Appendix A

Outreach Email from OFA to Tribal TANF Programs

Subject: Seeking Tribal Approval for the Next Steps for Tribal TANF Research and Data Study

Dear **[Name]**,

I am writing because the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) hopes to gain approval for Tribal leaders, Tribal TANF program staff, and Tribal TANF participants who are part of your community to participate in the planned *Next Steps for Tribal TANF Research and Data* study.

ACF is sponsoring this study to hear directly from American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities about their experiences with Tribal TANF, including their challenges and successes, and their recommendations for future directions for Tribal TANF research and data. Planning for this study began in 2023 and study activities are expected to continue through 2028. Tribal TANF program staff learned about this project in June 2024 at OFA's Tribal TANF Grantee Meeting and had the opportunity to engage with project staff and ask questions about the plans for the project. We are now seeking approval for data collection and deeper engagement with program staff and communities. ACF will use this information to inform future directions for Tribal TANF research, technical assistance, and related programs. This planned study is not an evaluation of Tribal TANF; rather it is intended to be an opportunity for AIAN communities to share their wisdom and perspectives about Tribal TANF.

The planned study is being conducted on behalf of ACF by MEF Associates, a small social policy research firm with the mission of improving the lives of individuals, children, and families by building knowledge to improve public policies and programs; and Kauffman and Associates (KAI), an American Indian, woman-owned consulting firm working to drive positive change across Indian Country.

The study team hopes to engage knowledge holders including tribal leaders, Tribal TANF staff, and Tribal TANF participants in activities such as talking circles, a survey, and knowledge sharing visits. It is hoped that what we learn will inform future

directions for Tribal TANF research, technical assistance, and related programs in order to improve the Tribal TANF program for future generations of AIAN families.

ACF intends to obtain tribal approval before beginning study activities. **The purpose of this letter is to let you know that you can expect to hear from Tyler LaPlaunt, KAI Project Director, who will reach out to inquire about research approval processes for your tribe and how ACF can seek approval from your tribe for this study.**

I hope you will consider engaging with the study team so that your Tribal TANF program can share knowledge as part of this planned study.

If you have any questions about the study, or to express interest in participating, you may reach out to MEF Project Director Emily Schmitt (emily.schmitt@mefassociates.com) or KAI Project Director Tyler LaPlaunt (tyler.laplaunt@kauffmaninc.com).

Sincerely,

Stan Koutstaal
Division Director, Tribal TANF Management and Regional Operations
Office of Family Assistance