



## MTS History

**2000:** Interim final rule for tribal child support programs published

**2002-2005:** Tribal Systems Workgroup studied feasibility of automating tribal child support programs, developed essential system requirements, and created the general system design

**2004:** Final rule for tribal child support programs published (45 CFR Part 309)

**2006:** Feasibility study, market study and cost-benefit analysis for MTS completed

**2007:** Concurrence of ACF Assistant Secretary to build MTS; software development begins

**2009:** Forest County Potawatomi Community selected to pilot test the MTS

**2010:** Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma joins pilot testing; tribal system regulations published (45 CFR Part 310)

**2012:** MTS Pilot ended

**2013:** EBCI begins installation as the first OCSE-supported tribe

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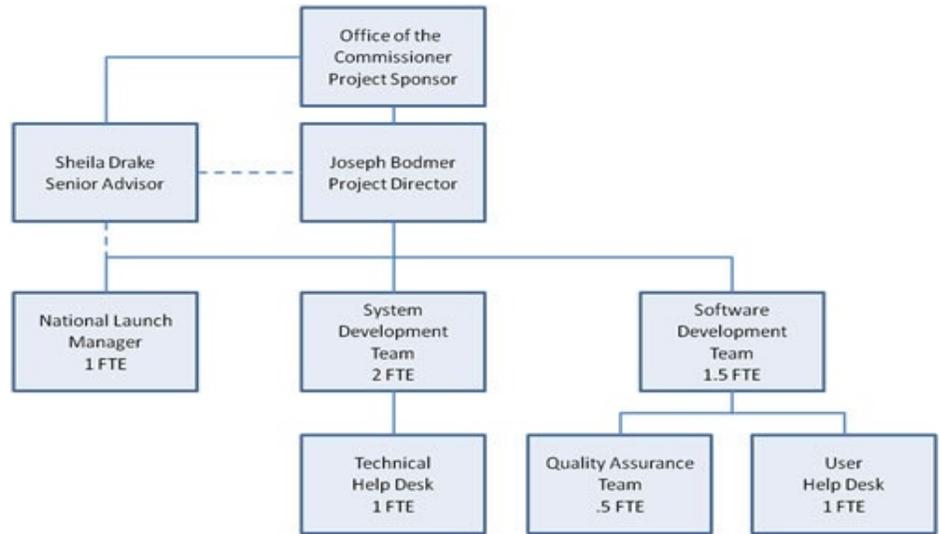
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## MTS Project Structure

As you know, the MTS Project is managed and led by OCSE's Division of State and Tribal Systems. What you may not know is the overall structure of the project.



The overall team is comprised of 7 individuals who wear multiple hats across the project. An FTE or “full time equivalent” means that more than one person may be needed to comprise this 40 hour per week role. Each role is described below:

Title	Principal Responsibilities
Vicki Turetsky, Commissioner Donna Bonar, Deputy Commissioner Project Sponsor	Provide senior leadership and oversight for the entire MTS Project.
Joseph Bodmer, Project Director	Provides day-to-day direction for the project, approves all deliverables and schedules, directly manages the contract and federal support staff.
Sheila Drake, Senior Advisor	Provides oversight and direction for the change management and strategic communication efforts associated with the national launch.
National Launch Manager	Responsible for the communications plan, change management plan, and the monthly MTS Flash along with any other needed communications.
System Development Team	Responsible for all technical system design, planning, management, coding, testing, and technical customer support. Maintains the Maintenance Plan, and Installation Plan for the MTS
Software Development Team	Assists the System Development Team with the design and testing for the system. Manages the user help desk and all user training (including materials). Provides oversight for the quality assurance team who provides detail reviews of training and communications material.





## Support for TANF Cases on the Model Tribal System



The MTS provides functionality to support tribes who have a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/IV-A) program or who support state or tribal cases with TANF grants. Please refer to the “MTS Definitions” section later in this issue for reference.

The MTS allows information about a client’s TANF grant to be entered, including: grant amount, TANF agency, payee agency, grant start date, and grant end date. TANF grant information, as well as the TANF referral agency and the TANF case number, are required to create a new IV-A case. All TANF information is recorded in the case history as part of participant demographics as shown below.

The screenshot shows the 'Participant Demographics' form with a 'Grant' tab selected. The 'TANF Grant Data' table contains the following information:

Status	Effective Date	End Date	Case Number	Amount	Agency
Current	03/04/2013	03/04/2013	CN78878	\$1,500.00	Tribal TAN Agency

A red bracket highlights the table, and the text 'TANF Grant data in MTS' is overlaid on the table area.

The MTS manages Assistance Type (never assisted, currently assisted, formerly assisted) based on the status of the TANF grant. All IV-A cases are currently assisted cases. When the custodial parent no longer receives assistance, a case becomes IV-D formerly assisted.

