



## Yurok Tribe

# Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Plan

### **I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The Yurok Tribe will operate the Yurok Tribal TANF Program (YTTP) providing TANF assistance and support services to eligible Indian families in the approved service area (SA). Those eligible Indian families residing within the approved service area of Del Norte and Humboldt Counties, in California, must meet all of the eligibility requirements (both the financial and non-financial) as defined by the Yurok Tribe in the plan and program guidelines, including participation in required work activities and cooperation with their family self-sufficiency plan.

### **II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

The Yurok Tribal Council has the overall administrative authority for Tribal Program Departments. Program management responsibilities of the Yurok Tribe TANF Program have been delegated to Yurok Tribe Department of Yurok Health and Human Services, Client Services Department, Tribal TANF Program.

### **III. PROGRAM MISSION**

The mission of the YTTP is to help Yurok families to work toward and achieve self-sufficiency in a culturally appropriate way. The goals of the YTTP are:

1. To provide culturally centered case management and support services to Yurok Tribal families that contribute to strengthening family resilience, parenting skills, executive function and advance the formation of two-parent families.
2. To provide culturally integrated training, education, and support services to eligible participants which empowers them to become employed long-term and independently support themselves and their families.
3. To provide culturally competent support and prevention services to youth, to foster their positive development, improve rates of high school graduation, and prevent or reduce participation in high-risk behaviors such as substance-abuse, juvenile justice entries, premarital sex, and truancy.

Program goals #1 and #2 will be measured by tracking participant progress in meeting individual goals as outlined in each Family Empowerment Plan (FEP). Progress in achieving goals will be monitored utilizing existing data systems and reviewed on a monthly/quarterly/annual basis to illustrate progress toward the goals to ensure TANF families are receiving culturally centered case management and support services to enable Yurok Tribal families to become employed and independently support themselves and their families.

For program goal #3, YTTP will measure progress through activities and support services provided that improve family resilience and will measure progress in prevention services for youth that foster positive development, improve rates of high school graduation, and prevent or reduce participation in high-risk behaviors.

The four purposes of the TANF program are to:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes.
- Reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

#### **IV. PERIOD COVERED BY THE PLAN**

This plan covers the continued operation of the YTTP for a 3-year period, beginning August 1, 2024 and ending July 31, 2027.

#### **V. REVIEW AND COMMENT ON YTTP PLAN**

The Yurok Tribal TANF plan was made available for public comment on the Yurok Tribal website from April 29, 2024 to June 12, 2024. The Yurok Tribal Council approved the YTTP plan and authorized its submission to HHS-ACF.

#### **VI. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS**

YTTP will not spend more than 25% of its annual Federal TANF grant on administrative costs, as per the regulation.

**VII. SERVICE POPULATION AND SERVICE AREA**

The YTTP will provide TANF assistance and/or support services to eligible Yurok tribal members, members of the California judgment Rolls, members of other federally recognized Tribes and their families who reside on the Yurok reservation, and to eligible Yurok Tribal members and their families who reside in the off-reservation areas of Humboldt and Norte counties,

**DUAL ELIGIBILITY: PROVIDING BENEFITS AND ASSISTANCE TO YUROK ENROLLED TRIBAL MEMBERS WHO LIVE OUTSIDE OF THE TRIBAL TANF SERVICE AREA**

In accordance with the authority granted under TANF-ACF-PI-2018-02, the Yurok Tribe elects to provide, as financial resources permit, the full range of Tribal TANF assistance and services as described in this plan to all eligible enrolled Yurok Tribal members and their families, who reside outside of the approved service area of the Yurok Tribal TANF Program. This area would consist of the neighboring county adjacent to the Yurok Tribes service area, Trinity County.

The Yurok Tribe understands that no additional funding will be provided now or in the future for this additional service population, and that all federal rules and regulations governing Tribal TANF apply. The Yurok Tribe understands that it is not authorized to establish a Tribal TANF office outside of the Tribal TANF of the Yurok Tribe approved service area without expressed permission of the entity that has designation of that service area and without the approval of an expanded service area in the plan. The Yurok Tribe understands that the time limit exception associated with "50% or more not employed" applies to the actual location a recipient is living in, not the location of his or her Tribe.

**VIII. ELIGIBILITY FOR TANF ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES RELATED TO THE PURPOSES OF TANF.**

Eligibility for TANF assistance and services is as established in the Tribe's approved TANF plan. Only needy families, as defined in the TANF plan, may receive: (a) any form of Federally-funded or State MOE-funded "assistance" (as defined in 45 CFR 286.10); or (b) any benefits or services pursuant to TANF purposes 1 or 2. "Needy" means financially deprived, equal or less than 175% of the federal poverty guideline, and according to income and resource (if applicable) criteria established in the TANF plan by the Tribe to receive the particular "assistance", benefit, or service.

The Tribe may use segregated Federal TANF funds to provide services (and related activities) that do not constitute “assistance” (as defined in 45 CFR 285.10) to individuals and family members who are not financially deprived but who need the kind of services that meet TANF purposes 3 or 4. Objective criteria will be used and applied to establish eligibility for participation in these services and activities. Eligible families must reside within the YTTP Service Area.

Unless the State instructs otherwise, the Tribe may also use State funds to pay for non-assistance, family formation activities for individuals or family members, regardless of financial need.

