

APPENDIX 6

TRIBAL TANF OFFICIALS INTERVIEW GUIDE

[Note: This guide is intended for respondents identified as officials of the Tribal TANF office operating in this area. Respondents will be familiar with the Tribe's demand for TANF, efforts to connect TANF recipients with employment opportunities, and relationships between the Tribe, TANF program, and related programs. Since the respondents will vary for each tribe, not all questions will apply to all respondents.]

Introduction/Purpose of the Study

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

My name is _____ and I'm a researcher from the [Urban Institute, a non-profit research organization OR Support Services International, an Indian-owned consulting firm] located in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. With me today is [name and affiliation]. I'm here today because the Urban Institute, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is studying how Tribal TANF programs, like (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME), are being implemented and how they provide services to Tribal members.

The study will describe how current Tribal TANF programs are operating, and what innovative programs are being implemented that can inform other Tribal TANF programs. This study includes analysis of Census and administrative data as well as in-person interviews and discussion groups. [Name of tribe/village] is one of 4 sites we are visiting to conduct these in-person interviews. At each site, we will be with speaking with administrators and staff of the Tribal TANF and other programs as well as TANF recipients, to better understand the issues in the study sites.

Interviews will cover the way the Tribal TANF support system is organized and how different programs relate to each other; views on the performance of the TANF program; perceptions of social/economic conditions; training and work opportunities; and key challenges and innovations. These interviews will provide important information on local arrangements, particularly as they relate to households in need and the opportunities available to them.

We will use what we learn today and from other interviews to contribute to a report to HHS, participating tribes, and other tribes interested in operating TANF programs. This report will be released in the summer of 2013.

Privacy Statement *[Interviewer must read this]:*

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Before beginning the interview, I (we) want to remind you that your participation is voluntary. I (we) know that you are busy and will try to be as brief as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. This interview is **not** part of an audit or a compliance review. We are interested in learning about your ideas, experiences, and opinions about (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) and related programs in your Tribal area/village. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

This data collection effort is authorized under 42 USC 612 and Section 412 of the Social Security Act for the purpose of describing how current Tribal TANF programs are operating, and what innovative programs are being implemented that can inform other Tribal TANF programs. We will use what we learn today and from other interviews to contribute to a report to HHS, participating tribes, and other tribes interested in operating TANF programs. This report will be released in the summer of 2013. Our study began in September 2011 and will end in September 2013. Your participation is voluntary and your statements are private to the extent permitted by law. This interview is not part of an audit or a compliance review. Your comments will not affect the program's management or your involvement with the program.

In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we will take notes during these interviews, information is never associated with your name or the name of any respondent in any report, discussions with supervisors or colleagues, or HHS. When we write our reports and discuss the study findings, information from all informants is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. Finally, you are free to terminate this interview at any time for any reason. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

We have scheduled this meeting for [1 hour - LENGTH OF INTERVIEWS WILL VARY BY TYPE OF RESPONDENT. INTERVIEWERS SHOULD REFER TO SCHEDULE]. Is that still convenient? (If yes) Are you willing to participate in this interview?

Do you have any questions before we begin? If you have any questions during the interview, please do not hesitate to ask-- if something is not clear, just let me know. Okay?

I. Background and Context

1. Please describe your position/role. (Probe: What is your job title? What are your responsibilities related to (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME)? What are your overall responsibilities? How long have you held this role? In the past, did you have other positions in the program? (If yes) please tell me about them.

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I would like to understand more about the geographic, economic, and political contexts in which your (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program operates.

2. What service area does the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program cover?
3. Could you please give us a general sense of the demographic characteristics of the populations served by the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program. (e.g., age, household structure, etc.)
4. From your perspective, what is the status of the economy in the Tribal community? What is the employment availability? What are the main job providers in the community?
 - a. From your perspective, has the national recession affected employment and income in your community?
5. In your experience, how has demand for TANF and workforce services changed over time?
6. What are the barriers (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) recipients face related to finding and retaining employment? (Probe: Size of region/ accessibility, lack of job opportunities, skills)
7. Does the TANF program participate in the "477 Program" (PL 102-477)? If not, why not? If it does participate, what are the benefits of participating in "477?"

