to provide employment opportunities.

XVIII. CHILD CARE

Assistance with child care will be provided to eligible OVDCD TT Program cash-assisted families who are participating in approved Tribal Work Activities. Funding for childcare services may be made available to families at risk of dependency on government assistance through Diversion. Childcare may be provided by family members, (but not a parent of the child), other providers, or by state licensed childcare providers.

OVDCD TT program may extend child care assistance for 24 months to those families who are transitioning off of Tribal TANF due to a combination of earned/unearned income, as an incentive and support for the adult to maintain employment and retain a job. Child care will be paid for all children through the age of 12 while the parent or caretaker relative is participating in approved activities. Child care will be paid for disabled children through the age of 18 with verification from a physician declaring the need. Child care payment will be authorized when a caretaker is engaged in work participation activities. Child care rates will not exceed state regional market rate(s) with exceptions made on a case by case basis.

XIX. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The OVDCD TT Program will require all Tribal TANF staff to sign a statement indicating that they will maintain the confidentiality of all TANF applicants' and/or participants; understand the participant's right to complete and full confidentiality, and; that any violation of this right could result in immediate termination of their employment with OVDCD.

XX. NON-DUPLICATION OF SERVICES

All applicants will be required to sign the OVDCD TT Program application certifying that family members are not receiving assistance from another Tribal or State TANF program. Information will be shared with other Tribal and State TANF programs and agencies to verify non-duplication of TANF assistance and services. Social security numbers of Tribal TANF applicants may be shared with State and County welfare agencies to avoid duplication of services.

XXI. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

OVDCD's approved service areas are comprised of both isolated, rural areas and urban areas; thus the challenges and opportunities related to employment are vastly different across the service area(s) and populations.

All of the Indian reservations included in OVDCD's approved service area are located in rural areas, with some being geographically isolated. There can be great distances

between reservations and towns, and public transportation is sporadic, limited, and in some instances, not available at all.

Inyo, Kern, Tulare, Fresno, Kings, Mono, and Ventura Counties have reported unemployment rates ranging from 3.9-9.6% with 9.6% being the third highest in the State of California according to the Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division. Although these rates of unemployment have decreased over the last 3 years, they contribute to the challenges and barriers many of the Tribal TANF recipients already face in their efforts to achieve self-sufficiency.

In addition to the challenges presented by the widely varied employment opportunities and unemployment rates, many recipients lack the basic skills, knowledge, adequate training, and education necessary to obtain long-term employment. In order to address both the employment opportunity challenges and the challenges presented by the skill and knowledge limitations, OVCDC will:

- Partner with workforce development organizations and businesses to secure employment for its recipients;
- Refer recipients to appropriate service providers to improve the recipient’s ability to be labor market competitive;
- Utilize Employment Coordinators to make contact with local governments, private businesses and training agencies to provide and enhance employment and training opportunities; and
- Provide eligible TANF program participant’s access to an Employment Coordinator, to assist them with job search, interview skills, resume development, job preparation and readiness workshops, budgeting workshops, and job retention workshops in order to prepare for employment or employment training.

Current labor market data, gathered from the State of California Employment Development Department, recognizes the following industries as the leaders in job creation and employment for the counties in our service area. This information will be regularly reviewed to determine appropriate changes in labor market focus for participant career and job preparation.

Inyo	Mono	Kern	Tulare	Kings	Fresno	Ventura
Government	Leisure and Hospitality	Government	Government	Government	Government	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities
Leisure and Hospitality	Government	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	Government Services			
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	Private Service Providing-Residual	Education and Health Services	Educational and Health Services	Educational and Health Services	Educational and Health Services	Education and Health Services

*As reported by the Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division for August 2018

XXII. FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

For each year in which the OVCDC TT Program receives or expends Federal TANF funds, OVCDC will comply with the fiscal accountability provision of section 5(F)(1) of the INDIAN SELF-DETERMINATION AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

(U.S.C. 450c (f) (1), relating to the submission of a single-agency report required by chapter 75 OF TITLE 31, US CODE.

XXIII. TRIBAL WORK ACTIVITIES

All activities shall include reasonable transportation time to and from the approved work activity. ***Reasonable transportation time*** is defined as the amount of time a participant will use traveling from their residence to and from an approved work activity which may or may not include the additional time used transporting their child(ren) to and from their respective child care provider(s).

Further, due to the demographic/geographic differences of the OVCDCTT Program's seven county service area, the reasonability of any required transportation time will be determined by the participant's assigned case counselor and will be based on the individual's circumstances with regards to the following service area factors:

- Limitations in personal transportation,
- Availability of public transportation,
- Rural locations of Reservations and Rancherias,
- Proximity to the activity/service, and
- Mode of transportation to be used.