**IX. NEEDY INDIAN FAMILIES**

The YTTP defines needy families as families with family income equal to or less than 175 %of the federal poverty guideline. The YTTP shall define an eligible Indian family as one comprised of biological children, stepchildren, adopted children, and/or relative children (including non-Indians) under the age of 18 living with an eligible adult with a household income less than 175%of the federal poverty guideline. In addition, all eligible Indian families must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Indian/non-Indian single parent with eligible child(ren) or expecting (individuals will become eligible for YTTP Services in third trimester month of pregnancy), or
2. Indian/non-Indian two parent families with eligible child(ren), or
3. Needy relative caretakers with eligible child(ren)

**X. NON-NEEDY INDIAN FAMILIES/CARETAKER RELATIVE**

The Yurok TANF plan defines non-needy caretaker relatives as families that are providing care to eligible Indian child/children. In this situation only the income of the child will be counted towards the TANF cash grant. In addition, one of the following criteria must be met:

1. Indian/non-Indian non-needy caretaker responsible for the full-time care of an eligible Indian child(ren) must be related by blood, adoption, marriage, or determined to be a non-relative extended family member (NREFM). A NREFM is defined as a person with an established familial or mentoring relationship to the child or the child’s family. Cases will be verified and approved by Yurok Tribe ICWA Worker, Social Worker, or Client Services Director.
2. The relative caretaker must show proof of placement from either the County Social Services or the Yurok Health and Human Services, or by other acceptable documentation.

**XI. FAMILIES MOVING INTO THE COVERED SERVICE AREA**

Eligible Indian families who have moved into the approved service areas of Humboldt and Del Norte Counties will receive the same amount of cash assistance and/or support services as all other eligible families residing in the approved service area.

**XII. NON-DUPLICATION OF SERVICES**

During initial application process and annual eligibility recertification, all applicants/recipients are required to sign a statement certifying that the applicant and family members are not receiving assistance from another tribal, state or county TANF Program. Information will be routinely exchanged with local tribal, state, or county TANF Programs in order to verify non-duplication of services. Information will be disclosed to other TANF Programs outside of the area to verify non-duplications of TANF assistance or services if recently moving to the service area. Social Security numbers for Tribal TANF recipients will be shared with other TANF Programs to avoid duplication of services.

**XIII. TANF ASSISTANCE**

The YTTP will provide eligible needy families monthly assistance as defined at 45 CFR 286.10, in the form of cash, checks, vouchers, or other forms of benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items, and general incidental expenses. This includes childcare and transportation assistance for those TANF clients who are participating in work activities, but not employed.

**XIV. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR NEEDY FAMILIES:**

As funding allows, support services may be provided to income eligible YTTP participants, or payments may be made directly to service providers for services provided to participants. All support services listed here are provided to needy income eligible families to support the family in resolving barriers to executive function, successfully engage in work activities, form two-parent/stable families, and obtain or maintain employment. All support services must be tied to the participant's Family Empowerment Plan. All supportive services will be approved on a case-by-case basis and are subject to funding availability.

Support Service funds will be expended on needs that promote self-sufficiency and include the following items:

1. Childcare costs for participants who are engaged in assigned TANF activities

and/or participating in and maintaining employment. YTTP does not provide payments for childcare through the use of disregards.

2. Transportation costs such as car repairs, tire replacement, insurance, fuel, and public transportation passes for participants who are engaged in approved TANF work activities.
3. Tools and equipment for participants to either gain or maintain employment. An annual maximum of \$3000 will be allowed. Additional funding may be granted based on individual occupational needs.
4. Relocation expenses for employment not to exceed \$5000 per episode.
5. Domestic violence services for purposes of removing barriers to self-sufficiency.
6. Non-Medical Substance use services and mental health services for purposes of removing barriers to self-sufficiency and employment.
7. Once in a lifetime payment (up to \$3,000. toward traffic fines and/or to attend driving school to allow a participant to obtain or keep a driver license.
8. Premarital/marriage counseling to facilitate two-parent family relationships.
9. Job-training, work experience, and other educational/training activities intended to increase skill and knowledge development and lead to self-supporting employment, including GED completion activities, computer training, etc.
10. Clothing allowance for job training or for new employment up to \$ 500 available once every two years.

#### **XV. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR NON-NEEDY RELATIVE CARETAKERS**

As funding allows, Non-Needy relative or NREFM caretakers may be eligible for a limited amount of support services per household. These support services are available to assist working non-needy relative caregivers in meeting needs of the child(ren), maintaining employment, and fostering family stability, while the caregiver is caring for relative children placed in their home by either the County Social Services or the Yurok Health and Human Services.

1. Emergency Medical Services up to \$1000 once per year per child for the adult caretaker to address the immediate needs of the child/children. Emergency Services include:
  1. Expenses associated with travel for out-of-area medical treatment.
2. Emergency services utilities/housing with a maximum of \$500 per year
  1. prevention of utility shut-off.
  2. prevention of eviction or homelessness.
3. Emergency placement supports such as clothing, bedding, personal care items,

- etc. to meet the needs of children upon initial placement.
4. Furniture allowance for immediate need items such as beds and dressers, upon initial placement. Request for additional items may be evaluated once every three years.
  5. Childcare to support the caretaker relative in maintaining employment.
  6. Counseling for children or caretaker relative to maintain placement and support family stability.

**XVI. NON-RECURRENT SHORT-TERM BENEFITS**

As funds permit, the YTTP may provide Income-eligible Tribal TANF participant families with non-recurrent, short-term benefits (NRSTB) to meet an extraordinary need that arises from a crisis and is beyond those needs that are intended to be covered by regular TANF assistance and support services. As per the regulation at 45 CFR Part 286.10 (b)(1), NRSTB must meet the following criteria:

1. Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need.
2. Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs;
3. Will not extend beyond 4 months;

YTTP will establish an annual cap in its operating procedures for NRSTB benefits for assistance eligible TANF participant families outside of the context of a natural disaster or pandemic.

