

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0124-24

DATE: June 4, 2024

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES; RELATING TO THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATIONS' PUBLIC LAW 102-477 PLAN

PURPOSE: The purpose of this proposed resolution is to approve the Navajo Nation's Plan to participate in the funding under Public Law 102-477.

FINAL AUTHORITY: Navajo Nation Council

VOTE REQUIREMENT: Simple Majority

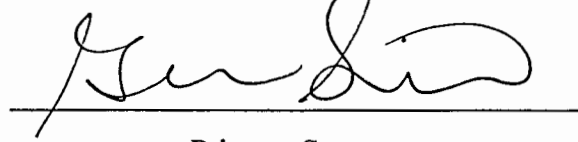
This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD 3:15 PM; 06-07-24
Website Posting Time/Date 06-12-24
Posting End Date: 06-13-24
Eligible for Action: 06-13-24

Health Education & Human Services Committee
Thence
Naabik'iyáti' Committee
Thence
Navajo Nation Council

PROPOSED COUNCIL RESOLUTION
25th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL—SECOND YEAR, 2024

INTRODUCED BY



Primary Sponsor



TRACKING NO. 0124-24

AN ACTION

RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES; RELATING TO THE NAVAJO
NATION COUNCIL; APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATIONS' PUBLIC LAW
102-477 PLAN

BE IT ENACTED:

SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

- A. The Health, Education and Human Services Committee is a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council and serves as the oversight committee for the Division of Social Services. 2 N.N.C. § 400(A).
- B. The Navajo Nation established the Naabik'iyáti' Committee as a Navajo Nation Council standing committee 2 N.N.C. § 700 (A). Proposed legislations that are assigned to the Navajo Nation Council as final authority shall be assigned to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee for review and consideration. 2 N.N.C. § 164 (A)
- C. The Navajo Nation Council is the governing body of the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. § 102(A).

SECTION TWO. FINDINGS

- A. The Division of Social Services (the "Division") is established under the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation Government. 2 N.N.C. § 1651.

- 1 B. Public Law 102-477 is the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services
2 Demonstration Act, which was passed in 1992 and amended in 2000.
- 3 C. The goal of the law is to reduce unemployment through workforce development and
4 job training in tribal communities by reducing and streamlining administrative
5 requirements. Each participating tribe decides which eligible employment and training
6 related federal programs to include in its 477 plan.
- 7 D. Public Law 102-477 applies to any federal formula-funded program intended for
8 employment, training, and services that may enhance a person's ability to become self-
9 reliant.
- 10 E. For each tribe and tribal organizations with active 477 plans, the BIA conducts on-site
11 monitoring at least once every three years and, in coordination with affected agencies,
12 provides technical assistance related to audit findings or program activities. BIA will
13 notify affected agencies of the on-site monitoring activities. Affected federal partners
14 are invited to participate and notify the BIA of any issues or concerns so that they can
15 be addressed during the on-site review. BIA also conducts annual 477 Program
16 trainings at regional and national conferences for participating and non-participating
17 tribes. <https://www.doi.gov/ocl/tribal-477-programs>.
- 18 F. Twelve United States Executive Branch Departments have entered into a Memorandum
19 of Agreement ("MOA") for the submission, review, and approval of 477 Plans. This
20 MOA requires the 477 Plan to be approved by the governing body of the tribe.
- 21 G. The Division has submitted its 477 Plan which is attached as **Exhibit A**.
- 22 H. The Department of Justice reviewed the 477 Plan submitted by the Division and
23 determined it to be legally sufficient. The Department of Justice's review documents
24 are attached as **Exhibit B**.

25 26 **SECTION THREE. APPROVAL**

27 The Navajo Nation hereby approves the 477 Plan, as detailed in Exhibit A, prepared by the
28 Division of Social Services.

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Navajo Nation

Division of Social Services

P.L. 477 Plan

5 Year Plan: October 1, 2025 to September 29, 2029

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Introduction

We, the Diné, believe that every person is sacred possessing dignity as an individual and deserving of respect and kindness. In turn, every person has a responsibility to express their dignity in a life of responsibility for themselves, their families, and their communities. Every Diné person is deserving of a life full of Hózhó (happiness and harmony).

The teachings of the Holy People are embedded in our culture and traditions and the teachings provide us with the tools we need to defeat our modern monsters (such as violence, substance abuse and suicide) that endangered the welfare of our Navajo people and communities. Today, the teachings have been given to us by our Diyin Dine'e (The Holy People).

Each of us has an identity that is embedded in us as individuals and that is inextricably linked to our place in a continuum of ancestors, traditions, culture, family, clan, K'é (Kinship), and the future. Our culture, tradition, songs, prayers, ceremonies, way of life, language and teachings are the vital pathways for finding this continuum and understanding our place in it. Without it, we are adrift.

Youth: The teachings guide our youth to know that they must go through the trials and torments of adolescence. But if they work and persevere, they can become individuals who will please the Holy People, their families, community, and ultimately themselves. This represents the peace that can be found when one lives a life consistent with the community's values, standards and is a participant in the culture.

Children: As children grow, they experience the larger world. They discover the boundaries of their life skills and experiences and those of their immediate family. Some of their life skills come from their fathers and mothers, but not all. They need to seek out mentors who will help them. So it was with the Twins, who found Spider Woman along their journey to the East seeking their father the Sun. The mentors of youth teach them to find inner peace and strength, so they can defend themselves from things that would crush them, hurt them, and reduce them. This cultural traditional teaching is at the core of our Diné culture.

