



Planning Worksheets

How to use this document

Each of the topics below suggest questions to consider. This is not an exhaustive list of topics to consider. You may discover other items to incorporate as you build your unique program.

Topics

- Funding
- Policy
- Cultural Supports
- Staffing
- Program Services
- Eligibility and Enrollment
- Referral Procedures
- Partnerships
- Program Evaluation

After reviewing the questions in each section, use the space on the page to plan and document next steps.

Funding

Review each funding models to determine which will be best for your tribe. Visit [Funding Models](#) for more information about each option.

Considerations

- How will the child support agency fund the employment services program?
- Does your tribe have a Tribal TANF program to partner with?
- Does your tribe have an employment program already established through the Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), Public Law 102-477, Native Employment Works (NEW), or other funding source?

Type	Explanation
TANF Funds	Many tribal programs participate in Tribal TANF through the Office of Family Assistance. Tribes with child support programs can partner with their Tribal TANF division to leverage and provide employment and training services to families.
Workforce Related Funds	Tribal child support programs can partner with WIOA, PL 102-477, NEW, and other community partners with funds to support employment and training activities.
Section 1115 Waiver	By applying for a Section 1115 waiver, OCSS may approve child support programs to use program funds to create employment and training services.

Policy

Clear policies and procedures will ensure that staff has specific guidance to ensure parents are supported at each step of the employment support process. To implement certain activities, you may need to revise tribal codes and get support from tribal leaders. Looking at policies, tribal codes, priorities, and goals of the tribe or tribal organization ensures success in building and developing your employment and training services program.

Considerations

- Are tribal laws or policy changes needed to allow the child support program to implement an employment services program? If yes, what changes?
- How will you integrate the employment services program into existing child support operations and policies? What steps do you need to take?
- Are your program goals aligned with your tribe or tribal organization's priorities for its citizens?

Cultural Supports

The National Congress of American Indians released the Tribal Workforce Development: A Decision-Framing Toolkit (2017) as a result of a multi-year research project. The outcome of this toolkit highlights the recognition that tribes and tribal organizations know their citizens best and should build programs with their people, challenges, and goals for the future in mind. A successful employment and training services program should focus on providing a whole-person approach tied to cultural values and identity.

Considerations

- Where and how can you infuse your tribe's culture into your employment approach?
- While developing your employment program, how can you connect and support the tribe's goals?
- Do your current workforce development programs reflect tribal values and needs and advance tribal priorities?
- Are related programs effectively working together, as necessary, to provide person-centered, wrap-around services to people in need? What resources need to come together?

Staffing

Engaging parents in the child support program could be a challenge. Program staff can help bridge the gap between negative perceptions and positive experiences. Consider how you will grow your team to ensure your program success.

Considerations

- Does your program have the human capacity (experience and technical knowledge) to implement and sustain a program? If not, what steps should you take to build it?
- Who in your child support program organization will lead the implementation of the employment services program?
- How will the child support agency allocate staff resources to appropriately serve the employment services program participants?
- Who in the employment services program will provide intensive case management services to help parents with significant barriers to employment and payment of child support?
 - Child support staff
 - Partner agency staff
 - Both child support agency and partner agency staff

Program Services

Your program should provide services to parents that align with their strengths, priorities, concerns, abilities, and interests to prepare them for success and have the best opportunity for employment.

Considerations

- What kinds of intensive support does each client need to succeed at training and work?
 - Coaching?
 - Soft skills training?
 - Mentoring?
 - A combination of these and others?
 - Supplemental tutoring?
- Based on the child support agency caseload, how many noncustodial parents would the employment services program want to serve in a year?
- Will the program provide child support and employment services in a one-stop approach? How? (For example, will staff be co-located at the child support agency, workforce agency, or other community location?)
- What employment-related services will be provided?
 - Job search assistance
 - Job placement, including short-term paid work experiences
 - Resume writing
 - Job retention or coaching
 - Interviewing skills, including how to address periods of unemployment or incarceration
 - Partnerships for short-term training
 - Work supports such as interview clothing, work clothes, or tools
 - Other
- Who will provide the employment services?
 - Local workforce agency or American Job Center
 - Local for-profit agency
 - University or community college
 - Child support agency
 - Tribal college or university
 - Other (note your ideas below)
 - Local nonprofit agency
- If you contract with a vendor to provide employment services, what are the key deliverables? For example, if the vendor provides resume writing workshops, how many and over what period?
- Will you provide enhanced services for program participants?
 - Expedited review and change in orders
 - Forgiving arrears owed to the tribe in exchange for program participation, employment, or payment of child support
 - Reinstatement of driver's licenses suspended for non-payment
 - Negotiation to forgive arrears directly owed to the custodial parent
 - Suppression or suspension of certain child support enforcement remedies while a participant is actively engaged in the project
 - Other (note your ideas below)
 - Intensive child support case management

- How will the child support agency develop these enhanced services for its employment program?
- What types of transportation assistance, if any, will be provided through the employment services program?
 - Bus or train passes
 - Driver's license reinstatement fees for a driver's license suspended for unpaid child support
 - Gas cards or vouchers
 - Gift cards or other forms of payment for ride share apps
 - Shuttle service – a partner organization provides transportation to and from related services
 - Emergency car repair
 - None
- Will the program include a financial education component? How will you develop it?
- Will you include peer support groups in the employment services program? If so, how?

