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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

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*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

**Arizona Department of Economic Security**

***Tribal Consultation Activity Report***

***July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022***

***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 provided to adults, youth, and children. The Department's Tribal Government Consultation Policy ensures that ADES engages in ***open, continuous, and meaningful communication and consultation*** with the 22 Arizona Tribal Nations. These exchanges consist of information-sharing, with a focus on mutual understanding, before actions are taken that may directly impact 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 ADES Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) currently has a Tribal Relations Manager and four Tribal Liaisons, each covering specific ADES divisions, fostering increased transparency, promoting continued sharing of information and cultivating trust.

The Tribal Relations Manager serves as the point of contact with the Tribal Nations' Leaders and Executive Staff. The role of the Tribal Relations Manager is to ensure the Department is in good standing with its Tribal Government Consultation Policy and that the relationship and partnership with the 22 Sovereign Tribes are consistent and productive through sound, responsible management. Creating effective and efficient program development goals and strategies through data and analysis of the program approach is one of the position's primary responsibilities. 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 (Director, Deputy Director, Division Assistant Directors, and other management) to make sure they are aware of successes and challenges in working with the Tribes to create a strong working relationship and stay true to the intention of the Tribal Government Consultation Policy.

The role of a Tribal Liaison is to act as a conduit between the various ADES divisions and each Sovereign Tribe's Social Services Department Program Leader and staff; providing guidance, support, and technical assistance to the Tribes on divisional services spanning more than 50 different ADES programs. The Tribal Liaisons also assist in identifying potential issues or gaps in ADES policy, procedures, and processes.

### **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, focusing 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 before implementing any policy changes that may impact the Indian Tribes or Nations in Arizona.

The following five principles guide ADES's interaction with Tribal 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.

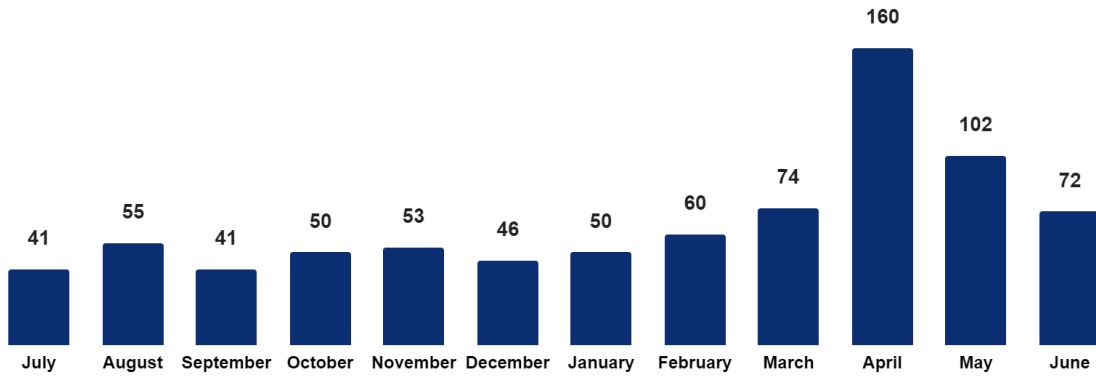
### **The Office of Tribal Relations: Working & Collaborating with Tribes**

During State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022, the OTR Team remained connected to our Tribal partners as the Tribes continued to fight the COVID-19 Pandemic, while partially closing Tribal offices. Our goal was to ensure the continuation of our six Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Tribal quarterly meetings, fine-tune our process for the Tribal Ombudsman to assist with inquiries and accessibility issues faced by rural and Tribal communities, and update the OTR website to include information about upcoming events and meetings so that our Tribal partners stayed connected and informed.

A total of 804 meetings were held during SFY 2022; 172 of those were meetings with Tribal programs and Tribal staff. The meetings with Tribes were quarterly meetings held for the Tribal TANF Programs, ADES Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) informational meetings, and individual meetings with Tribal staff on various divisional programs. From November 2021 to March 2021, there were fewer meetings held due to two staff vacancies in the OTR. The remaining 632 meetings were with internal and external partners to discuss, problem-solve, and collaborate with the goal of improving coordination and communication with Tribal partners. Charts detailing the number of meetings held by month are below.