They need mentors to help guide them through the potential dangers in life. All youth need to understand that there was a purpose to them being born. Mentors also need to advise them in finding their purpose in life and to help them gather the tools they need to survive and live their life's purpose. Without purpose, they can become ill of mind, body, spirit, and vulnerable to the modern-day monsters.

Adults: The Holy People teach us that to become adults, live in the happiness of being a member of our community and help our People, we must seek wisdom in order to obtain maturity and experience adversities that come from facing fear by living in an uncertain world. We must take the risks of living in the world to gain more wisdom. When we venture out into the world, we learn by using the teachings of our culture to make sense of our experiences and grow from them.

Elders: To do this, we must use the wisdom of others, our elders and the teachings of the Holy Ones to guide us. The gifts of wisdom we receive bring us purity and strength, if we accept them and endure them within ourselves, our family, our community, and as a whole nation.

Not all of the challenges of life should be thought of as evil or as monsters to be destroyed. Some of them teach us to help yourself and one another. You as an individual and all members of society need to be industrious, plant crops, earn a living, and basically experience the simple joys of accomplishing daily tasks for our families. Some, like old age, are necessary parts of the nature of things, the phases of life, and contribute to the balance that is necessary in our world, our society, and ourselves. These things are not to be thought of as adversity but to be celebrated as the natural order of things.

When we are in a state of balance, of holy one-ness with ourselves, our world, our families, and our community. As such, we say Hózhóó Naashá (May I Walk in Beauty). This is the true balance of mind, heart, body, and spirit, which is a relationship to the world and universe. This is the core strength of any human being and the source of lasting happiness. It is the antidote to the injuries caused by the modern monsters. For Diné, it is found by bringing ourselves into alignment with our heritage and our culture. But our youth cannot find this alignment without mentors to guide and teach them.

Conversely, without such mentorship and nurturing, we can become vulnerable to modern monsters. It can also bring disharmony. Put another way, we must appeal to the Holy Ones, our families, and all our relations for advice, tools, support, and guidance in order to restore harmony (this state is part of Walking in Beauty and it is the core Navajo value). As a result, whenever there is a dispute, violence is never the answer. Wisdom comes to us when we work collectively and with respect for the sacred nature of each individual. With this wisdom and collective collaboration, we can solve problems to restore Hózhó (harmony).

The Navajo Nation's Division of Social Service (NDSS) is under the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation's three-branch government. NDSS provides social services consistent with professional social work ethics and values; and human services in accordance with Navajo cultural values to help reduce and alleviate hardship.

Under the direction of the Executive Director, NDSS has initiated organizational rebranding efforts of its departments and programs aimed to improve coordinated efforts of the division's overall social well-being through case management, financial benefits, career development, childcare services, protective services, counseling, crisis intervention, and family reunification. The rebranding initiative includes a division name change to the Division of Social Services (DSS), which will be referenced accordingly henceforth *See Appendix H*.

DSS will continue to serve tribal members consistent with the DSS' Mission, Vision Statement, and with the Navajo Nation's Diné Action Plan (DAP). DSS shall offer an array of services through the self-governance compact and within organizational goals for the purpose of administering services to eligible clients. Therefore, DSS's successful comprehensive approach addresses challenges and barriers to self-sufficiency for both individuals, families, and children.

Pursuant to the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2017, DSS will implement a consolidated employment, education, and training program for the benefit of its tribally defined membership. DSS's 477 Plan consolidates diverse federal program funds into a single comprehensive 477 plan for both 477 and non-477 funded programs to be fully integrated to ensure non-duplication.

Programs to be Integrated

Pursuant to the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2017, Navajo Division of Social Services will be submitting the 477 Plan, which will be implemented for the purposes of:

- i. Job training,
- ii. Welfare to work and tribal work experience,
- iii. Creating or enhancing employment opportunities,
- iv. Skill development,
- v. Assisting Indian youth and adults to succeed on the workforce,
- vi. Encourage self-sufficiency,
- vii. Training individual participants with the world of work,
- viii. Facilitating the creation of job opportunities,
- ix. Economic development, or
- x. Any services related to the activities described.

By implementing the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2017, DSS will reduce administrative and reporting burden. The formula funded federal programs to be included in Navajo Division of Social Services 477 Plan for October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2029, are as follows:

Department of Interior; Bureau of Indian Affairs

- General Assistance
- Burial Assistance
- Adult Services
- Homemaker Services
- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Title IV-B Subpart 1 Child Welfare Services
- Title IV-B Subpart 2 Promoting Safe and Stable Families
- Title IV-E
- Family Violence Prevention and Services Act

Consistency with the Act

Navajo Division of Social Service's organizational goal is to create and maintain a comprehensive program to provide opportunities to eligible participants through education, training, employment, and related services for tribally enrolled Navajo people residing within the Navajo Service Area.

The Mission of the DSS is to advocate for change, empower and strengthen our children, families, and communities by providing quality, holistic, cultural, and value-based services is carried out through the

consolidation of federal education, training, employment, and related services included in our 477 Plan. This plan demonstrates how we as a Tribal Nation integrate federal program activities and services to improve their effectiveness and reduce unemployment in our communities. We will serve participants in accordance with our 477 plan.