The MTS, by default, is set to a family-friendly distribution, with a 100 percent pass-through to the family for current support cases. The MTS can be reconfigured to have some, all or part of child support payments retained by the tribe’s TANF agency; however, pass-through to the family always is disbursed first. When a case becomes formerly assisted, all current support payments will be distributed to the custodial parent. Any arrears created while the case is currently assisted will automatically be created as tribal TANF arrears.

Pass-through can be configured as either a fixed amount or a percentage of each debt. Both current support and arrears can be configured to have a pass-through. Each debt type defaults to the tribe’s default value for pass-through, but each debt can also be individually modified. MTS can be configured to support family first treatment of pass-through, where unpaid pass-through automatically rolls into arrears.

Foreign state and/or foreign tribal TANF arrears can be entered in the system. All TANF debts can be manually adjusted using the adjustment process within the MTS. All arrears obligations can be set up to charge interest.



The MTS will calculate Unreimbursed Assistance (URA) for each case based on the cumulative grant amount and the cumulative payments received. The URA limits the amount of support that can be retained by the tribe so that it does not exceed the amount of the grant. URA can also be manually adjusted.

If the case is currently assisted, MTS automatic distribution will pay Tribal TANF arrears first, followed by foreign tribe and state TANF arrears. If a case is formerly assisted, non-TANF arrears will be paid before any TANF arrears.

The MTS also has a Foreign Forward option that can be set for each case. If Foreign Forward is set, the MTS will not perform distribution, but instead will forward all payments received to the state or tribe that referred the case. This option may be useful for state TANF cases where the state does not want the tribe to perform distribution.

To help manage TANF cases, the MTS records TANF compliance information (cooperation, noncooperation, good cause, etc.), provides ticklers for workers for TANF events (grant end, foreign forward, payee changes, URA limit, etc.), and provides reports on TANF cases and debts.

## MTS Spotlight: Financial Management Screens

There are nine major financial management screens within the MTS. Each one has its own function and is integral to the process of collecting and management child support payments.



**Account Summary:** This function enables a financial worker to view all the account activity related to a specific case. It shows a summary of all financial obligations.

**Account Setup:** This function enables a financial worker to view case accounts and to set up debt obligations for a noncustodial parent (NCP) or third party in addition to those debts created by a court order. It also allows the worker to put a hold on an account.

**Adjustments:** This function enables a financial worker to modify the balance of an existing account or to cancel and reissue a check.

**Batch Creation:** This function enables a financial worker to enter and reconcile a batch of payments.

**Post Collections:** This function enables a financial worker to assign a particular batch item as a collection on a specific case or cases.

**Deposit Processing:** This function enables a financial worker to create a bank deposit from a batch of received payments.

**Reconciliation:** This function enables a financial worker to reconcile a bank deposit with the bank deposit receipt.

**Check Print:** This function enables a financial worker to print disbursement checks.

**Recoupments:** This function enables a financial worker to set up a debt obligation for a custodial parent (CP) or third party.



## MTS Definitions

The following are TANF terms that apply to the MTS:



**Assignment of Rights** – If a tribe is providing a CP with a TANF grant, the tribe may require that the CP assign his or her rights to child support to the tribe. The tribe may retain all or part of the money collected for child support.

**Pass-through** – A fixed amount or percentage of child support payments assigned to the tribe that the tribe gives to the CP.

**Good Cause** – A valid reason for failing to cooperate with the child support agency's efforts to pursue child support payments from an NCP.

**Grant** – Public assistance (PA) programs provide financial assistance grants to qualifying households. This money is generally in the form of a TANF check or a Foster Care payment.

**Noncooperation** – Failure of a PA client to cooperate with the child support agency in the establishment of paternity and/or support. Noncooperation could result in a reduction of the client's PA grant.

**Currently Assisted** – The active CP on a case is receiving a TANF grant as of today.

**Formerly Assisted** – The active CP on a case received a TANF grant in the past.

**Never Assisted** – The active CP on a case has never received a TANF grant.

## Meet the MTS Team: Heidi Thibodeau



This month we are pleased to introduce Heidi Thibodeau from BAE Systems Inc. Heidi has more than 10 years of management consulting and project management experience within the federal government. She has worked for a wide range of agencies including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Office of Emergency Communications. Heidi has led many change management and organizational development projects and specializes in strategic communications and strategic planning. She has been supporting the Division of State and Tribal Systems for just over a year where she focuses on the tribal applications and the MTS rollout. She is also the author of the monthly MTS Flash and would love to hear from you.

If you have any ideas or comments on the MTS Flash, please contact Heidi at [MTSProject@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:MTSProject@acf.hhs.gov).

For more information or to offer article ideas

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