RESOLUTION OF THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE OF THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

23rd NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL - Second Year, 2016

AN ACTION

RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI'; SUPPORTING THE STATE OF UTAH IN ITS GRANT APPLICATION SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ENTITLED "STATE AND TRIBAL INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERSHIP GRANTS" AS ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

WHEREAS:

- A. The Navajo Nation established the Health, Education and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) as a Navajo Nation Council standing committee and as such empowered HEHSC to review and recommend resolutions regarding certain matters, including health, education and social services. 2 N.N.C. §§ 164 (A)(9), 400 (A), 401 (B)(6)(a) (2012); see also CO-45-12.
- B. The Navajo Nation established the Naabik'íyáti' Committee as a Navajo Nation Council standing committee and as such empowered Naabik'íyáti' Committee to coordinate all state programs, including those of the state of Utah. 2 N.N.C. §§ 164 (A)(9), 700 (A), 701 (A)(4) (2012); see also CO-45-12.
- C. The Navajo Nation has a government-to-government relationship with the state of Utah.
- D. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, released funding opportunity notice entitled "State and Tribal Indian Child Welfare Act Implementation Partnership Grants." Funding Opportunity No. HHS-2016-ACF-ACYF-CT-1123, see www.act.hhs.gov/grants. The funding notice states: "The purpose of this funding opportunity announcement is to support the creation of effective practice model partnerships between state courts and/or Court Improvement

Program, state public child welfare agency and a tribe, group of tribes, or tribal consortia, including both the tribal child welfare agency and tribal court for effective implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 (Pub. L. 95-608). Demonstration sites will be required to jointly develop protocols and practices to promote effective and timely:

- Identification of Indian children;
- Notice to tribes;
- Tribal participation as parties in hearings involving Indian children;
- Tribal intervention in dependency cases;
- Transfer of ICWA cases to tribal courts; and
- Placement of Indian children according to preferences.
 Partnership models must be co-created by states and tribes, jointly implemented, and designed to generate and capture clear, measurable outcomes such as:
- Compliance with identification methods;
- The number of Indian children identified;
- Length of time from removal or petition filed until identification is made;
- Number of notices sent;
- Length of time from identification until notice sent state (measure)
- Number of notices received (tribal measure)
- Length of time for tribal intervention or participation; (tribal measure)
- Number of cases in which a tribe intervenes (joint measure)
- Number of transfers; (joint measure); and
- Number of Indian children placed according to tribal placement preferences (joint measure).
- This is a 60-month project with five 12-month budget periods." *Id*.
- E. The State of Utah, Department of Child and Family Services, submitted a grant application for a partnership implementation grant under funding opportunity described herein. See Exhibit "A." It is in the best interests of the Navajo Nation to support the state of Utah's efforts in seeking this grant opportunity.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Navajo Nation hereby supports the State of Utah in its grant application submitted under federal grant opportunity entitled "State and Tribal Indian Child Welfare Act Implementation Partnership Grants. See Exhibit "A."

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Naabik'íyáti' Committee of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation (Arizona), at which a quorum was present and that the same was passed by a vote of 12 in favor, 0 oppose, this 26th day of May, 2016.

Leonard Tsosie, Pro Tem Chairperson Naabik'íyáti' Committee

Motion: Honorable Benjamin Bennett Second: Honorable Edmund Yazzie

NAVAJO NATION

RCS# 415

Naa'bik'iyati Committee

5/26/2016

04:26:45 PM

Amd# to Amd#

Legislation No. 0142-16

PASSED

MOT Bennett

Supporting the State of Utah

SEC Yazzie

in its Grant Application

Submitted pursuant to funding

Yea : 12

Nay:0

Not Voting: 12

Yea: 12

Bates

Bennett

Filfred

Tso

Begay, K BeGaye, N Chee Damon Hale

Witherspoon

Slim

Yazzie

Nay:0

Not Voting: 12

Begay, NM

Daniels

Pete

Smith

Brown

Jack

Phelps

Tsosie

Crotty

Perry

Shepherd

Vacant

THE NAVAJO NATION



April 14, 2016

Navajo Nation Council Health, Education & Human Services Committee Honorable Jonathan Nez, Chairperson P.O. Box 3390 Window Rock, AZ 86515 RECEIVED