Our DSS Mission is consistent with the Statement of Purpose of Public Law 102-477. The 477 Act allows tribes the opportunity to tailor educational, employment, and training related services to meet tribal needs and priorities. DSS will ensure services are provided to clientele in a manner that is respectful and culturally sensitive. The DSS 477 Plan will be administered consistent with these overall goals.

Tribal Authority

Through the Navajo Treaty of 1868, the Navajo Nation's sovereignty and rights are recognized. As a governing body, the Navajo Nation operates under a three (3)-branch government system centrally headquartered in Window Rock, Arizona:

- The Executive Branch, headed by an elected President and Vice President, is comprised of twenty-one (21) Divisions and Executive offices that provide a broad range of governmental services.
- The Legislative Branch, headed by an elected Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, consists of twenty-four (24) members elected Navajo Nation Council, and various offices and boards.
- The Judicial Branch, headed by an appointed Chief Justice, is comprised of a system of eleven (11) District Courts and a Supreme Court.

The Division of Social Services (DSS) is under the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation's three-branch government. Under the leadership of the DSS Executive Director, DSS programs and departments provide social services, consistent with professional social work ethics and values, and human services in accordance with Navajo cultural values to help reduce and alleviate hardship. DSS programs and departments are designated to administer or supervise the administration of the programs to be integrated to include contracting and administering federal, state, and private grants and contracts.

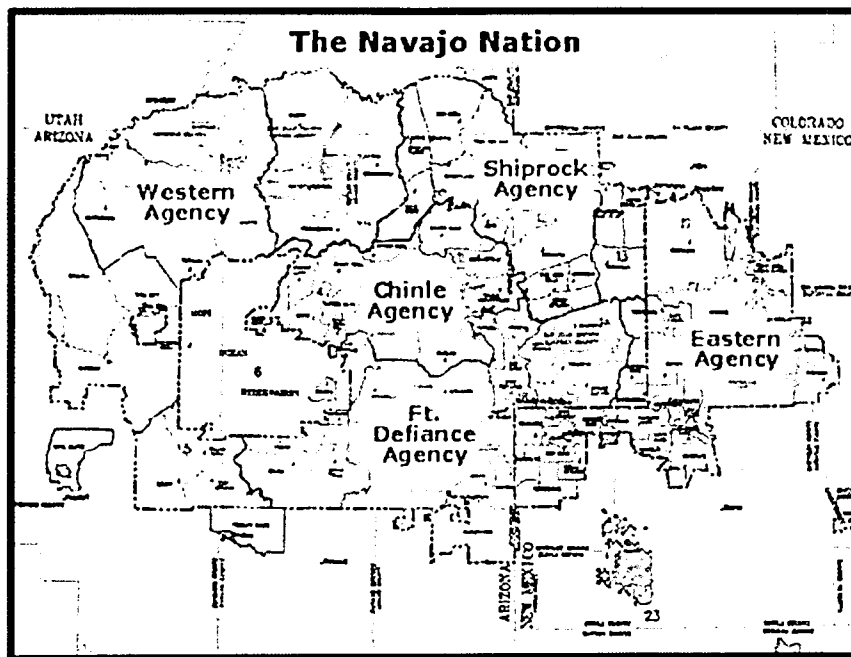
Service Area/Map

The Navajo Nation is the largest federally recognized Indian tribe in the United States. The Navajo Nation land base occupies a total area of approximately 27,000 square miles spans across the states of northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico, and southeastern Utah.

The Navajo Nation is divided into five (5) agencies, with the seat of government located at the Navajo Governmental Campus at Window Rock/Tségháhoodzání. The five (5) agencies within the Navajo Nation are the:

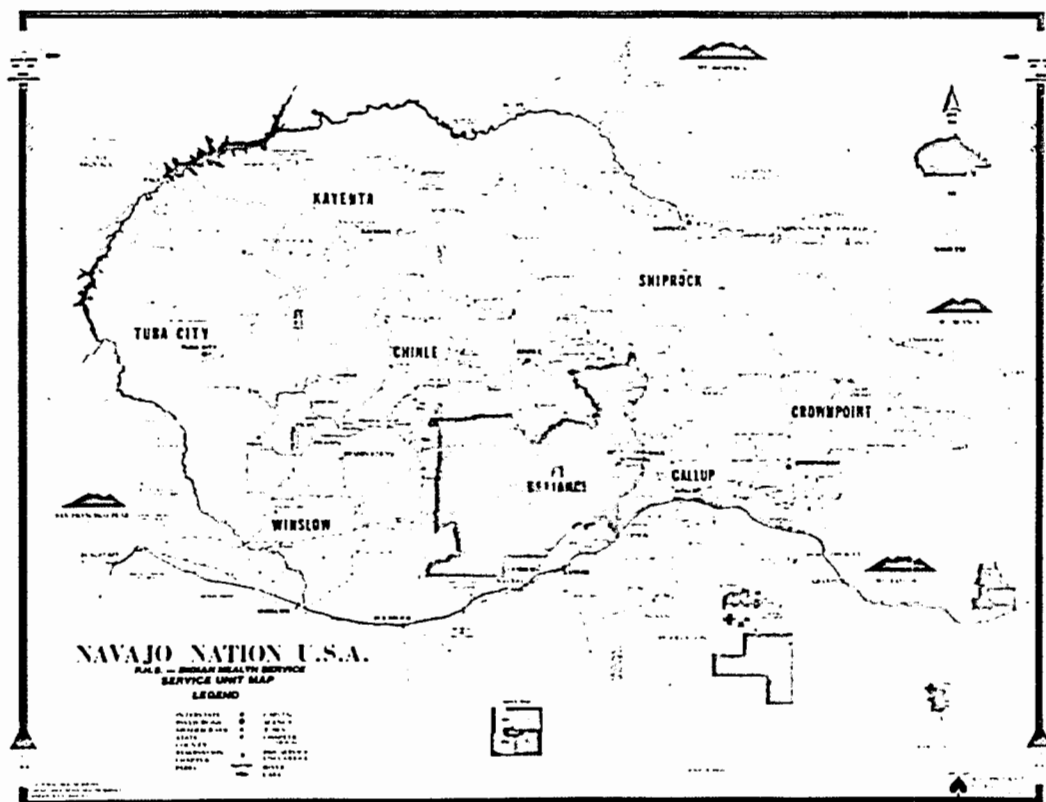
- Central Agency which has 14 chapters.
- Eastern Navajo Agency has 31 chapters.
- Western Navajo Agency has 18 chapters.
- Fort Defiance Agency has 27 chapters.
- Northern Agency has 20 chapters.