**XVII. NON-RECURRENT SHORT-TERM BENEFITS IN THE CONTEXT OF NATURAL DISASTER OR PANDEMIC**

As funds permit, the YTTP may provide eligible Indian families and assistance eligible Indian families whose total family gross income is equal to or less than 300% of Federal Poverty Guidelines, with non-recurrent, short-term benefits to meet an extraordinary episode of need that arises from a government-declared (federal, state, county, or tribal government) natural disaster, emergency, or pandemic. NRSTB provided in the context of a natural disaster or pandemic will be capped at \$5000 per event, per family. The Yurok Tribal Council may authorize NRSTB beyond the cap, for situations where extraordinary circumstances require additional funds.

As per the regulation at 45 CFR Part 286.10 (b)(1), NRSTB must meet the following criteria:

1. Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need.
2. Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs;
3. Will not extend beyond 4 months;

NRSTB provided in the context of a governmentally declared natural disaster, emergency, or pandemic will be limited per household, for each event, as per the cap limits outlined above. Families who meet the income eligibility criteria must also demonstrate an episode of need

in order to be eligible for receipt of NRSTB in this context.

#### **XVIII. INCOME AND EARNINGS**

All eligible needy family's earned income, with the exception of the first \$500 less 50% of the remainder per adult in the assistance unit, will be counted in calculating the family's monthly TANF assistance grant. The total earned income (after exclusions and deductions) must not exceed the calculated family grant amount, for the family to remain eligible for receipt of assistance. YTTP will exclude all Indian judgment funds or other disbursements excluded under federal law, from being counted as earnings in the calculation of the monthly TANF grant. (Refer to Appendix A in Policies and Procedures for detailed table)

#### **XIX. RESOURCES AND ASSETS**

YTTP applies the following resource and asset limits, in determining eligibility for receipt of TANF assistance and means-tested support services:

1. YTTP will exempt \$10,000.00 in savings/resources when determining eligibility for all income eligible families.
2. All other assets, i.e.; property, mineral rights, stocks, etc., will be considered as available assets, (exception; land/home located on an Indian reservation and/or a dwelling and associated land owned by a member of the TANF unit and providing the primary residence of the family/unit). Any resources beyond the limit shall be considered available income to the needy family, including equity in other vehicles. Exceptions can be granted in special circumstances, for example burial accounts or inoperable vehicles and /or other assets that are held in trust or have no value. We also will exempt all property that is considered cultural, traditional or for subsistence purposes.
3. The program will exempt one working vehicle, per working adult from the resource limit.
4. The program will exempt electronic devices such as personal computers, laptops, tablets, printers, or other electronic equipment needed for educational activities, training, or attending other approved activities remotely.
5. On a case-by-case basis, the Director of Client Services Department may waive the resource limit if the resource is reasonably expected to produce employment or income for the family in the future (e.g., wood cutting equipment, tools, etc.)
6. 401K or other retirement accounts will be exempted.

Universal Basic Income/Guaranteed Income Projects income will be excluded as income for



the purposes of eligibility and/or the grant calculation to determine monthly grant.

**XX. COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS:**

The YTTP will coordinate to provide referrals to other Tribal service providers (e.g., TERO, Yurok Indian Housing Authority, ICWA, General Assistance, LIHEAP, CSBG) and other welfare related agencies (county, state and tribal eligibility based or work opportunity programs) to assist families in obtaining services such as housing, SNAP, Medi-Cal, WIC, etc. The Tribal TANF Program will coordinate with the state, county, local high schools, community colleges, universities, and local Native American programs for educational needs and to enhance job opportunities.

**XXI. CHILDCARE**

YTTP will coordinate with the Yurok Tribe child care program and other local childcare providers to provide childcare for income eligible YTTP families who are participating in work/training/educational activities.

**XXII. CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT:**

YTTP will require all staff to be given annual certified training on confidentiality and mandated reporting. All staff will sign a statement that they understand all TANF participants' rights to confidentiality, and that any violation could result in immediate termination.

**XXIII. FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY:**

Each year that the Yurok Tribe receives or expends TANF funds, the Yurok Tribe will comply with the fiscal accountability provision of section 5 (f) (1) of the Indian self-determination and education assistance act (U.S.C. 450c (f) (1), relating to the submission of a single agency report required by chapter 75 of title 31, U.S. code.

**XXIV. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS:**

The Yurok Indian Reservation is located in the northeastern part of Humboldt County and southern Del Norte County in California. Public transportation services and employment opportunities are limited due to the rural and isolated geographic location. Unemployment rates remain consistently high in both Humboldt 5.9% and Del Norte Counties 7.2%, on and off the reservation<sup>1</sup> with the rates for on reservation being higher than the rates of the counties due to the location to major employment hubs. The local economy has been impacted by the decreased logging, fishing, and agricultural industries. The major employers are now in the service industry (casinos,

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<sup>1</sup> State of California, Employment Development Department, County Profile 2024

recreation and tourism), government (prisons, state, county and tribal governments), hospitals and schools. Strict gaming regulations have proven to create a significant barrier to tribal members gaining employment because of strict hiring requirements in the local casinos, casino hotels and restaurants. Lack of availability of child providers and child care centers in both Counties also serves as a significant barrier for TANF eligible families, in maintaining employment. Lack of availability of mental health and substance abuse services also poses a significant barrier to many families in the area in need of services to resolve dependency and be prepared to obtain and maintain employment.