APR 1 5 2016

Re: Request for Tribal Resolution Supporting the State of Utah Partnership Grant Initiative

Dear Honorable Hale:

This is to respectfully request your assistance in drafting legislation stating the Council supports the State of Utah, Department of Child and Family Services (UT DCFS) upcoming grant submission to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Washington, DC. The purpose of the five-year grant is so state courts, state child welfare agencies and tribes will create an effective practice model to implement the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978. Attached is a draft copy of the grant proposal.

As of the end of March 2016, our program had 64 cases / 137 children active ICWA cases with UT DCFS. Utah is the third highest state, of 28 states, our program has an ICWA caseload with. The Division of Social Services maintains its Intergovernmental Agreement with the UT DCFS. Through this agreement we continue to strive strengthen our partnership and it is the goal of the grant to improve upon this current coordinated work so we can meet children's best interest.

We look forward to a favorable response. If you should have any questions, please call me at the telephone number below. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely

Regina Yazzie, Program Manager

Acknowledge:

Terrelene Massey, Division Director

ATTACHMENT





State and Tribal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) **Implementation Partnership Grant Proposal**

1.22.2016

Alisa A. Lee, JD, MA

Indian Child Welfare Administrator

Division of Child and Family Services

Utah Department of Human Services State of Utah Judiciary

Gabriella Archuleta, JD, MPP

Court Improvement Program Coordinator

Administrative Office of the Courts

Summary

The State and Tribal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Implementation Partnership Grant (ICWA Partnership Grant) is a forecasted Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) of the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The purpose of this funding is to support State-Tribal demonstration sites to co-create effective practice model partnerships for implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 (Pub.L. 95-608).

The funding for this NOFA is limited: \$1.4 million total is appropriated with the anticipation of four awards ranging from \$250-500k. The NOFA is expected to be released on 4/12/16 and the grant electronically submitted by the deadline of 6/13/16. The award date is 9/30/16 and the grant is a five year cycle.

It is proposed that two of Utah's state agencies, the Utah's Court Improvement

Program (CIP) and Utah's Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) work together to

prepare and respond to the ICWA Partnership Grant NOFA in 2016. After consulting with the

Tribes and state agencies, it was decided the lead agency will be DCFS to provide oversight

and administration of the grant. The state agencies will jointly collaborate with eight Utah

tribes and their respective tribal child welfare agencies and tribal courts to create a

comprehensive ICWA implementation strategy.

Rationale

Implementation of ICWA has been difficult to achieve for many states since its passage in 1978. A primary impediment of proper ICWA implementation is that no federal agency was

charged with administration or support for states. However, non-compliance with ICWA has many consequences such as the invalidation of state court proceedings, disruption of long-standing foster care placement, and/or voiding of final adoption orders, any of which can result in a delay in securing permanency for the Indian child. Inadequate compliance with ICWA is a continued disruption of Indian families that have struggled to heal in the aftermath of federal policies aimed at either terminating or assimilating Indian Tribes.

National Efforts are Focused on Effective ICWA Implementation

The federal government, through various agencies, is increasingly focused on the need to bolster the proper implementation of ICWA. Recent reports of nationwide ICWA non-compliance and the overrepresentation of Indian children in child welfare and juvenile justice systems has increased scrutiny of state application of ICWA. For example, the Department of Justice (DOJ) recently announced they will actively identify state-court cases involving Native American children to ensure state agencies comply with ICWA. In *Oglala Sioux Tribe v. Van Hunnik*¹, three Indian parents and two tribes in South Dakota were the Plaintiffs in the class-action lawsuit which alleged violations of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause and ICWA. DOJ filed an amicus brief concluding that the state violated the rights of Native American parents. Officials from the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services, the State Attorney and the presiding judge were defendants. The South Dakota Federal Court Chief Judge found that state judges, prosecutors and the Department of Social Services failed to protect Indian parents' fundamental rights which resulted in a widespread and systemic failure to protect the integrity of Indian families.