Agencies are further divided into chapters, which includes 110 Navajo chapters and three (3) Navajo "satellite" communities: Alamo, To'hajiilee, and Ramah, are in central New Mexico.



According to the Navajo Nation Census Data dated February 21, 2024, there are 415,863 enrolled members of the Navajo Nation, who reside on the Navajo Nation, in urban, border towns, and elsewhere in the U.S. DSS provides assistance and services to the following areas:

- A. All communities within the Navajo Nation, including Trust lands, Fee lands, and the satellite communities.
- B. The city limits of a federally designated Near Reservation community, where the identified head-of-household or a Benefit Group member has a Navajo Census Number. The Navajo Nation's designated "near reservation" communities, as listed in the Federal Register (Vol. 44, No.9, January 12, 1979).
- C. Eligible Navajo children and families residing off the Navajo Nation, who are involved voluntary or involuntary state child custody proceedings.
- D. Services may be coordinated with other tribes and states through formal agreements such as Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU).



Tribal History/Population/Tribal Statistics

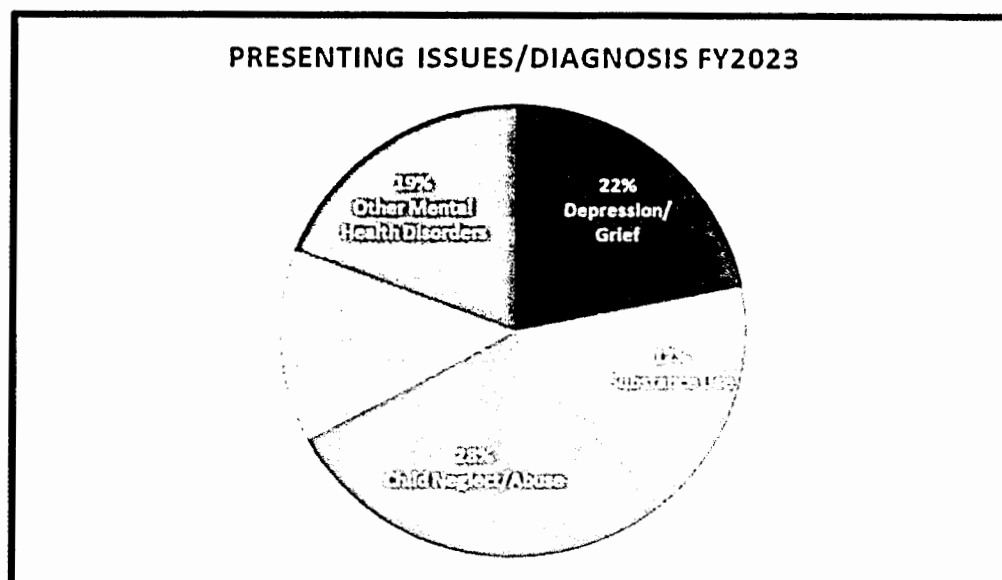
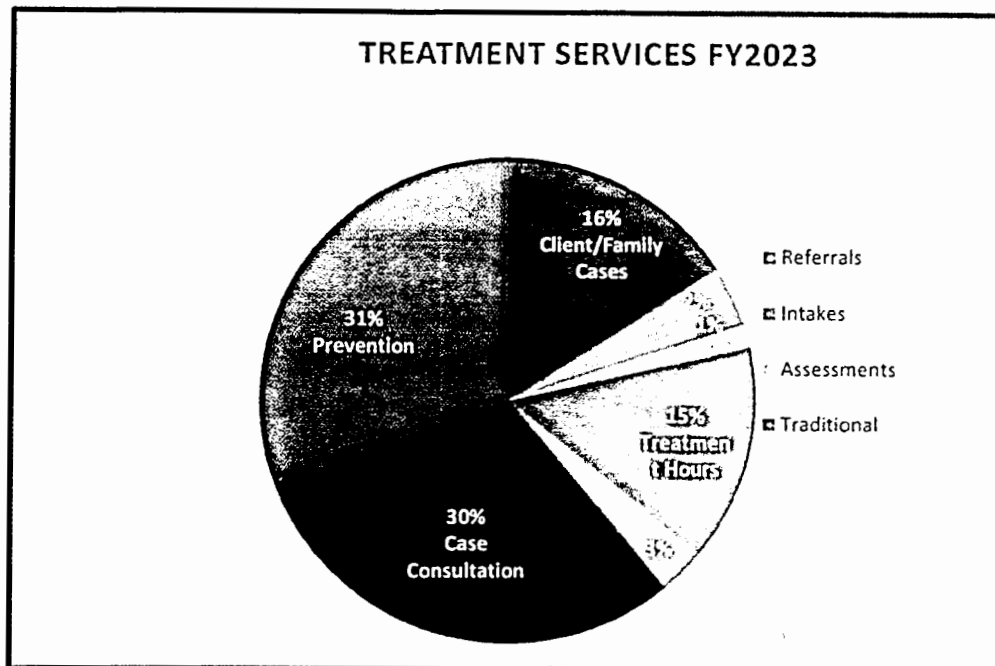
Throughout our Navajo history to present day, our oral history tells us that Navajo people faced Naayéé (monsters) that endangered the welfare of our Navajo people and communities. Today, we face contemporary monsters such as violence, substance abuse and suicide that trouble our communities and people. Since time immemorial our Navajo ancestors fought and persevered in various challenges. So, we too must rely upon our traditions, our language, our sacred teachings, and resources to combat these contemporary monsters to further prove our resilience and overcome these struggles to heal our Navajo children and families to strengthen future generations.