Any one activity or a combination of activities shall count towards work participation. The list of work activities includes, but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Subsidized employment
- 2) Unsubsidized employment
- 3) Participation in a "NEW"(Native Employment Works) activity
- 4) Work experience
- 5) On the job training
- 6) Job search/job readiness assistance and basic skill development as per 45 CFR 286.105(b) and (c).
- 7) Participation in community services programs
- 8) Post-secondary/vocational educational training
- 9) Job skills training directly related to employment
- 10) Education directly related to employment
- 11) Satisfactory attendance in secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate
- 12) The provision of childcare services for the child of an individual who is participating in a community services program.
- 13) Domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health counseling, education and rehabilitation not to exceed one year.
- 14) Microenterprise and/or small business training
- 15) Life skills training/education

- 16) Culturally relevant work activities, reasonably calculated to lead to self-sufficiency.
- 17) Participation in a Career Pathways program or apprenticeship.
- 18) Comprehensive parenting/executive function classes or training.

XXIV. MANDATORY WORK REQUIREMENTS

OVCDC agrees to satisfy the following minimum participation rates as established by the OVCDC Tribal TANF program and is consistent with economic conditions and resources.

WORK PARTICIPATION RATES (WPR)

ALL FAMILIES (Except non-needy caretaker)

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR	MINIMUM PARTICIPATION RATE
(Oct. 1, 2019 – Sept. 30, 2022)	36%

WEEKLY WORK HOUR REQUIREMENTS

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR HOURS/WEEK	MINIMUM NUMBER
Oct. 1, 2019 – Sept. 30, 2022	
Single Parent Family with child(ren) under the age of 6	16
Single Parent Family with child(ren) 6 and above	28
Two Parent Family	32

Only one adult in a two-parent family will be required to participate in a work activity for the minimum number of hours per week listed above (The OVCDC TT Program will allow either one or both parents to participate in the work activity to meet the minimum requirements, and the work hours of both parents can be combined).

A single parent with a child under age six and over one year of age shall be required to participate in work participation at a minimum of 16 hours per week. This will meet the 24 hours per week work participation requirement.

A single parent with a child under one year of age shall be exempt from any work requirement.

XXV. GOOD CAUSE

The OVDC TT Program may temporarily exempt TANF participants who have good cause from the work participation requirements. Participants who fail to meet work participation requirements or who refuse to participate in required work activities due to good cause, will not be subject to penalties or sanctioned. Good cause hardships can include but are not limited to:

1. Temporary lack of accessible child care.
2. Temporary lack of transportation.
3. Temporary illness verified by a doctor or medical professional signature.
4. Extreme weather or natural calamities that temporarily prevent safe travel to or from work, training or approved activity.
5. Court appearances which conflict with scheduled work activities.
6. Other good cause reasons on a case by case basis.

Good cause will be determined on a case by case basis.

XXVI. LIMITATIONS AND SPECIAL RULES

An individual shall be considered to be engaged in work by virtue of participating in any work activity specified in this plan, or as approved by the OVDC TT Program in advance.

The OVDC TT Program shall consider participation of the individual in a job search and job readiness assistance activity of 3 days during a week as a week of participation in the activity by the individual. An individual's job search and job readiness may only count toward work requirements, for a total of 6 weeks in any fiscal year, unless such activities are an ancillary part of other work activities. If the Tribe's unemployment rate in the Tribal TANF service area is at least 50 percent greater than the United States' total unemployment rate for that fiscal year, then an individual's participation in job search or job readiness assistance may count for up to 12 weeks in that fiscal year.

If job search and/or job readiness activities are an ancillary part of other work activities, there is no time limit.

A teen head of household maintaining satisfactory school (high school, GED or college) attendance is considered to be meeting the work participation requirements.

Upon certification by a case counselor and approval of Management, OVDC will temporarily exempt victims of domestic violence from work participation requirements. A review of continued eligibility for this exemption will occur every 3 months for up to a maximum of 6 months.

Cash assistance will not be terminated or reduced if a single parent caring for a child under the age of 6 years refuses or stops work activities for the following reasons with a signed justification statement:

- A) Unavailability of appropriate child care- Appropriate child care is defined as a relative caregiver, licensed child care provider, license-exempt provider, or

- licensed child care center within a reasonable distance (based on proximity and mode of transportation) from the individual's home or work site, or
- B) Unsuitability of informal child care by a relative or under other arrangements- If one or more of the above referenced child care provider types has been deemed not safe or "unsuitable" for the child, or
 - C) Unavailability of appropriate and affordable formal child care arrangements- If one or more of the above referenced child care provider types is not available due to service area or available resources.