¹ See, Oglala Sioux Tribe v. Van Hunnik, 993 F.Supp.2d 1017 (D.S.D. 2014).

In 2015, the Office of the Management and Budget (OMB), under the direction of President Obama, established the native youth priorities for the FY 2017 budget. One of the priorities included supporting the implementation of ICWA. OMB specifically directed agencies to focus on programs that promote the capacity building and programmatic support necessary to implement ICWA.

In 2013, the American Bar Association's resolution urged state court collaborations with tribal courts, tribal court improvement programs, tribal governing bodies, and other tribal authorities to protect American Indian and Alaska Native children and to ensure appropriate treatment of, and resources for, American Indian and Alaska Native families and children at all levels of government.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA): 2015 Updated ICWA Guidelines and Proposed Federal Regulations

In 2015, the BIA updated the ICWA Guidelines, which are currently in effect, and proposed regulations that will become legally binding interpretation of ICWA by early 2016. The new regulations will create significant changes to ICWA implementation in Utah to the extent that additional training will be necessary for all state agencies, tribal governments, and child welfare partners that are involved in ICWA cases.

Specifically, the BIA Guidelines address new definitions of the following ICWA terms: "active efforts" "continued custody" and "qualified expert witnesses." The use of the "Existing Indian Family Exception" and court's assessment of a child's contacts with the Tribe will be prohibited. The BIA Guidelines placement preferences <u>must be met</u> unless there is good cause to deviate. In addition, diligent efforts (clear and convincing evidence) must be shown to

demonstrate that a comprehensive search has been conducted to seek out and identify placement options that would satisfy ICWA's placement preferences. This is an area that Utah needs to address <u>immediately</u>, and will require extensive collaboration between the Tribes, urban Indians and state foster care recruiting efforts to increase the number of American Indian homes for emergency, foster and adoptive placements.

Utah Has a Demonstrated Need to Develop an ICWA Implementation Plan

The National Indian Child Welfare Association submitted a report to the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2013. Utah was one of the 13 state examples cited in the report with a disproportionality rate of 3.2 percent for foster care placement of Indian children. Improving ICWA compliance will have a direct impact on the number of Native American children who are currently overrepresented in the child welfare system. In 2006, Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) Report, using NCANDS data, showed overrepresentation of Indian children in foster care at 5.7% in Utah. Using AFCARS data, the National Center for Juvenile and Family Court Justices (NCJFCJ) yearly technical report also indicated overrepresentation of Indian children in Utah's child welfare system.

Data on Overrepresentation²

2000 (4.2%) - NCJFCJ	2014 (3.2%) - NCJFCJ
2012 (3.5%) - NCJFCJ	2015 (3.1%) - NCJFCJ

² National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Technical Assistance Bulletin: Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster Care

2013 (3.6%) - NCJFCJ

Although the data suggests a decline in the last two years of overall disproportionality, the goal should be to continue to reduce the disparity to 1% which would represent no overrepresentation. The Attorney General's Report (2014), Ending Violence So Children Can Thrive, recommended ACF and BIA should develop a modernized unified data collection system designed to collect Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), ICWA and Tribal Dependency on all American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) data quarterly. In addition, ACF and BIA were urged to collect data regarding compliance with ICWA in state court systems. The ICWA Partnership Grant will allow the Tribes and State to develop this infrastructure and the data will be an aid to identify areas of success and improvement.

Utah Indian Child Welfare Compliance Assessment

The Utah Court Improvement Program (CIP) commissioned an assessment of Utah's

Juvenile Court compliance with ICWA (Utah Report). Utah is one of the few states that we
know of that has assessed ICWA compliance. The Utah Report, completed in 2013, found that
one key area of ICWA, active efforts, was not consistently documented in the court record.