Therefore, defining the scope of our community needs will be made at the tribal level. The mission of the DSS is to advocate for change, empower and strengthen our Navajo children, families, and communities by providing quality, holistic, cultural, and value-based services to our Navajo relatives, who reside on the Navajo Nation, in urban areas, border towns, and elsewhere in the U.S.

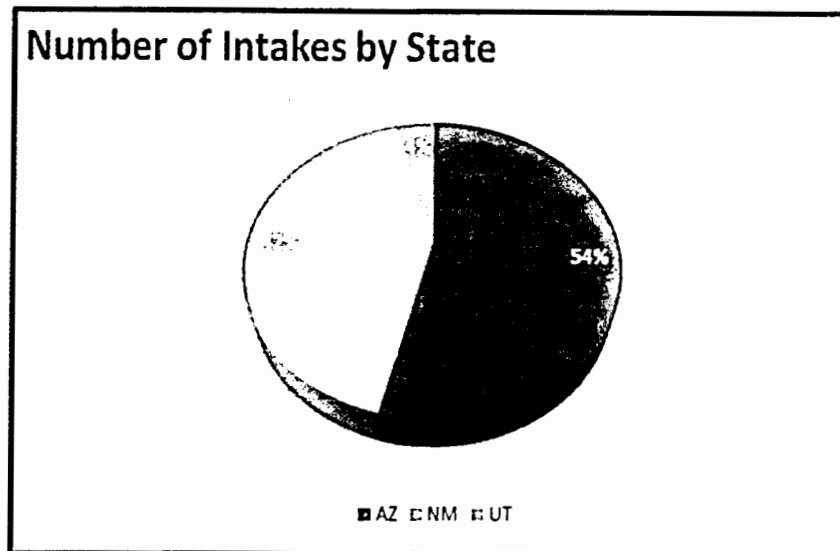
According to Navajo Nation Census Enrollment Data, February 21, 2024

415,863	Total enrollment numbers for the Navajo Nation
109,461	Total number of enrolled children under the age of 18
306,402	Total number of enrolled adults

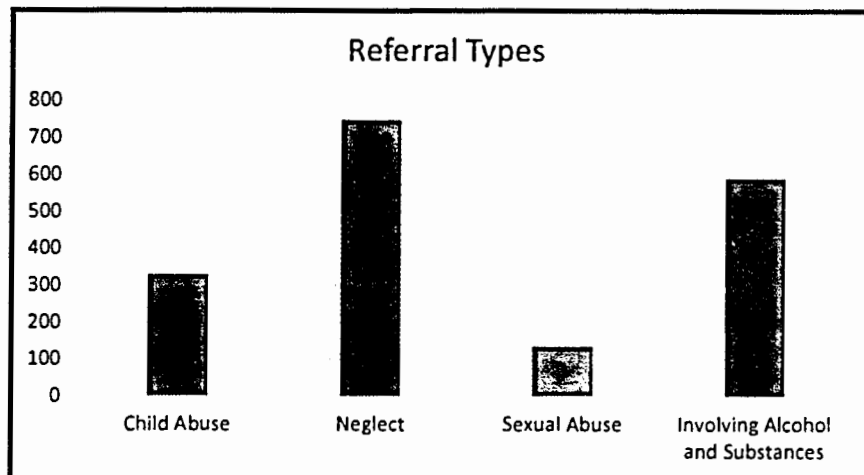
➤ 2023 Statistics of Client Treatment Services



➤ **Child Welfare Services offered under DSS in 2023**



In 2023, 1,098 total referrals were received for child abuse and neglect, including 330 referrals for child abuse, 748 for child neglect and 137 for sexual abuse. 591 referrals involved parental alcohol and substance use issues.



A total of 1,088 total Child Protective Services investigations were completed, resulting in:

- 153 referrals to the court
- 413 in referrals to other sources
- 270 family conferences
- 93 family group conferences completed.

Intervention services also included out of home placements, including:

- 376 in Emergency Shelter
- 1,979 Foster Care
- 160 in Residential Care
- 4961 in Relative care
- 22 in youth homes
- 92 in Developmental Disabilities (DDD) placements.