The Yurok Tribe has been at the forefront of several innovative projects and initiatives aimed at improving the socioeconomic wellbeing of their community and protecting their environment. These include landmark water rights agreements, participation in carbon credit markets through sustainable forestry practices, and a focus on sovereignty and self-determination in managing their resources and economic development.

It is the goal of the program to better assess work readiness prior to employment, provide proper referrals to necessary services to address barriers, offer life skills trainings, and empower families to reach professional and/or educational goals. Transportation, childcare, and changing employment trends must all be addressed in order to help improve outcomes for TANF participants. Empowerment plans will be utilized to help assess strengths and equip the individual with the necessary skills to reach employment goals. YTTP will expand internal services and supports by offering support services to improve individual coping and foster healthy and stable families; specific supports and services offered to this end include healthy relationship groups, parenting classes, AOD counseling, and behavioral health counseling.

The program will continue to partner with tribal and local agencies to establish necessary life skills, on -the -job training and volunteer opportunities to foster job-readiness and the development of employable skills. Local partner agencies include: United Indian Health Services, Inc., Northern California Indian Development Council, Hoopa/Yurok Vocational Program, Redwood Hotel and Casino, Rural Human Services, The Job Market, Del Norte Workforce Center, etc.

YTTP will continue to actively partner with all local certification programs. These areas will include licensed childcare, certified nursing programs, medical assistant programs, teacher's aide certification, early childhood education, local beauty colleges, laborer and heavy equipment operator certifications, and other certification courses offered through the Yurok Tribe, other employment agencies, and local community college, and College of the Redwoods with campuses in both counties.

YTTP will continue to incorporate an educational track to better equip participants to compete with the changing trends in the local job industry (decline in mills, local businesses, and fishing industry). This includes referrals for tutoring services to assist

participants with educational goals including GED preparation, earning a high school diploma, or for those who are interested in pursuing higher education. The program will maintain partnerships with local Adult Education Programs, American Indian Educational Programs such as Indian Teachers Educational & Professional Program (ITEPP), Hoopa Yurok Vocational Education & Training Program (HYVTEP), and California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt Pathways Program that provides unique options to Native American students pursuing a degree while maintaining employment.

YTTP staff will continue to work with partnering agencies to reduce barriers to employability, transportation, and childcare. This will include services such as: on-site computer lab for training and job search, hosting workshops with Tribal Court Attorneys to work with eligible program participants on resolving legal issues, reducing restrictions on driver's license (child support, fines, etc.), and working to improve the accessibility to quality childcare (licensed providers and local preschools), and transportation.

The Yurok Tribe's and the YTTP contributions to the Tribal community and labor market are multifaceted, reflecting their holistic approach to community development, environmental stewardship, and cultural preservation. Their efforts underscore the important role that Indigenous communities play in creating sustainable and meaningful employment opportunities, while also highlighting the interconnection between economic development, environmental health, and cultural integrity.

**XXV. APPROVED WORK ACTIVITIES:**

The TANF program will coordinate with existing state, county, and tribal services or make available to its participants the following employment and training activities. Some of the following activities will be conducted directly by the Program; others will be delivered through contracts with other tribal programs or local service providers. All work activities will be identified in Family Empowerment Plan. Plans will be developed in cooperation with Family Advocate and Resource Development Coordinator and monitored monthly in order to identify progress toward self-sufficiency. The following is a list of approved work activities that YTTP clients may participate in to fulfill their work participation requirement:

1. Unsubsidized employment
2. Subsidized tribal, private or public sector employment.
3. Work experience, on the job training, and job readiness training that may include: vocational certifications, career pathways, resume writing, interview preparation, self-awareness training, work skills, communication training, organization training, computer skills
4. Job search for up to 6 weeks for families residing outside of reservation boundaries or 12 weeks for families residing within the reservation boundaries per fiscal year within the limitations specified at 45 CFR 286.105 (b) (c)

5. Education including college courses, vocational courses, or certificate courses that will meet educational goals that may lead to employment. Time allowed will include academic attendance, reasonable travel time identified by Family Advocate, and reasonable study time of up to 3 hours per unit as identified by Family Advocate or Resource Development Coordinator
6. Participation in approved Community Service Programs
7. Satisfactory attendance in secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence (GED) in the case of a participant who has not completed secondary school (high school diploma) or received such a certificate (GED)
8. The provision of child care services for children of other TANF Participants engaged in work activities
9. Limited family stabilization wellness activities for high risk families who require comprehensive services in order to become stable in accordance with joint case plans addressing significant barriers with County or Tribal Child Welfare, Yurok Tribal Wellness Court, County or Tribal Behavioral Health, and other interdepartmental agencies that are working collaboratively with YTTP to provide a path of healing to improve family formation, cultural involvement, coping skills strengthening, and promote healthy life choices that will assist in preparing TANF participants to obtain and sustain employment. YTTP will closely monitor these cases every 60 days and make necessary adjustments to the Family Empowerment Plan to ensure participant engagement, make additional referrals, and ensure collaborating agencies are providing status updates.
10. Small business, microenterprise, and entrepreneurial training that may lead to self-employment to include business model planning and budget training.
11. Volunteering or Mentoring youth programs for cultural/prevention activities such as traditional net making and fishing, canoe making, ceremonial protocol, regalia making, coaching traditional stick games, gathering and processing traditional foods and materials, traditional storytelling, AOD prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, life skills or employment readiness training for a maximum of 30 hours per month.
12. Active participation in family stabilization activities related to children's educational or wellness needs (for a maximum of 20 hours per month), including: attending meetings or appointments for counseling or mental health activities, 504 Educational Plans, Individualized Educational Plans, Individualized Family Service Plans, Individualized Education Evaluations, Individualized Health Plans, or Individualized Transition Plans. Families must be working closely with schools or other providers to identify specific needs of child(ren).
13. Life skills training and education (up to a maximum of 20 hours per month) that may include: financial literacy, planning and organization, interpersonal relationship skills, healthy relationships, healthy communication, nutritional education.