Eligibility and Enrollment

Eligibility determines who can participate in your program and will vary depending on your case load, circumstances, capacity, etc. While eligibility may be relatively easy to decide, enrolling and keeping participants engaged may need more discussion. Review the considerations below and determine what makes the most sense for your tribe to achieve the best results.

Considerations

- Will the child support agency determine more eligibility criteria for enrollment other than having an open child support case?
 - Paternity established
 - Child support order established
 - Owes a current child support obligation
 - Owes arrears
 - Owes both current and arrears
 - Must live within the tribal court's jurisdiction
 - Court-ordered participation
 - Case is targeted for early intervention before enforcement remedies are applied
 - Case considered for enforcement remedies due to failure to pay
 - Will you include all intergovernmental cases?
 - Must be a tribal member
- At what stages of case processing does the child support agency enroll eligible noncustodial parents into the employment services program?
- How will the child support agency gain consent to share information among employment services program partners?
 - Will you have an employment services program representative present at child support court hearings?
- Will the program be voluntary or mandated or both? If mandated, who mandates? The courts?

Referral Procedures

The participant's success depends on a referral process that helps them transition smoothly through each step. Clear referral policies and procedures ensure that staff and partners successfully connect participants to necessary services. Participants are more likely to follow through on their responsibilities when the next steps are clear. The goal is to have referrals produce results!

Considerations

- From what sources will the employment services program receive eligible participants (referrals)?
 - Child support staff
 - Tribal child support programs
 - Other tribal social service agencies such as TANF, Child Welfare, SNAP, and Child Care
 - Legal staff and attorneys
 - Court personnel
 - Workforce agency
 - Fatherhood programs
 - Reentry programs/Probation/Parole
 - Other community-based organizations
 - Tribal members
 - Self-referral
- What are the steps that case workers need to take once a client is referred to the program? Should you develop policies and procedures?
- How will the child support agency plan to develop a referral process for the employment services program that specifically helps noncustodial parents with a history of incarceration or currently on probation or parole?
- How will all child support project staff, partner organizations, and courts exchange information about its employment services program participants, receive updates on parent activities and progress (or lack thereof)?
- How will you agree on and communicate the responsibilities of each partner in the referral process?

Outreach and Engagement

A tribal program director said, “The most success comes through outreach!” You can build trust with parents through outreach and engagement with other agencies and customers. Networking is a successful tool in finding resources for your program and finding ways to leverage your resources to help others. Once you build your community of support, engage with them often.

Considerations

- How does the child support agency plan to engage and convey to custodial parents the value of employment services so they can help with enrollment and retention efforts?
- How does the child support agency plan to market and promote the employment services program internally, with partners, and with the community?
- How will you keep participants engaged in the program? How will case managers follow up and check in to make sure participants are supported?
- What is the engagement and retention plan?

Partnerships

Partnerships help achieve priorities and elevate goals. Developing relationships with key partners provides a broader reach than going alone. Partnerships enable tribes to leverage relationships to make the most of limited resources and be more efficient, save time, and help parents. For more information about partnerships and resources visit [Employment Program Partners](#).

Considerations:

- What is your current level of collaboration between related programs to ensure they are coordinating and communicating with one another? Where are the gaps and weaknesses?
- What steps should you implement to establish and strengthen the working relationships?
- Who are the key partners to engage for the success of the employment services program? For example:
 - Child support staff
 - State and county child support programs
 - Other tribal social service agencies such as TANF, Child Welfare, SNAP, and Child Care
 - Agency leadership
 - Department leadership
 - Tribal leadership
 - IT services
 - Legal staff and attorneys
 - Court personnel
 - Workforce agency
 - Fatherhood programs
 - Reentry programs, probation, or parole
 - Other community-based organizations
 - Parents
- How will the child support agency establish partnerships with vocational rehabilitation, fatherhood, parenting time, domestic violence, substance use, and mental health service providers in the local community?
- How does the child support agency plan to build consensus with these key stakeholders?
- How will you agree on and communicate the responsibilities of each partner?

Program Evaluation

How will you know your program is or isn't working? After launching your program, what feedback will you collect from your partners, staff, and participants? What outcomes are ideal? When will you know if something needs to change? These and the considerations below are part of a program evaluation.

Considerations

- What does success look like? For example: A noncustodial parent finds and keeps employment for six months and pays 90% of the monthly child support obligation.
- Will the child support agency evaluate the effectiveness of the employment services provider, case management contract provider, and the overall success of the employment services program? If so, how?