Currently, there are 132 licensed relative homes and 150 licensed non-relative homes.

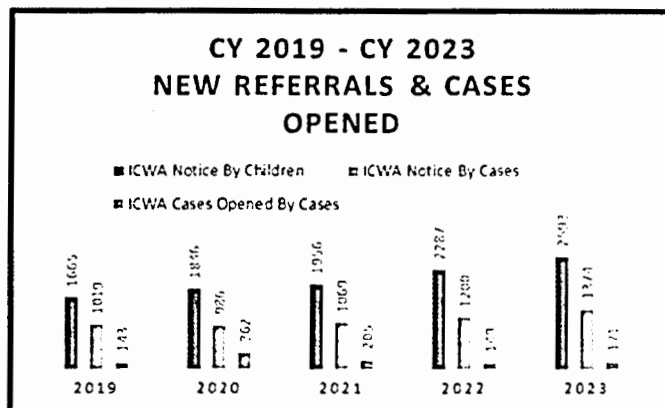
Permanency efforts for children removed resulted in:

- 275 successful reunifications
- 89 resulted with Guardianships
- 2 resulted with Adoption.

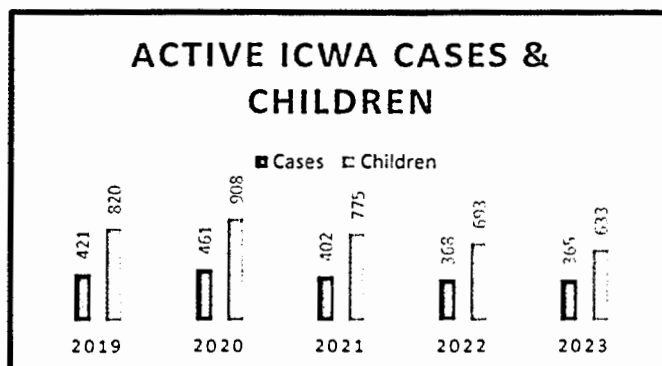
A total of 1,121 home-studies were completed:

- 995 home-studies for child guardianships
- 16 regarding child custody concerns.

➤ Navajo Indian Child Welfare Act

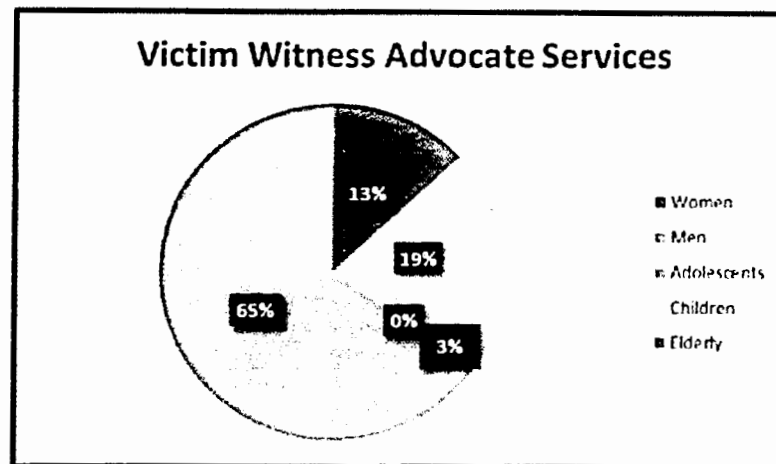


In 2023, there are ICWA active cases within 27 states.



➤ 2023 Family Violence Prevention and Services Act

DSS served a total of 69 clients, including 9 women, 13 men, 2 adolescents, 0 children, and 45 elderly with victim witness advocate services.



➤ 2023 Adult Services / Home Maker Services

DSS served adults and elderly involved within the Dine Elder Protection Program (DEPP) within the respective states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah.

- 81 adults were served by the DEPP Program
- 204 elders were served by the DEPP Program
- 424 adults were served by the Adult Services
- 769 adults and elders were provided Adult in Home Care Services (Home Maker Services)
- 332 adults were provided adult case management services.
- 702 elders who needed group home or elderly placements.

Comprehensive Strategy

The Division of Social Services (DSS) believes all individuals are sacred and that our Navajo culture, language, and strong kinship ties are essential to one's overall well-being and healing. Therefore, our plan will integrate all education/ training, employment, protective services, family reunification, and related services to increase opportunities for the people of the Navajo Nation, and American Indians. DSS 477 plan will be accomplished utilizing the DSS Vision and Mission Statements:

DSS Vision Statement: to promote the holistic and cultural values of T'áá hwó ájít' éego and K'e to individuals and families in order to have safer and healthier communities for future generations.

DSS Mission Statement: The mission of NDSS is to advocate for changes, empower and strengthen our children, families, and communities by providing quality, holistic, culture and value-based services.

Additionally, our plan approach will improve:

- Communication and cross training efforts between DSS program services.
- Overall effectiveness and efficiency of services to our Navajo people within our communities while inspiring self-sufficiency, reducing joblessness, and strengthening family values using our culture.
- Co-location of staff across the Navajo Nation to ensure space/rental meets the service delivery of this plan.
- Technology and support to assist DSS staff, adult, and youth participants in job retention through the development of specialized tech skills, and further enhance their skill sets, resumes, and employability.
- Youth programming across the Navajo Nation to promote healthy behavior and life choices.
- Partnerships with the local education agencies and community groups to provide services, transportation, and support youth.