14. Family enrichment activities (up to a maximum of 20 hours per month) that may include: parenting classes, family strengthening activities, family wellness classes, or family bonding activities offered through local family resource centers, schools, or Head Start programs.
15. Culturally relevant work activities based upon tribal culture that could lead to self-sufficiency, increase cultural knowledge, or contribute to family wellness (up to a maximum of 20 hours per month).
16. Up to 20 hours of the required work participation hours per month to provide volunteer work to Yurok tribal elders.
17. Sheltered/Supported Work: Involves work site job skills and job readiness training coupled with intensive supervision and counseling. The intent of the activity is to assist participants who lack basic job experience and skills to develop them at their own pace in a supportive environment.
18. Reasonable travel time to and from work /training site and travel time to childcare provider shall count as time toward meeting participants work activities. Due to the limited public transportation and the proximity and location of activity sites, reasonableness of travel time will be determined by the YTTP Staff but shall not exceed three hours .

**XXVI. DISPLACEMENT COMPLAINTS**

Pursuant to section 286.110, The Yurok Tribe has established grievance procedures in Section 9 of the YTTP Policies and Procedures. These procedures will be used to resolve displacement complaints to any individual who feels they have been displaced. The Public is notified of the grievance procedures through postings at all employment agencies participating in YTTP Employment Programs. Grievance forms are available at all YTTP TANF sites and at the Yurok Tribal Human Resource department.

YTTP will not jeopardize the employment and economic well-being of non-TANF families through displacement. This will be achieved by adhering to the following safeguards:

1. A TANF recipient may not be assigned to a vacant position if the employer has placed other individuals on lay off from the same or equivalent job and/or position.
2. An employer may not terminate the employment of any regular employee in order to create a vacancy for the employment of a TANF recipient.

**XXVII. MANDATORY WORK REQUIREMENTS:**

The Yurok Tribe agrees to satisfy the following minimum work participation rates:

**WORK PARTICIPATION RATES**

**ALL Needy FAMILIES**

FISCAL YEAR	MINIMUM PARTICIPATION FY
2024	38%
FY 2025	38%
FY 2026	38%

**Minimum Average Participation Hours per Week:**

YTTP agrees to satisfy the following minimum participation hours as established by the Yurok Tribe TANF Program and as consistent with economic conditions and resources.

SINGLE PARENT NEEDY FAMILY WITH CHILDREN 12 MO AND OLDER:

Minimum Number Hours/Weekly  
20

SINGLE PARENT WITH CHILD 4 MO. TO 6 MO.

Minimum Number Hours/Weekly  
5

SINGLE PARENT WITH CHILD 7 MO. TO 9 MO.

Minimum Number Hours/Weekly  
10

SINGLE PARENT WITH CHILD 9 MO. TO 12 MO.

Minimum Number Hours/Weekly  
15

2-PARENT FAMILIES:

Minimum Number Hours/Weekly  
30

YTTP will allow either/both parents to participate in the work activity to meet the minimum requirements through combined work hours.

**Limitations And Special Rules:**

YTTP will exempt single parent families from the work participation requirements under

the following circumstances:

1. Parents in their third trimester of pregnancy
2. During the first three months after birth of their child. Months 4 through 12 will be reduced work participation hours.

YTTP will consider participation of an individual in a job readiness activity for a minimum of 3 days per week and approved by the Family Advocate or Employment Staff to be considered a full week of work participation once per 12-month period by that individual per 45 CFR 261.34 (e.)

Non-Needy Caregivers are exempt from work participation requirements.

A teen head of household who maintains satisfactory school (high school, GED or College) attendance is considered to be meeting the work participation requirements.

Upon recommendation by a YTTP staff and with the approval of the TANF Manager, YTTP may temporarily exempt victims of domestic violence who are participating in mental health or substance abuse treatment and single parents who are participating in substance inpatient or outpatient rehabilitation from work participation requirements up to a maximum of 6 months. Verification and other requirements are outlined in -the YTTP's policies and procedures.

In instances where the individual is a single custodial parent caring for a child under the age of six (6), the YTTP will not reduce or terminate assistance based on the parent's refusal to engage in required work if he or she demonstrates an inability to obtain needed childcare for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Appropriate childcare is unavailable within a reasonable distance from the participants home or work site; or
2. Informal childcare provided by a relative or under other arrangements is unavailable or unsuitable; or
3. Appropriate and affordable formal childcare is unavailable.

The following definitions will govern the meaning of the following terms:

1. Appropriate Childcare:

- a. Full day/full-year high quality childcare services for young children. High quality programs meet high educational and child developmental standards (e.g. Head Start and accredited pre-Kindergarten).
- b. After-school and summer recreation activities that provide supervision and developmental services for children and

youth while their parents participate in eligible work activities.

2. Reasonable Distance:

- a. Within three to five (3 to 5) miles or 30 minutes one-way public transit travel time.

3. Unsuitability of Informal Care:

- a. Lack of adult supervision (must be 18 or older).
- b. Unsafe surroundings (unsafe housing conditions and/or inappropriate environmental conditions due to the presence of violence, substance abuse, etc.).
- c. Over-crowded conditions in residential home or childcare facility; or
- d. Ill and/or drug using child care provider.