Active efforts refers to the specific actions of DCFS staff to maintain and reunite an Indian child
with his family or tribal community. In addition, the assessment noted that Utah's Juvenile
Court does not have a systematic way to consistently identify ICWA cases without examining
each individual file. It is important to note that the new ICWA regulations, if adopted, will
provide a more stringent structure and thus require extensive documentation of active efforts
and identification of Indian children, among other requirements.

Utah's Juvenile Court actively addresses the challenges of ICWA implementation through its Court Improvement Program which coordinates the Indian Child Welfare Committee

comprised of Indian child welfare professionals throughout the state of Utah. DCFS actively employs Indian child welfare specialists within each of its five regions to support the application and interpretation of ICWA's special protections by providing training and support to the caseworkers. The challenge for Utah is to address the <u>new</u> changes through the implementation of the BIA's ICWA Guidelines and the anticipated regulations.

Due to the federal agencies increasing participation in ICWA implementation, combined with the additional forthcoming BIA regulations, it is recommended that a comprehensive state-tribal ICWA committee convene to address these issues and systematically implement a new state-tribal ICWA implementation plan.

Specifications

The goal of the ICWA Grant is to create effective Tribal-State practice model partnerships to effectively implement ICWA. Specifically, State agencies and Tribes are required to jointly develop protocols and practices that promote effective and timely identification of Indian children, notice to tribes, tribal participation, tribal intervention in dependency cases, transfer of ICWA cases to tribal courts and placement of Indian children according to tribal preferences.

The NOFA emphasizes that State agencies and tribes must co-create and jointly implement practices that can be validated through <u>clear, measurable outcomes</u>. Specifically, the State will be required to provide data in the following areas: (1) the number of Indian children identified, (2) the length of time from removal or petition filed until identification is made, (3) the number of notices sent, and (4) the length of time from identification until notice sent. The tribes will report data on the number of notices received and the length of time for tribal intervention or participation. Jointly, Utah and the tribes will identify the number of cases

in which a tribe intervenes, the number of transfers and the number of Indian children placed according to tribal placement preferences.

Advantages and Disadvantages

The advantage of the ICWA Partnership grant includes the ability to receive funding to support and strengthen a unified effort toward ICWA compliance in Utah. The grant requires development of co-created and jointly implemented protocols and practices in areas previously identified by federal agencies and the Utah Report for ICWA compliance improvement. Utah already has strong collaborative relationships that have been developed through the Indian Child Welfare Committee, the Memorandum of Understandings that exist between the Utah Attorney General Child Protection Division, DCFS and six of Utah's eight tribes and regular communication among tribes through the Utah Tribal Leaders meetings, among other efforts. Continued collaborative work on ICWA compliance will benefit the state by fostering positive working relationships with the tribal governments. The increase in public awareness regarding ICWA compliance has also influenced governmental and nonprofit support for proper implementation.

The disadvantages in applying for this grant are the upfront resources required to prepared the grant application. Additional costs such as travel to consult with and secure tribal participation will also be integral but can be accomplished within the current and ongoing activities within DCFS's Indian child welfare program and the CIP. This preliminary collaboration between state-tribal agencies is required to define the grant objectives, develop a work plan, define an implementation schedule, and develop a budget.

Conclusion

There is increasing attention on state ICWA compliance that necessitates a well coordinated uniform approach to ICWA implementation between state and tribal governments. Due to the federal agencies' increasing participation in ICWA implementation, combined with the additional forthcoming BIA regulations, it is recommended that a comprehensive state-tribal ICWA committee convene to address these issues and systematically develop a new state-tribal ICWA implementation plan. Currently, the lack of Indian homes for substitute care has serious implications for non-compliance with ICWA. In addition, the provision of "active efforts" to maintain and reunite an Indian child with his family must be extensively documented in the record. These activities can best be supported with the assistance of the ICWA grant as it will provide funding (\$250k-500k) over a five-year period to meet these objectives. Because additional money to pursue these activities is not available through the CIP or DCFS, it is critical that tribes, courts and state agencies in Utah develop a coordinated effort to pursue this NOFA.