Goals/Outcomes

The Navajo Division of Social Services (DSS) adopts the goals below for its 477 Plan as each goal is consistent with the purposes of P.L. 102-477. Whenever possible, DSS will strive to make all 477 programming culturally relevant in accordance with DSS Vision Statement of promoting the holistic and cultural values of T'áá hwó ájit' éego and K'e to individuals and families to have safer and healthier communities for future generations.

- To protect and promote the welfare of Navajo individuals, children, vulnerable adults, elderly, and families. While delivering service in an efficient and culturally sensitive manner utilizing the wrap around method of intervention and the system of care model while promoting and preserving cultural teaching, cultural identity, and the Navajo language.
- To increase awareness of and prevention education of child welfare, adult/elderly protection and domestic violence and to promote family and community involvement in addressing these concerns, while providing 24/7, 365 days advocacy for emergency residential shelter for victims/survivors of violence and their dependents.
- Provide in-home one to one care to eligible adults/ elders.
- Develop Navajo language resources, materials, and training to be used long term with Navajo clients to increase the use of language, number of speakers, and improve the health and education of the community holistically.
- Integrate programs implemented for the purposes of job training; outreach to potential clients, creating or enhancing employment opportunities with emphasis on the importance of gaining new knowledge including digital literacy; skill development; assisting Indian youth and adults to succeed in the workforce; familiarizing individual participants with the world of work; facilitating the creation of job opportunities; economic development; and related services thus advancing their careers.

- Create youth mentorship/internship and training opportunities throughout the Navajo Nation that will synchronize with Navajo values. This will ensure youth have a positive ongoing relationship with tribal government and promote healthy relationships with adults in the community.
- To facilitate the successful nurturing of children in their own homes by promoting healthy home environments and strengthening family values. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
- Provide financial assistance to eligible Low-income households, shelter needs resulting in displacement or from natural disasters with everyday basic living expenses, training /educational expenses, employment expenses, and medical care / health related expenses, and travel expenses that exceeds their source of income to support self-sufficiency.
- Provide financial assistance to eligible low-income households that have minor health related expenses that exceed their source of income while also supporting the use of Traditional healing ceremonies.
- Provide parents and other caregivers with respite or short-term child services that offer temporary relief, improve family stability, and preserve child(ren) placement.
- Provide financial assistance to low-income households for housing related needs such as rental assistance, security deposits, utility payments related to crisis situations, and assistance.
- Increase self-sufficiency by addressing and reducing the dependency on public assistance programs and reducing the effects of poverty on the Tribal Service Area population.
- To create and support responsible parenting to strengthen healthy, stable family relationships. Encourage the formation, maintenance, and strengthening of two-parent families, extended families, and non-traditional families.
- Support education that leads to high demand/high pay with projected future growth to meet the local area needs.
- Provide education, counseling, and services to reduce and/or better manage basic needs including home energy consumption, health, and safety practices.
- To prevent neglect, abuse and exploitation while providing education, assessment, counseling, and trauma informed care to support, treat, and stabilize behavioral/mental health needs.
- To promote the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care, kinship and shelter homes while promoting and advocating for the stability and security of Navajo families by providing services to preserve and reunite Navajo families who reside off the Navajo Nation while protecting the best interest of Navajo children.

- To promote and advocate for permanent placement of Native American children in Native American homes for the preservation of cultural identity.
- Serve tribally determined goals consistent with the policy of self-determination and self-governance. To strengthen and increase partnerships with providers to design and improve intervention services while maintaining intergovernmental agreements.
- To promote and integrate staff and Tribal member training, professional development, and support to ensure a well-qualified workforce using enhanced technology across the Nation.
- Focus on the importance of ensuring the health and safety of children in child care and promoting quality to support child development.
- Helping parents make informed consumer choices and access information to support child development; and to provide equal access to stable, high quality child care for eligible children throughout the Navajo Nation and identified border towns.

Program Eligibility

All applicants requesting services through Navajo Division of Social Services (DSS) must meet the following basic eligibility requirements. Participants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements may be served on a case-by-case basis for unmet need:

- Submit a completed, signed and dated application for services along with necessary supporting documentation.
- Provide a Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) or verification of enrollment with a federal recognized tribe.
- Proof of residency (may be determined by local chapters)
- Individual or Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (ISP or FSSP) prior to receipt of services.
- Individual services being provided may require additional supporting documentation.
- In certain circumstances, court order which may include any of the following:
 - Court order for services (adults, elders)
 - Custody/ dependency
 - Specific judicial determinations

Services: Youth/Adult

DSS emphasizes employment, education, and training supportive services to individuals and families. Many of the service providers within DSS refer participants that need child care and are actively working, taking college/vocational classes, in certificated training, employment "related" activities, or short-term subsistence "related" activities as deemed appropriate for household. DSS offers a variety of services to help job seekers achieve their personal and professional goals.

Employment

➤ Adult Subsidized Employment

DSS offers subsidized work experience for adult members in a DSS Benefit Group. DSS will provide job preparation, work experience, exposure to various career fields, and potential long-term, sustainable employment.

➤ Youth Subsidized Employment

DSS offers subsidized work experience or extended training for youth members in a DSS Benefit Group and 14-18 years of age. The employment program or training program will be offered for 4-6 weeks and will provide job preparation, work experience, and exposure to various career fields for the youth.