XXVII. TIME LIMITS

The OVCDC TT Program shall limit the time a family may receive Federal cash assistance to a maximum of 60 months. The OVCDC TT Program is opting to use the maximum federal time limit due to the challenges and barriers many of our participants' face especially those located in rural and geographically isolated areas where education and employment opportunities remain limited.

Once a family is ineligible to receive federally funded TANF assistance due to the federal time limit, the OVCDC TT Program may continue to provide assistance to the eligible children of the timed-out family using State Maintenance of Effort ("MOE") funds if funds are available and provided to the OVCDC TT Program by the State of California. Any family whose assistance is extended through State MOE funds will not be eligible for federally funded Supportive Services.

The OVCDC TT Program will not count months received from any Tribal or State TANF program, if the applicant lived in Indian Country or in an Alaska Native Village where 50% of the adults were not employed.

The OVCDC TT Program will count all prior months of TANF assistance funded with federal TANF block grant funds provided by any tribe or state, except for any month that was exempt or disregarded by statute, regulation, or under any experimental, pilot, or demonstration project approved under section 1115 of the Act.

XXVIII. HARDSHIP CASES-TIME LIMITS

Hardships are conditions that hamper or limit an individual's ability to maintain work or successfully enter into work activities. The OVCDC TT Program will consider the following categories of hardships for exemption from the 60 month time limit on a case-by-case basis. Hardships for which exemption may be granted include:

1. Individuals with significant physical, mental, and/or developmental disabilities as verified by a physician,
2. Single parents with 4 or more children under 12 years old,
3. Adults responsible for the full-time in-home care of a family member who is disabled or has a long term or significant illness as verified by a physician,
4. Victims of domestic violence,
5. Households where the adult(s) is 55 years of age or older, or

6. As approved and verified on a case by case basis, depending upon severity.

The OVDC TT Program may exempt up to 20% of the total caseload from the 60 month time limit.

XXIX. PENALTIES AGAINST INDIVIDUALS –SANCTIONS

If an individual in a family receiving assistance refuses to engage in work as required by the OVDC TT Program in the absence of good cause, the OVDC TT Program may reduce or terminate the amount of assistance otherwise payable to the family or may provide limited assistance for basic needs through a vendor payment system until the individual resumes work requirements.

Any individual that refuses to participate in substance abuse or mental health counseling when referred by the OVDC TT Program shall be placed on the vendor payment system.

XXX. APPEAL RIGHTS AND PROCESS

During the application process, all individuals shall be advised of their right to appeal an adverse decision or sanction by the OVDC TT Program which results in a denial, reduction, or termination of assistance, services or being placed on the voucher system.

The OVDC TT Program will provide individuals at risk of losing benefits a notice of adverse actions 10 days before said action will begin. All appeals must be in writing and submitted to the OVDC'S TANF Director within ten (10) days of receiving the notice. Upon receipt of the appeal, counted as day one, the TANF Director has thirty (30) days within which to notify the recipient of a decision in writing.

A final appeal of an adverse decision may be made by the participant within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision of the TANF Director. Such final appeal shall be directed to the OVDC Grievance Committee at which time the Committee shall schedule a hearing.

The time, date and place of the hearing shall be mutually convenient to the committee and the participant. Transportation costs may be provided if need is established. Upon receipt of the appeal, counted as day one, the Committee shall render a decision and notify the recipient in writing within 30 days. The decision of the Committee shall be final and binding. All appeal periods are in calendar days.

XXXI. TRIBAL OPTIONS

The OVDC TT Program has made the following decisions:

- 1) There will be no family cap.
- 2) Will require all mandatory work participants and recipients to complete substance abuse testing as the initial activity after eligibility is determined. Random testing may be conducted; a positive test will require recipients to participate in substance abuse assessment and possibly attend counseling sessions or enroll in a rehabilitation program. OVDC will continue Tribal

TANF assistance to the family through a vendor payment system, or deny, reduce or terminate benefits until participant complies.