II. Tribal TANF Organization and Management

I would like to focus now on the organization and management of the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program.

8. How does the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program relate to the Tribal structure (leadership; organization; relationships with other bodies, etc.)? What is the relationship and interaction between the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program and other political bodies within your Tribe, such as State entities, county or municipal governments, or the Tribal government?
 - a. To what extent do political bodies have influence over the management budget of (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) (Example: State TANF, County or municipal government, Tribal officials/ government)
 - b. Has this relationship changed over time? If so, how?
9. In what capacity does the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program work with the State TANF office?

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- a. Is there coordination with related programs and/or integration with the 477 program?
 - b. What are reporting and accountability requirements?
 - c. What are the challenges you deal with because of oversight by the state office?
 - d. What are the impacts of this relationship on your program and clients?
10. Do you receive any Technical Assistance from the state? If so, what kind of technical assistance do you receive? Is this level of assistance sufficient for your needs?
11. Could you please describe your relationship with the ACF Regional office?
- a. *(Probe, if needed)* What are some of the benefits and challenges of working with the ACF Regional office? What are the impacts of this relationship on your program and clients? Are there aspects of that working relationship that you would like to change?
 - b. Do you receive any Technical Assistance from the regional office? If so, what kind of technical assistance do you receive? Is this level of assistance sufficient for your needs?
12. Do you communicate with other Tribal TANF programs? If so, how? If not, why not? What are the impacts of this relationship on your program and clients?
13. Do you manage funds for more than one Tribal area, as part of a consortium or other arrangement?
- a. [If YES] Please describe the process for administering funds for two or more areas.
 - b. What are the challenges and benefits of managing funds for more than one area?
14. Describe the experience and expertise of the organization's leadership and staff.
15. To what extent are information systems and fiscal reporting systems automated as opposed to paper-based? Is the technical capacity of your program sufficient for your needs?
16. Is fraud a problem in your Tribal TANF program? If so, how have you addressed the issue? Have you received any assistance from ACF to address or prevent fraud?

III. Tribal TANF Policies/Priorities

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I would like to focus now on the priorities and policies of the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program.

17. Please describe the overall strategy or mission of the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program.
 - a. Are there priorities among the Program’s objectives (e.g., participation, work requirements, skills development, and poverty reduction)?
18. Do you have specific performance or outcome goals for the program? How is progress toward these goals measured, if at all?
19. How is self-sufficiency defined by the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program?
 - a. How is self-sufficiency prioritized relative to other goals?
20. To what extent does the TANF program incorporate community planning or engagement into (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program decision-making and planning?
21. How does the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program identify, incorporate, and enhance employment opportunities for recipients (e.g., subsidized employment; blended funding)? Does the tribe have any initiatives apart from (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) to create employment opportunities?
22. What are the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) Program’s individual work participation requirements for clients?
 - a. In your opinion, which activities can clients participate in to fulfill those requirements (e.g. job search, job training, education, activities to address substance abuse or domestic violence, etc.)?
 - b. Which activities do clients participate in most commonly?
 - c. What policies exist regarding the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program’s subsidized employment, job training, education/post-secondary education, post-employment training?
 - d. Do your staff and clients use the term “work participation requirements,” or do they use a different term?
23. What are the sanction policies for noncompliance with work requirements?
 - a. How are penalties (sanctions) applied against individuals/families?

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- b. About how often are the different sanctions applied?

24. What are the time limits for (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) cash assistance?

- a. How common is it for individuals/families to lose eligibility due to time limits? Do you have any specific data on this?
- b. How frequently are exemptions from the time limit granted? Under what conditions are clients exempted from time limits?

25. Have the work requirements, sanctions, or time limit policies changed over time or have they been pretty consistent since the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program was first implemented? How long have the current policies been in place?