Utah has the current capacity and structure in place to be successfully awarded the ICWA grant. The ICWA Grant will address needed areas of improvement such as reducing the overrepresentation of Indian children in the child welfare system from 3.2% to 1.0%. The deliverables of the ICWA Grant is an opportunity to enhance state policy through a uniform coordinated effort to implement ICWA within the state of Utah. By doing so, Utah also has the opportunity to become a national model demonstration site for ICWA compliance.

ICWA Grant Requirements 2013 Utah ICWA Assessment Recommendations³ **Promote Effective and Timely: General Recommendations:** Identification of Indian children Ensure that the official court record documents ICWA compliance 2. Notice to tribes More clearly identify ICWA cases in the juvenile Tribal participation as parties in hearings court database and provide additional training to involving Indian children clerical staff on electronically documenting ICWA cases Tribal intervention in dependency cases 4. Judicial orders should be careful to use the specific language and findings required by ICWA Transfer of ICWA cases to tribal courts Placement of Indian children according to tribal Make ICWA findings at each hearing, regardless of whether the tribe has intervened or not. preference Determine ICWA applicability for in-home cases. 5. Identification of Indian Children Capture clear and measurable outcomes in the following areas: Notice to tribes should be sent even for Protective Supervision Services (PSS) cases State measures: Compliance with identification methods Discuss how fathers may be identified and included in court proceedings 2. The number of Indian children identified **Proper Exercise of Jurisdiction** Length of time from removal or petition filed 3. The court record should clearly document until identification is made findings regarding the proper exercise of jurisdiction. Number of notices sent 4. **Proper Notice of Proceedings to Tribes** Length of time from identification until notice 5. Ensure that CARE lists all attendees sent 10. Do not send notice to the BIA unless the tribe **Tribal Measures:** cannot be identified Number of notices received **Active Efforts** Length of time for tribal intervention or 11. Inform the tribe of cases and solicit their participation assistance in providing culturally appropriate service to Joint Measures: the family (active efforts). Number of cases in which a tribe intervenes 8. Use of Qualified Expert Witnesses and Proper Standards of Review 9. Number of transfers

³ Indian Child Welfare Compliance Assessment, State of Utah, National Center for State Courts, Court Consulting Services (2013).

- 12. Establish a finding of imminent physical harm at every hearing.
- 13. When qualified expert witness testimony occurs by affidavit, the court order should incorporate the affidavit.

Placement of Child Pursuant to ICWA Preferences

- 14. Provide detail in the court order as to the child's placement.
- 10. Number of Indian children placed according to tribal placement preferences

Scope of Work

The ICWA Partnership Grant will improve ICWA compliance through multi-state and tribal collaboration, changes to internal policies, increased training and measurement. Tribal governments will identify specific areas needed to improve communication with the State and to increase capacity for their internal programs. Four areas addressed in the scope of work:

DCFS, AOC, Attorney General's Office and Tribal governments.

DCFS

The ICWA Partnership Grant will require involvement in five service areas:

- 1. Jennifer Larson, Director, Out of homes Programs & Practice Improvement
 - a. Provide ongoing oversight 5 years
- 2. Lori Giovannoni, Professional Development
 - a. Training development and Implementation Year 2 (September 2017-September 2018)
- 3. Jeremy Hirschi, Finance Director
 - a. Grant Proposal
 - i. Work with Cosette for pre-proposal planning (12/15-3/15)
 - 1. MOU with AOC
 - ii. Dave Florence Grant application assistance
 - b. Financial Reporting
 - c. Contracting (T/A, AOC Admin, Tribal Activities)
 - d. Grant closeout
- 4. <u>Jonathan Houser, SAFE</u> the participation of the SAFE Team will be involved at two points.
 - a. Grant Proposal Development (January 2016 to June 2016)
 - i. Pre-grant assessment

