

**ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**  
Tribal TANF



**2015-17 BIENNIAL BUDGET**

ML Request	FY15	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE				
GF-State	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Total</b>				

**DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY**

The Economic Services Administration (ESA) requests GF-State funding in order to support the Cowlitz Tribe (Tribe) in the operation of its Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. By funding this request, ESA is expected to maintain the same level of funding for the Washington State TANF program, while providing the Tribe with a TANF award, as required by federal law, and a fair and equitable amount of Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funding as required by state law. This request is a placeholder as the amount of the federal TANF and GF-State TANF MOE to be provided to the Tribe has not yet been determined.

**PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The Cowlitz Tribe has informed the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of its intent to operate a TANF program. ACF has given approval for the Cowlitz Tribe to enter into negotiations with ESA to determine the amount of federal TANF funds to be awarded to the Tribe and deducted from the State’s TANF block grant award. The Tribe has tentatively identified the start date of their TANF program as January 1, 2015. The Cowlitz Tribe wants to serve all Native American families residing in Cowlitz and Clark counties. State-Tribal negotiations to establish the amount of GF-State TANF MOE funding to be provided to the Tribe must be completed prior to implementation by the Cowlitz Tribe of its TANF program. If approved, the Cowlitz Tribe will become the twelfth Tribe operating a federally approved Tribal TANF program in Washington State.

As required under Federal law (45 CFR 286.20), the amount of the federal TANF Block Grant to be permanently transferred to the Tribe must be equal to the dollar amount of the federal funds that the State spent for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and related programs for the Tribe’s designated service population in Fiscal Year 1994. In addition, under RCW 74.08A.040, the department is directed to transfer a “fair and equitable amount” of GF-State TANF MOE funds to the eligible Tribe. This RCW also requires that the amount of GF-State MOE funds to be transferred be specified in the biennial appropriations act.

Under the current TANF budget, no funding has been allocated to transfer to the Cowlitz Tribe once it receives ACF approval to operate a TANF program.



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## ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION Tribal TANF Funding Request



### 2015-17 BIENNIAL BUDGET

#### PROPOSED SOLUTION

This request is for GF-State MOE to support the operation of the Tribe's TANF program. In order to maintain the current level of effort in Washington's TANF program, GF-State funding will be needed to replace funding (GF-State and federal) transferred to the Tribe.

The GF-State MOE amount needed will be the net difference between ESA's spending associated with this population and the amount necessary for the Tribe to operate a fully functioning TANF grant and services program. It may be a net increase in costs for several reasons:

1. Current caseload information indicates that there are more Native American families in Cowlitz and Clark counties receiving assistance versus 1994 levels. Given this increase, the amount of MOE will be expected to exceed amounts based on 1994 levels.
2. The average cost per unduplicated assistance unit for the Tribe is higher than it is for ESA. All calculations used to determine Tribal costs are based on the actual costs of the unduplicated assistance units in the TANF program. This amount is higher due to the longer length-of-stay of tribal families on the grant, the higher per capita administrative costs (due to the lack of economies of scale) and the service package that the Tribe will provide (as provided for in their Tribal Family Assistance Plan).
3. Citizens have the right to choose where they receive services. ESA's experience has been that some Tribal members elect to stay in the State program. This leads to a shortfall in the State program because the calculations assume all those eligible to receive services through the Tribe will do so. When fewer make that choice, ESA is short of funds.

#### EXPECTED RESULTS

The budget request supports DSHS Goal 4 and ESA's Strategic Objective 4: Quality of Life – Each individual in need will be supported to attain the highest possible quality of life. This request supports the Results Washington goal to help the most vulnerable people become independent and self-sufficient.

The outcome of this decision package will be to provide the Cowlitz Tribe with the resources necessary to operate a TANF program while maintaining the State's TANF program at its current funding level.

#### STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

The Cowlitz Tribe will support this proposal.



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