- a. Were these policies designed to accommodate Tribal culture and circumstances? If so, how?

IV. Service Delivery Practices

I would like to focus now on the service delivery practices of the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program.

26. Please describe your organization's service delivery model. Generally, how does your organization distribute benefits or services to clients?

- a. What are the processes for eligibility and intake to the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) Program? What, if any, assessments and screenings are used? What is the process for re-determination?
- b. In your opinion, what extent is (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) coordinated with other support organizations (Probe: substance abuse prevention and treatment, SNAP, social services, child support enforcement, Indian Child Welfare, vocational education and rehabilitation, workforce development, post-secondary education/training, and economic development)?
- c. Are welfare-related services provided directly by the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) Program or through agreements, contracts, or compacts with intertribal consortia, States, or other entities?)
- d. Does the office that handles eligibility and intake also handle the delivery of services, or are clients referred elsewhere for services? What follow-up occurs for clients referred to services or placed in jobs?

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27. Has the service delivery model changed over time, or has it been pretty consistent since the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program was first implemented? How long has the current model been used?
28. In your opinion, how are barriers to successful job placement and employment (e.g., domestic violence, substance abuse/addiction, lack of safe affordable housing) addressed by the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program? How are they addressed in Tribal communities?
29. What is the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program's approach to outreach and providing information about TANF to potential recipients?
30. Can you give me an example of how elements of Tribal culture are integrated into service delivery?
31. What **non-cash** innovations or initiatives have been developed with **TANF funds** (e.g., fatherhood programs, school-to-work, apprenticeships, and family stability, assessment, job readiness skills development, contextual education, workplace based training, apprenticeships, subsidized employment, participant or staff incentives)?
32. What **non-TANF resources** are available to TANF recipients for service delivery, social services, education, training, and employment?
 - a. Where are these resources located? Are they available in Tribal communities?
 - b. How do people who live in remote areas access resources?
33. Please discuss one or two examples of present or past partnerships your organization has engaged with to provide services to your clients. (Probe: How did the partnership begin?)
 - a. Does your organization generally benefit from having such partnerships? Would you like to engage in more partnerships or fewer?
34. How common is it for Tribal members to move between the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) Program and state TANF programs? Do you have any specific data on this?
 - a. Does your organization do anything to encourage or discourage this movement?
35. From your perspective, what are this organization's biggest challenges in serving clients?
36. What is the organization's highest priority for improvement?
 - a. What do you believe are the challenges to making this improvement?

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- b. What do you believe is the consequence if this improvement is not made?

V. Outputs and Outcomes

37. What is the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program's work participation rate and how has it changed over time?

- a. In your opinion, to what extent do (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) work requirements affect the work participation rate?

38. In your opinion, do you think (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) recipients have benefitted from participating in (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME)? If not, why not? If so, how have they benefitted?

(Probe, if not already answered.)

- a. Do you have a sense of whether the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program has helped recipients become self-sufficient?
- b. Do you have a sense of whether the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program has helped recipients improve their job skills or other skills?
- c. Do you know if there have been income gains among (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) recipients in the past [timeframe]? What do you think the gains are due to?

39. Has the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program used performance information, such as surveys of recipients or employers, income data or employment data to inform policies or service delivery?

- a. If so, can you give an example of how it has done so?

40. What do you think would be different in your community if the Tribal TANF program were not there?

- a. *(Probe, if not already addressed.)* In your opinion, has the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program and recipient outcomes affected the larger Tribal community? If so, can you give an example or two?

41. What do you think have been the greatest successes of the (TRIBAL TANF PROGRAM NAME) program? Can you give us any examples of promising practices?

- a. If you were giving advice to another Tribal TANF program, what aspects of your program would you suggest that they borrow?

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VI. Wrap-up.

42. Thank you so much for sharing this information with us. This has been a great discussion and we are grateful for your time. Is there anything else you would like to share with us about your program?

43. If we have any follow-up questions as we write our report, may we contact you again?

Thank you.

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