4. Affordable Childcare:

- a. Childcare provider that agrees to accept as full payment the childcare subsidy payment provided by Tribal TANF.
- b. Childcare where the cost to the family does not exceed the regional market rate.

YTTP will make efforts to assist the family with obtaining transportation and childcare resources in order to address concerns. YTTP will work with the Yurok Tribal resources and other local agencies in order to secure suitable transportation and/or formal or informal childcare.

**XXVIII. TIME LIMITS**

The YTTP shall limit the time a family may receive cash assistance from the TANF program to a maximum of 60 months.

When a family member reaches the sixty-month time limit, the family's YTTP Tribal TANF cash assistance grant will be discontinued.

YTTP will not count months in any month of receipt of assistance by an adult during which the adult lived in Indian country or in an Alaskan Native Village in which at least 50 percent of the adults were not employed. Verification of residency is provided by applicant/recipient upon initial intake and during annual redetermination of eligibility.

YTTP will not count months for a family that does not include an adult head of household.

YTTP will not count months for a family that does not include a pregnant minor head



of household, minor parent head of household or spouse of such household.

YTTP will count prior months of TANF assistance funded with TANF block grant funds towards the time-limit, except for any month that was exempt or disregarded by statute, regulation, or under any experimental, or pilot demonstration project approved under Section 1115 of the Act.

**XXIX. HARDSHIP CASES:**

YTTP Staff may exempt participants from 60-month lifetime limits due to hardship. A hardship is a condition or situation, generally outside of the control of the participant, which significantly limits or prevents a participant from successfully achieving the requirements of the program and which serves as a significant barrier to meeting the goals of their Family Empowerment plan. Hardship approval will be made by YTTP Manager and reviewed every 6 months to redetermine eligibility for exemption. Based upon hardship, YTTP may exempt up to 20% of the caseload from applicable 60-month life-time limits based upon the following hardship exemptions as listed below:

1. Individuals with a significant learning disability, which limits their ability to perform work activities and/or maintain employment, as verified in writing by a qualified professional.
2. Single parents with four or more children under 6 years old without suitable school or child care options for children
3. Single parents responsible for the full-time care of an elderly, (60 years of age or older) or disabled parent as verified in writing by a qualified medical provider. Elder/disabled parent must reside in the home of the participant and show that no other individual can assist in the care of the elder / disabled parent. Participant must complete home health training, CPR training, and other identified training needed to provide appropriate care.
4. Victims of domestic violence or individuals actively engaging in full-time mental health or inpatient/outpatient substance abuse treatment programs for up to 6 months
5. An adult member of the household has to care for a household member that is incapacitated or has a serious health problem that requires full time care as established by a qualified medical provider for up to 6 months. Participant will be required to apply to be a certified In-Home Support Service provider for household member.
6. Individuals who are enrolled full time students with one (1) year or less remaining to successful completion of a post-secondary educational degree or vocational program.
7. Individuals/families who have been impacted by a natural disaster for a period not to exceed 6 months.

8. Cases where time limit expiration/termination of benefits would likely result in a child(ren) being placed into emergency shelter or foster care for a period not to exceed 12 months.
9. Cases experiencing a housing crises/homelessness not to exceed 12 months.
10. Cases with an SSI/SSP application is pending or in the appeal process not to exceed 12 months.

**XXX. PENALTIES AND SANCTIONS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS**

YTTP shall meet with participants who fail to fulfill their work participation requirements or comply with their TANF Case Plan. Failure to meet their work participation requirements and/or case plan will result in sanctions, and penalties and/or termination from the TANF program, if a participant refuses to:

3. Engage in work as required by the YTTP in the absence of good cause.
4. Any individual who refuses to complete substance abuse testing or to participate in substance abuse/mental health counseling and/or treatment when referred by YTTP shall be placed on the voucher system.
5. Comply with any aspect of their TANF case plan.
6. Comply with providing necessary documents required by YTTP.

The policies and procedures for penalties are further defined in YTTP Policies and Procedures Manual.

**XXXI. APPEALS, RIGHTS, AND PROCESS:**

During the application process the applicant shall be advised of their right and responsibilities that include the right to appeal an adverse decision or sanction by YTTP decision to deny, reduce, or terminate assistance/services or placed on the voucher system. A written notice of appeal rights, process and time line shall be provided at the time of application and with any decision document whether mailed or otherwise provided. Participants will be notified of any adverse action or changes to grant 10 days prior to the effective date of the action.

1. Program staff will make every attempt to informally settle any complaints regarding the case. Staff will make every effort to respond to a participant complaint, problem, or requests for action.
2. If resolution cannot occur during an informal attempt, the Tribal member may file a written appeal. The appeal must be filed within 10 days after decision/action. If requested, staff may assist the individual with writing the appeal.

3. The appeal must first be reviewed by the TANF Manager. In some circumstances this might be the Client Services Director. The program manager will have 5 days to review and make a decision in writing.
4. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may appeal to the Client Services Director. The Client Services Director - has 5 days to review and make a decision.
5. If the TANF Manager, Client Services Director upholds the initial decision, the participant may appeal to the /Deputy Executive Director within 10 days. The Deputy Director will review and respond within 10 days. Decisions made by Deputy Executive Director will be final.

