
HB184 – TRIBAL CHILD WELFARE COMPACT

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HOUSE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

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WHY THE WORK BEGAN

Significant Disparities

- Alaska Native Children make up 15% of the state's general population but represent 60% of the children in state custody
- Disparities of this nature indicate a system failure in our child welfare system

OCS Retention Difficulties

- Office of Children's Services (OCS) typically operates at a 50% vacancy rate and require frontline workers to carry caseloads more than 3x the national average
- The goal of HB 151 (2018) was to lower turnover and vacancy rates, but despite increased funding, turnover rates have not decreased

HOW THE WORK BEGAN

Tribal State Collaboration Group

- A 25-year partnership between state, tribal representatives, and invited stakeholders
- Goals:
 - Strengthen Alaska's compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978.
 - ICWA is a Federal law that established standards for the removal and placement of American Indian children and enabled Tribes and families to be involved in child welfare cases.
 - Reduce the disproportionality of Alaska Native children in state custody
 - Build & strengthen working relationships

Tribal Title IV-E Agreements

- Provides Federal funding to states and tribes for foster care, transitional independent living programs, guardianship assistance, and adoption assistance
- Tribes also receive a higher reimbursement rate than states for covered services, resulting in significant General Fund savings.

WHAT IS ALASKA'S TRIBAL CHILD WELFARE COMPACT?

- The Alaska Tribal Welfare Compact (Compact) is a government-to-government agreement to improve the life outcomes for Alaska's children and families by transferring specific, negotiated child welfare services and supports (including revenue streams) from the Office of Children's Services (OCS) to the Tribal Co-Signers
- The Compact was signed in 2017 by Governor Walker and 18 Tribal Co-Signers; representing 161 Federally-recognized Tribes and Tribal Organizations and continued under Governor Dunleavy in 2019



IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

FY2018

- Tribal Co-Signers developed their programs, built capacity and infrastructure
- OCS began sharing Protective Services Reports (PSRs or ‘screen ins’ or ‘screen outs’), and provided training and technical support

FY2019

- Tribal Co-Signers began performing Initial Diligent Relative Searches
- The Parties negotiated four new Scopes of Work for Ongoing Relatives Searches, Family Contact, Licensing Assists, and Safety Evaluations
- ***However, the State declined to sign due to a change in Administration***

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Rural Alaska

Alaska tribal officials blame state for stalled talks on child welfare agreement

✍ Author: Associated Press ⓘ Updated: May 24, 2019 📅 Published May 24, 2019



Negotiations sour on tribal child welfare agreement

By Krysti Shallenberger, Alaska's Energy Desk - Bethel - May 23, 2019

The Cordova Times

May 29, 2019

“Tribal co-signers say their efforts to negotiate with the state of Alaska, as called for in the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact, have so far failed because the state presented them with unreasonable and unworkable ultimatums.”

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

FY2020

- Parties worked out differences and signed all five previously-negotiated Scopes:
 - Initial Diligent Relative Searches (IDRS)
 - Ongoing Relative Searches (ORS)
 - Family Contact
 - Licensing Assists
 - Safety Evaluations

FY2021

- Negotiations will take place in May 2021



ADVANTAGES

- Provides higher quality services, closer to home, at a lower cost through leveraging Tribal resources
- Strengthens state services by engaging Tribes, often the most local government, on an issue of shared interest
- Increased public trust through existing family relationships with Tribes



ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health outcomes.

ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years):

- Experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect
- Witnessing violence in the home or community
- Having a family member attempt or die by suicide
- Growing up in a household with substance abuse, mental health problems, instability due to parental separation or household members in prison

ACEs are linked to:

- Chronic health problems
- Mental illness
- Substance abuse problems in adulthood
- Increased incarceration rates

ACEs can negatively effect:

- Education
- Job opportunities
- Earning potential

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How big is the problem?

- ACEs are common. 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states reported that they had experienced at least one type of ACE, and nearly 1 in 6 reported they had experienced four or more types of ACEs.
- Preventing ACEs could potentially reduce a large number of health conditions. For example, up to 1.9 million cases of heart disease and 21 million cases of depression could have been potentially avoided by preventing ACEs.
- Women and several racial/ethnic minority groups are at greater risk for having experienced 4 or more types of ACEs.
- ACEs are costly. The economic and social costs to families, communities, and society totals hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

Section 1: Amends AS 47.05 to add a new section to article 1 requiring the State to participate in a Tribal Child Welfare Compact.



Quyana!