- 1. Review and and provide an assessment of what data is currently collected.
- 2. Reporting Identify reports we can currently pull and what new structure is needed
- 3. Identify changes needed to the data structure.
- b. Grant Implementation
 - i. Year Two (September 2017-September 2018)
 - 1. Changes to identified areas will be clarified and implemented.
- 5. <u>Regional Staff</u> the regional staff will participate through the Indian Child welfare Specialists. We currently have 6 ICWA Specialists and will continue to meet monthly. Regional directors have currently approved meeting this frequently beginning December 2015. Participation will be ongoing but will reduce to quarterly meetings in Years 3-5. Areas to be addressed are:
 - a. Practice Guidelines
 - b. Additional Forms
 - c. Training

Administrative Office of the Courts

Court Specific Activities/Deliverables:

- 1. Program CARE to identify potential ICWA eligible children and run reports
 - Policy: determine whose responsibility it is in the courtroom to identify an ICWA case or develop CARE/SAFE interface to share SAFE's id
- 2. Training:
 - a. CIP can devote training funds to the collaborative
 - b. Develop Innovative web-based and live ICWA trainings:
 - i. Judge specific
 - ii. Clerical specific on ICWA flags in CARE
 - iii. Probation Officer specific on ICWA's application to status offenses
 - iv. Tribe specific on court procedures, e.g.
 - v. Cross-training
 - c. Dedicate time at court trainings for ICWA:
 - i. Fall All-Judicial Conference
 - ii. Spring Juvenile Judges Conference
 - iii. District Court Judges Conference
 - iv. CIP Summit (even years)
 - v. Attorney Skills training (odd years)
 - vi. New Probation Officer Academy & boosters
- 3. Materials:
 - a. ICWA Benchbook

- b. ICWA Bench cards
- c. ICWA Forms Templates
- d. One-pagers for clerical and POs
- 4. Personnel:
 - a. CIP Coordinator- Gabriella Archuleta
 - i. Serve as Court liaison to the grant
 - Facilitate and fund the Indian Child Welfare Committee work (ICWC can serve as the ICWA Grant Steering Committee)
 - iii. Develop and Present trainings

Tribal Governments

Specific activities and deliverables to be determined by each tribe.

Attorney General's Office

- 1. Develop policy and procedures regarding notice.
- 2. QEW discontinue using DCFS staff
 - a. Develop policy for reimbursement of QEW's
 - b. Maintain list of QEW's (tribal and state)
- 3. Binder of step-by-step procedures addressing notice.
- 4. Train AAG's on ICWA with DCFS
- 5. MOU/IGA with Tribes

Grant Implementation Plan -- DRAFT

Year 1 FFY 2017 (\$150,000) EVALUATION/PARTNERSHIPS/PLANNING/CAPACITY

Develop coordinated policies and procedures: DCFS - practice guidelines; Courts - benchbook; AGs - tribal reference manual

Tribal needs assessment

Select lead researcher, establish evaluation method and compliance measurement tool

Year 2 FFY 2018 (\$150,000) TRAINING/SAFE/CARE

Training key partners: state, tribal, courts, legal and community partners

Part 1 of SAFE/CARE programming enhancements including tribal verification, notice, and active efforts, legal pleadings and forms bank

Parent video /w PDA

Tribal needs

Year 3 FFY 2019 (\$100,000) WEBSITE/MEASURING COMPLIANCE

Part 2 of SAFE/CARE programming enhancements including tribal verification, notice, and active efforts, legal pleadings and forms bank

Tribal needs

Begin compliance assessment Develop Utah ICWA Website

Year 4 FFY 2020 (\$50,000) COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (i.e. mental health, substance abuse, Urban Indian Center, RAW, human trafficking)

Community outreach/family preservation programs

ICWA case law updates

Support tribes in implementation of policy

Year 5 FFY 2021 (\$50,000) PUBLISH FINDINGS/FINALIZE ICWA COMPLIANCE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Post-test: submit and publish research and findings with Tribes & State

Grant close-out