- 3) Will require all school age children in TANF cash-assisted families to attend school full time with regular attendance. Verification of enrollment and current status is required. Cash benefits will be reduced, until child(ren) return to school or attend regularly. Every school-aged child in a cash-assisted family who maintains a “C” average or better GPA may be eligible to receive a report card incentive, as outlined in OVDC’s program policies and procedures.
- 4) Will disqualify individuals who have been convicted of welfare fraud for three (3) years and require vendor payment for any assistance received after the three (3) year disqualification.
- 5) No deprivation requirement.
- 6) Require proof that all children have current immunizations.
- 7) OVDC may exempt parent and needy caretakers that are 55 years of age or older from the work participation requirement and/or the 60 month time limit. OVDC considers Tribal members reaching age 55 to be elders. In the American Indian/Alaska Native community, elders are considered deserving of deferential treatment. The meals on wheels program under title VI uses an age of 55 to qualify individuals for that program. In addition, American Indian/Alaska Natives experience a shorter life expectancy rate than other Americans. These factors, as well as the lack of employment opportunities and transportation challenges in the service area, contribute to the adoption of this provision.
- 8) Will continue to provide cash assistance to an eligible Tribal TANF family while a parent/needful caretaker is in an inpatient substance abuse treatment program for a maximum of 90 days.
- 9) May provide a onetime \$2,000 incentive to TANF recipients who participate in counseling and then marry. This will be considered an incentive to encourage two parent family formation and will not be counted as an available resource.
- 10) Allow participants to accumulate assets through a program of individual or family group development accounts (IDA), if implemented.
- 11) Provide marriage promotion activities.
- 12) Provide incentives for obtaining and retaining unsubsidized employment following 60 days of successful employment.
- 13) Provide incentives for successful completion of pregnancy prevention and family formation activities including but not limited to attendance and workshop completion incentives, materials for reinforced learning in the home, and certificates of completion on certifiable skills such as CPR/First Aid Training
- 14) Parent/caretaker will be provided with the option to cooperate with child support enforcement in order to obtain additional financial assistance for eligible children.
- 15) Provide TANF cash assistance to an eligible parent(s) of a child receiving SSI in order to build parent’s capacity to support their child.

- 16) OVDCD TT Program will work with ICWA to provide support to TANF eligible families to enable the family to keep their child(ren) in their own homes. Services may include counseling, parenting classes, anger management, and other supportive services offered under the Tribal TANF program.

The OVDCD TT Program will provide TANF services to eligible Tribal members that meet all of the OVDCD TT Program requirements in an equitable and fair method according to custom and traditions.

XXXII. NON-ASSISTANCE/PREVENTION PROGRAM

The OVDCD TT Program may provide non-assistance support services under TANF Purposes 3 and 4 to American Indian/Alaska Native individuals who have been determined eligible under the criteria below or have income at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level:

- 1) Living in a high crime rate area
- 2) Living on or near Reservation and Rancheria lands, or Indian Allotments
- 3) Previous involvement in the juvenile justice system
- 4) Attending a low performing school
- 5) Being a member of a low income family
- 6) Having academic challenges
- 7) Having parents who are not high school graduates
- 8) Being a single parent with children
- 9) Living with a caretaker relative
- 10) Having low self-esteem
- 11) Homelessness
- 12) Experiencing substance abuse issues
- 13) Pregnant or parenting teen
- 14) Domestic violence victim or survivor

The OVDCD TT Non-Assistance Services offers participants opportunities to participate in activities that contribute to the development of improved executive function, critical thinking skills, self-esteem and leadership skills, and communication and life management skills, with an emphasis on American Indian/Alaska Native culture Families, including non-custodial parents, who meet the above referenced eligibility requirements are able to receive these services under TANF Purpose 3 and 4. As funding permits, these services may include but are not limited to:

- TANF Purpose 3: to prevent out of wedlock pregnancies
 - A) Youth Employment Services
 - Work experience

- Resume writing
 - Job readiness workshops
- B) Educational Activities
 - Tutoring services
 - Pregnancy prevention activities
 - High School graduation activities
 - Education/Career Counseling activities
 - Family Literacy Services
 - i. Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- C) Youth Development/Leadership Program Services
 - Pregnancy prevention workshops
 - Alcohol and drug prevention services
 - Leadership development programs with integrated pregnancy prevention curriculum such as Native American Student Association (“NASA”) clubs.
 - Activities related to leadership development with integrated pregnancy prevention curriculum
- D) Promote Healthy Physical Activities
 - Promote healthy lifestyle choices and physical activities in combination with integrated pregnancy prevention curriculum including hikes, nature classes, culturally relevant classes, campouts, and team sporting activities.
- E) Culturally Relevant Activities
 - Language services
 - Cultural curriculum activities
- TANF Purpose 4: to encourage the formation and maintenance of 2 parent families.
 - A) Family formation education activities
 - B) Healthy relationship activities
 - C) Alcohol and drug prevention activities
 - D) Life skills activities
 - E) Domestic violence prevention activities
 - F) Family literacy services
 - G) Fatherhood services
 - H) Marriage promotion services
 - I) Parenting education services
 - J) Culturally relevant family formation activities
 - Language services
 - Cultural curriculum activities

XXXIII. DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

The OVCDC TT Program will comply with all federal statutory and regulatory requirements pertaining to data collection and reporting.

XXXVI. RETROCESSION PROVISION

In the event that OVCDC retrocedes the TANF program, OVCDC will follow all requirements as defined by applicable TANF statutes and regulations as outlined in 45CFR Part 286, and Social Security Act.

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