**XXXII. GOOD CAUSE:**

YTTP may temporarily exempt participants who are claiming good cause from work participation requirements. All good cause claims must be documented in writing and substantiated with documentation by the participant. The Family Advocate must request the exemption and provide justification to the TANF Manager. The TANF Manager will provide written approval for the participant based upon the information received from the Family Advocate. Good cause exemptions will be issued for the following:

- Temporary lack of reliable transportation (until problem is resolved)
- Temporary lack of suitable childcare (until problem is resolved)
- Mental or physical illness of the caretaker or a dependent child as verified in writing by a qualified medical provider.
- Chronic Illness or medical condition of the child requires parent to stay home with the child as verified by qualified medical provider.
- Work activities conflict with required court appearances.
- Extreme weather conditions such as floods, heavy snow, wildfires, landslides or other serious acts of nature

Family circumstances or issues of an emergency nature preventing participation such as medical emergencies, death, or serious illness of immediate family member or other justifiable emergency circumstance.

**Good Cause Criteria for Failure to Accept or Maintain Employment**

Good cause exemptions shall be determined by YTTP Staff and approved by the TANF Manager or Client Services Department Director on a case-by-case basis considering the unique facts of each circumstance. Good cause may include the following circumstances or conditions:

- Temporary lack of transportation (until resolved).
- Temporary lack of childcare (until resolved).
- Temporarily disability or serious illness verified by qualified medical

- provider).
- Extreme weather conditions such as floods, heavy snow, wildfires, landslides or other serious acts of nature.
  - The work adversely affects the person's health as verified by a qualified medical provider's statement.
  - The work site violates health and safety standards.
  - The wage does not meet minimum wage or piece work standards.
  - Required hours of work are in excess of what is customary for the job.
  - The job is vacant due to a strike, lockout or other labor dispute.
  - The job referral or employer exhibits overt discriminatory behavior toward the participant.

All good cause claims must be documented in writing with back up documentation provided by the participant, YTTP Staff must submit in writing request approval from the TANF Manager or Client Services Department Director and provide a time period for exemption. TANF Manager or Client Services Department Director shall provide either approval or denial in writing within 10 working days.

### **XXXIII. TRIBAL TANF OPTIONS**

The Yurok Tribe has elected to provide the following options for YTTP income eligible needy families, as funds permit:

1. All YTTP recipients are required to participate in substance abuse testing during the period of Annual Eligibility Recertification. This includes non-needy relative caretakers. For cause substance abuse testing will be conducted as deemed necessary by program staff.
2. A positive test or a "no show" will require participants to complete a substance abuse assessment and comply with the recommendations of the substance use Counselor. This will include counseling, education or rehabilitation programs depending on the substance abuse evaluation. YTTP will continue Tribal TANF assistance to the family through a voucher system, or deny, reduce or terminate benefits until the participant comes into compliance. A positive test for the Employment Services program shall disqualify the individual from participating in the program for no less than 90 days.
3. YTTP does not mandate cooperation with Child Support Enforcement as a condition of eligibility.
4. YTTP requires all school age children to attend an approved education program. Regular satisfactory attendance, verification of enrollment and current status is required. Cash benefits may be reduced, until child (ren) return to school or attend regularly.
5. YTTP may provide school age, income eligible TANF participant youth with school incentives and/or allowances. Incentives and/or allowances are used to encourage and support students to achieve excellence in academics.

- Attendance Incentive – \$50 Check will be provided to elementary school age children (K-4<sup>th</sup> grades) who demonstrate at least an attendance rate per school semester or each trimester.
  - Grade Incentive – Cash awards will be provided to school age children (5-8<sup>th</sup> grades) that receive a “C” or above grade point average or average satisfactory status on their report card per school semester or each trimester, as funds permitted.
    - \$ 175 for GPA of “4.0”
    - \$100 for GPA of “3.0”
    - \$ 75 for GPA of “2.0”
  - Grade Incentive – Cash awards will be provided to school age children (9-12<sup>th</sup> grades) that receive a “C” or above grade point average or average satisfactory status on their report card per school semester. Students attending home school programs must complete the same number of units per semester as required by the public high school, as funds permit.
    - \$ 275for GPA of “4.0”
    - \$ 175for GPA of “3.0”
    - \$ 100 for GPA of “2.0”
  - Adult Grade Incentive - Cash awards will be provided to adult participants attending high school or college that receive a GPA of 2.0 or above per semester.
    - \$ 275for GPA of “4.0”
    - \$175 for GPA of “3.0”
    - \$ \$100 for GPA of “2.0”
6. Provide a \$50 incentive for TANF youth who show verified regular attendance at tutoring and show improvement in grades. This incentive is available at each semester or trimester grading period.
  7. High School Incentive for income eligible YTTP students that receive their high school diploma/high school equivalency while participating in YTTP, will receive an incentive in the amount of \$500. Additionally, as funds permit, students who are accepted and attend a post-secondary institution of higher education are eligible to receive a lap top computer to assist them in pursuing a college degree.
  8. All adult participants shall be required to actively participate in a GED or High School diploma educational program if they have not met this requirement at the time determined eligible the program.
  9. Clothing Allowance – YTTP will provide an annual school clothing allowance for all income-eligible TANF school age (PreK-12) children enrolled in public school or center-based pre-school as funds permit. The program will also provide a winter clothing allowance for all income-eligible children in a TANF family unit.
  10. Clothing allowance for YTTP full time college students not to exceed \$500 per year.
  11. AA/AS Degree Incentive – All needy TANF eligible adults who obtain their AA/AS Degree and meet their work participation rates while on TANF will receive an

