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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

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Douglas A. Ducey  
Governor

Michael Wisehart  
Director

**Arizona Department of Economic Security**

**TRIBAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021**

***Agency Overview***

**Purpose:**

The Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES/Department) works to strengthen and build strong relationships with Arizona's 22 Sovereign Tribes. The Department is committed to working with American Indian Tribes to improve the quality, availability, and accessibility of human services to children, youth, and adults. The Department's Tribal Government Consultation Policy ensures that ADES engages in ***open, continuous, meaningful communication and consultation*** with the 22 Arizona Tribal Nations. This consists of information exchange and mutual understanding prior to taking actions that will likely have a direct impact on the American Indian Tribes in Arizona.

**Office of Tribal Relations Team:**

To ensure that the Department thoroughly engages and is accessible to the 22 Arizona Tribes, the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) has three Tribal Liaisons and a Tribal Relations Manager. The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and the Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (DBME) each have a dedicated full-time Tribal Liaison. The Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), Division of Child Support Services (DCSS), and Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services (DERS) all have selected a staff member to work on Tribal matters with the Office of Tribal Relations.

The role of the Tribal Liaison is to be the conduit between the Department's divisions and each Sovereign Tribe; to provide guidance, support, and technical assistance to the Tribes on Divisional programming, as ADES has over 40 different programs. The Tribal Liaison works out of the OTR to ensure transparency, increase trust, and prevent the siloing of divisional information. In addition to being the Tribal connection and point-of-contact for ADES with Tribes, the Tribal Liaison assists with the identification of issues in ADES policy, procedures, and processes.

The role of the Tribal Relations Manager is to make certain that the Department is in good standing with its Tribal Government Consultation Policy and to ensure the relationship and partnership with the 22 Sovereign Tribes is consistent and productive through sound, responsible management. Creating effective and efficient program development goals and strategies through data and analysis of program approach is a delicate but necessary responsibility of the position, as each of the 22 Sovereign Tribes is unique and requires individual communication to address their needs equitably and effectively. The Tribal Relations Manager works with the Department's

Leadership team to make sure they are made aware of successes and challenges in working with the Tribes to create a strong working relationship and to stay true to the intention of the Tribal Government Consultation Policy.

### **Standard of Work for Office of Tribal Relations:**

OTR serves as a single point of contact for Tribal issues and works to ensure relevant programs and policies are efficient, easy to understand, accessible, and developed in consultation with the 22 Arizona Tribes. OTR also facilitates and ensures consistency and effectiveness in ADES Program delivery to Tribes, and establishes long-term consultative and collaborative relationships with Tribal governments through policy and direction.

OTR provides guidance, assistance, and suggestions on various ADES policy issues with a specific focus on Tribal Government Consultation and cultural awareness, and works to educate ADES program staff about the Arizona Tribal Nations to focus on particular strengths, needs, and opportunities for partnership and collaborations.

ADES Tribal Government Consultation Policy ensures open, continuous, and meaningful engagement with Arizona's 22 Tribal Nations prior to implementing any policy changes that may impact the Indian Tribes or Nations in Arizona.

The following five principles guide ADES's interaction with Indian Tribes or Nations:

1. Commitment to a government-to-government relationship;
2. Responsibility to conduct outreach;
3. Obligation for timely consultation;
4. Possible coordination with other state agencies for joint Tribal Government Consultations; and
5. Engagement of Arizona's 22 Sovereign Indian Tribes or Nations.

### **The Office of Tribal Relations: Working & Collaborating with Tribes**

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, the OTR Team remained connected to our Tribal partners as the Tribes were fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic and Tribal offices were closed. Our goal was to ensure the continuation of our six Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Tribal quarterly meetings, fine-tuning our process for the Tribal Ombudsman to help with inquiries and accessibility issues faced by rural and Tribal communities due to many ADES services going virtual, and updating the OTR website to include information about upcoming events and meetings so that our Tribal partners stayed connected and informed.

The ADES OTR conducted two Tribal Government Consultations on the following dates, the topics presented are listed:

- November 19, 2020 - Review ADES Tribal Government Consultation; DDD Office of Individual and Family Affairs (OIFA) - Presentation on Customer Service Center – Provider Relations; and DDD American Indian Health Plan (AIHP) - DDD American Indian Health Plan Integration Updates. Fifty-five individuals participated in the Tribal Government Consultation

which included representation from seven Tribes. Three Tribal Leader Designees and one President were in attendance.

- June 15, 2021 - Review ADES Tribal Government Consultation; Development of Federal FY 2022 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program (SNAP E&T) State Plan; and DDD AIHP Integration Updates. Ninety-four individuals participated in the Tribal Government Consultation which included: one Chairman, one Chairwoman, one Vice-Chairwoman, two Vice-Chairman, two Lt. Governors, one President/Vice-President designee (Tribal Health Director), four Tribal Council Members, four Tribal social services directors, and four Tribal Executive/Department Staff, a total of ten Tribes were represented.

In addition, four Tribal Informational Forums (TIF) were scheduled, two in August 2020 and two in March 2021. Each of the TIFs was held virtually as many of the Tribes were on a no-travel policy to keep safe during the Pandemic. Given the fact that many Tribes do not have access to the internet and are working from home, DBME and DDD each scheduled two TIFs, each with an additional session, so that the Tribes and Tribal stakeholders were able to attend at least one session. This totalled eight sessions in all (four in the fall and four in spring). A total of 76 participants attended the DBME and DDD August TIFs, with six Tribes attending. For the March 2021 TIF, there was a total of 185 participants with eight Tribes attending. The TIFs were scheduled on the following dates:

1. DBME TIF August 18 & 26, 2020
2. DDD TIF August 19 & 27, 2020
3. DBME TIF March 9 & 11, 2021
4. DDD TIF March 2 & 4, 2021

To establish a one-on-one conversation between the ADES Leadership and Tribal Government Elected Leaders, the Tribal Relations Manager scheduled “Meet & Greets.” The ADES Director, Michael Wisehart, along with other ADES Leadership, was able to meet with three Tribal Leaders via Zoom. The “Meet & Greets” were scheduled for 30 minutes but were extended to an hour.

To ensure that Tribal Leaders and Tribal Councils were aware of upcoming ADES Tribal Government Consultations, the Tribal Relations Manager presented at six Tribal Council meetings, provided agenda topics and asked for agenda items to be discussed.

**FY 2021 DIVISION DATA FOR TRIBAL OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT:**

<i>DAAS</i>		
Tribal Communication (Virtual meetings)	Presentations to Tribes	Number of Tribal Government Consultations
25	0	2

<i>DBME</i>		
Tribal Communication (Virtual meetings)	Presentations to Tribes	Number of Tribal Government Consultations
44	3	2

<i>DCSS</i>		
Tribal Communication (Virtual meetings)	Presentations to Tribes	Number of Tribal Government Consultations
3	1	2

<i>DDD</i>		
Tribal Communication (Virtual meetings)	Presentations to Tribes	Number of Tribal Government Consultations
39	9	2

<i>DEERS</i>		
Tribal Communication (Virtual meetings)	Presentations to Tribes	Number of Tribal Government Consultations
53	2	2

**For questions or more information, please contact:**

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