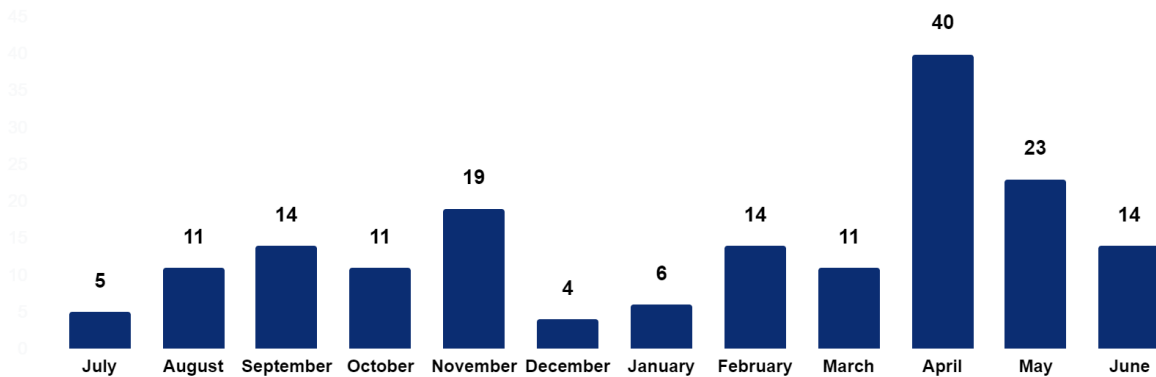
### Tribal Engagement Activities (Internal/External/Tribal) - FY 2022

Total 804



### Tribal Engagement Activities (Tribal Only) - FY 2022

Total 172



Total 172

The ADES OTR scheduled two Tribal Government Consultations. Dates and topics presented are listed below.

- November 30, 2021 - Review ADES Tribal Government Consultation; SNAP CAN Update (Informational) - Status update on the SNAP E&T State Plan – DDD: COVID-19 Immunization Updates and Tribal Health Plan (THP) Integration with AHCCCS Project Updates - ADES Division of Aging and Adult Services: Long Term Care Ombudsman Visitation - Updated CMS Guidance Importance of Visitation. Seventy-two individuals participated in the meeting, which included: two Vice-Chairmen, one Vice-Chairwoman, one Lt. Governor, one President/Vice-President designee (Tribal health director), one Chairman/Vice-Chairman designee (Deputy Attorney General), five Tribal social services directors, and 18 Tribal Executive/Department Staff, a total of 16 Tribes were represented. Comprehensive pre-meeting documents were sent to the Tribal Leaders, Tribal Council, Tribal Social Services Directors, and other executive Tribal leadership before the Tribal consultation meeting.

- June 15, 2022 - Canceled Tribal Consultation at the request of the Tribal Leaders due to their participation in the National Congress of American Indians Mid-Year Conference held in Alaska. The Tribal Consultation agenda will be rolled onto the November 30, 2022, Tribal Consultation.

In addition, three Tribal Informational Forums (TIF) were scheduled. Each TIF was held virtually as many Tribes still had a pandemic no-travel policy in place. A total of 178 participants attended the virtual TIFs, which included divisional breakout sessions to provide updates and information from which the Tribes could benefit. The TIFs were scheduled on the following dates:

- September 24, 2021;
- March 23, 2022; and
- May 25, 2022.

To establish ongoing one-on-one conversations between ADES Leadership and Tribal Government Elected Leaders, the Tribal Relations Manager continues to schedule “Meet & Greets.” Additionally, ADES Director, Michael Wisehart, fully participated in the Tribal Consultation, where Tribal Leadership engaged with him, as well as key members of the ADES Executive Team.

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

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