- incentive in the amount of \$1,000.
12. BA/BS Degree Incentive – All needy TANF eligible adults who obtain their BA/BS Degree and meet their work participation rates while on TANF will receive an incentive in the amount of \$2,000.
  13. Provide a \$750 incentive award to those income eligible TANF parent participants who receive their high school diploma/GED and meet their work participation rates while on the YTTP. All income eligible TANF program participants are eligible for this incentive.
  14. Provide eligible TANF participants a one-time marriage incentive benefit of \$1000 to assist with costs associated with marriage such as marriage license or cost of officiation or services upon completion of pre and post healthy relationship education.
  15. Deny/disqualify TANF cash aid and supportive services to applicants/participants who commit welfare fraud for a maximum of two years.
  16. The participant must provide proof of current immunizations of all children in the assistance unit regardless of age. This is requested and received at intake, re-certification or within 10 days of new immunizations received.
  17. Domestic violence victims may receive additional support services while living at a shelter for up to 6 months for costs associated with housing, relocation, or transportation services. In addition, participants that are victims of domestic violence may be eligible for a basic needs package of \$500 upon approval by the Program Staff member and TANF Manager or Client Services Department Director.
  18. Presumptive eligibility will be approved for victims of domestic violence and emergency child welfare placements. Approval is based upon YTTP program policies and submittal of appropriate documentation.
  19. Any participant applying for YTTP benefits that has been convicted of a felony drug, sexual abuse, or domestic violence crime will be denied/disqualified benefits for 2 years from the date of conviction and show proof of completing program in alignment with court order. In some situations, clients receiving YTTP benefits that receive a conviction while they are a client may continue to receive benefits as long as they start and actively participate in an appropriate program. Any applicants convicted of child molestation will not be eligible for YTTP benefits.
  20. YTTP will continue to provide cash assistance while an eligible TANF parent/needy caretaker is in an inpatient substance abuse treatment program with their child (ren) for a maximum of 180 days.
  21. Provide a maximum of \$ \$550 per year, per child to pay registration fee or provide equipment for income eligible TANF youth to participate in school related or prevention activities. Additional funding may be granted based on needs and activities of children upon recommendation of Program Staff and approval by TANF Manager or Client Services Department Director.
  22. Subsidized Adult Employment Training and Job Placement opportunities for TANF Participants meeting program requirements.
  23. May allow participants to accumulate assets through federal Individual Development Accounts (IDA) programs set up for the individual or family,

**XXXIV. TRANSITIONAL SERVICES**

Tribal TANF participants may be eligible for transitional support services payments for up to Twenty-four (24) months after they become employed and lose eligibility for the TANF cash grant due to excess income (i.e., income that exceeds the Tribal TANF eligibility standards), or until they reach 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, whichever comes first. Family Advocates will provide written justification for all support service decisions, including why the service is needed as related to TANF purposes and why the cost is appropriate. These justifications will be part of the case file for the TANF unit. Clients receiving transitional services are only eligible for services that directly relate to maintaining employment or career development, such as, childcare, vehicle repair, mileage, tire replacement, and other employment or career development related costs. These services will be incrementally reduced at 6-month intervals over the period of twenty-four months.

**XXXV. DIVERSION SERVICES**

Diversion assistance for families at risk of welfare dependency in order to keep them from on-going assistance. Families must meet income eligibility of no more than 300% of the federal poverty guidelines. Individuals must have a recent work history within the last 90 days. Funds may not exceed \$10,000 in a lifetime with diversion assistance being available once every five (5) years, limited to the availability of funding.

**XXXVI. NON-ASSISTANCE PREVENTION SERVICES : PURPOSE 3 & 4**

As funding permits, YTTP program may provide non-assistance prevention services to both eligible needy TANF families and other TANF eligible families deemed “at risk” residing in the YTTP service area. At risk assessments will be administered in order to determine eligibility for receipt of these programs and services. These non-assistance activities provide participants the opportunity to participate in culturally integrated services that discourage out of wedlock pregnancies and encourage the formation of two-parent families. YTTP may provide incentives for successful completion of pregnancy prevention and family formation activities that include a series of three or more sessions. Appropriate incentives will be identified per activity with a maximum of \$50 per session if deemed appropriate. Non-assistance prevention activities and education includes:

1. Marriage promotion and healthy relationship activities such as Positive Indian Parenting, Fatherhood is Sacred/Motherhood is Sacred, marriage preparation classes or workshops.
2. Pregnancy prevention and educational activities targeting male and female teens such as Tribal Personal Responsibility Education Program, Brushdance protocol and other cultural activities, responsible decision making, healthy relationships and communication workshops, youth leadership workshops.
3. Domestic violence and sexual assault prevention education such as teen dating

- violence prevention workshops, Batterer’s Intervention Program, Darkness to Light, and other child abuse prevention workshops
4. Substance abuse prevention and education activities such as Narcan administration training, opioid and stimulant use prevention, harm reduction, trauma informed educational programs.
  5. Suicide prevention services and activities.
  6. Life skills activities such as financial literacy, budgeting, executive function workshops, nutrition education programs, responsible decision-making workshops, mindfulness and self-awareness workshops, cultural awareness and connectivity workshops and safety
  7. Youth prevention activities such as, GONA, Healing the Canoe, elder and youth mentorship, youth leadership, employment readiness training, and career development workshops.
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**XXXVII. DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

The Yurok Tribe will comply with all federal statutory and regulatory requirements governing data collection and reporting requirements for TANF.

**XXXVIII. RETROCESSION PROVISION**

The Yurok Tribe may retrocede the operation of this YTTP to the state and HHS/ACF by 1.) Providing written notice to ACF and the State according to the guidelines in 45 CFR 286 and 2.) Meeting all of the requirements in 45 CFR 286 for retrocession

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Joseph L. James, Yurok Tribal Chairman

Date