The Tribe may use Federal TANF funds under purpose 3 to provide Alaska Native/American Indian youth ages 14-24 subsidized employment and employment services. The youth must be Alaska Native/American Indian residing within Navajo DSS service area and do not have to be financially deprived. DSS will develop internal guidelines to prioritize TANF and low-income children based on funding availability.

➤ Transitional Support

Transitional services shall be available to DSS Customers who gain sustainable employment and are no longer receiving DSS assistance. Adults who receive Transitional Support shall be ineligible to apply for DSS assistance for a period of three (3) months from the date of closure.

➤ Work Experience

Provide Customers the skills, job knowledge and gain experience for their identified interest.

Education

➤ Adult Basic Education (ABE)

- Training Instructors partner with various colleges/institutions around the Navajo Nation for ABE referrals in which Customers may obtain their GED/HSED.
- Provides adults with opportunities to develop literacy and English-language skills needed to qualify for further education, job training, and better employment to reach their full potential as family members, productive workers, and citizens.
- Partnered programs provide instructional services for Customers over the age of 16 and our Training Instructors are responsible for administering ABE services.

➤ Computer Basic Training (CBT)

- Training Instructors are able to teach Department of Self-Reliance (DSR) Customer's basic troubleshooting skills, teleconference basics and maneuvering in certain apps to ensure that Customers are able to gain valuable skills in computer knowledge.

➤ Enrichment Trainings

- Education, Career and Training (ECS) has been offering various enrichment trainings throughout each month such as substance abuse, domestic violence, ignition interlock

information, motivation, Navajo weaving, Navajo culture, parenting classes, goal setting, transitioning off welfare and many, many other trainings that are resources for DSR Customers.

➤ Vocational/Technical Education

➤ GED/HSED

➤ Post Secondary Education

- Additional tribal education is provided for information on energy reduction education is provided to tribal members through various methods such as brochures and handouts to reduce their home energy needs.
- Navajo language learning is not the scope of work for the Navajo Treatment Center for Children & their Families (NTCCF) program; however, the learning and preservation of the Navajo language is crucial, therefore, service delivery includes the Navajo cultural and traditional services. Healing through learning your Navajo language is a form of prevention/treatment modality.

Training

Adult Extended Training: Short-term vocational training for adults, who are interested in a certain educational/ career field in accordance with their Personal Responsibility Plan.

- Customers are evaluated and prepared to ensure that success is achieved through close case management and monitoring.
- Short term – NTCCF clinical staff will continue to attend training that provides Continued Education Units with their respective licensures. Clinical staff will maintain Navajo cultural competencies classes/trainings yearly.
- Long term – NTCCF clinical staff hired as an intern will gain their clinical experience and licensure with the program under the Tier System established.
- Foster Care/ Kinship Care Training is provided to potential foster/kinship parents. Training includes pre-placement training and continuing education.
- Financial assistance to Navajo students pursuing a Social Work degree and are working in or have an interest in working within the Navajo Nation's child welfare programs.
- Social Work internships/field placements are available within the DSS.
- DSS supports and provides continued education credits toward staff certifications and for specialized training.

Cash Assistance

General Assistance (GA)

GA provides short-term financial assistance for basic essential needs (food and shelter) that will help achieve personal well-being, family unity, economic, and social stability, when no other services are available. Applicants must not currently be receiving financial assistance from TANF, Social Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), or any Public Assistance programs (excluding food stamps) or other BIA assistance funds. If a client has been employed in the past 12 months, he/she must apply for unemployment benefits, and provide official documentation of unemployment benefits decision. If upon the initial screening by DSS staff, the participant appears eligible for GA, the participant

will then develop an Individual Self-sufficiency Plan (ISP) that outlines the steps they must take to obtain and keep employment. The assigned staff will complete basic assessment of career interests, employment skills, employment readiness, and assessment to their barriers to employment (physical limitations, mental health needs, substance abuse issues, etc.) will be identified. GA will be provided for a period of no more than three (3) consecutive calendar months. Redetermination of eligibility for benefits will be mandatory at the end of three (3) consecutive calendar months. Redetermination for a GA eligible participant includes a home visit, an estimate of income, living circumstances, and household composition, and appropriate revisions to the participant's case plan.

General Assistance Employment Policy (Implemented by the Client): Employment policy does not apply to the following:

The employment policy does not apply to...	If...	And...
(a) Anyone younger than 16.		
(b) A fulltime student under the age of 19...	He/she is attending an elementary or secondary school or a vocational or technical school equivalent to a secondary school.	He/she is making satisfactory progress.
(c) A person enrolled at least half-time in a program of study under Section 5404 of P.L. 100-297	He/she is making satisfactory progress...	He/she was an active General Assistance recipient for a minimum of 3 months before determination/redetermination of eligibility *(No Child Left Behind Act; No longer Applicable)
(d) A person suffering from a temporary medically injury or illness.	It is documented in the case plan that the illness or injury is serious enough to temporarily prevent employment.	The assessment is documented in the case plan.
(e) An incapacitated person who has not yet received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) assistance.	A physician, psychologist, or social services worker certifies that a physical or mental impairment (either by itself, or in conjunction with age) prevents the individual from being employed.	The assessment is documented in the case plan.
(f) A caretaker who is responsible for a person in the home who has a physical or mental impairment.	A physician or certified psychologist verifies the condition.	The case plan documents that: the condition requires the caretaker to be home on a virtually continuous basis; and there is no other appropriate household member available to provide this care.

(g) A parent or other individual who does not have access to child care.	He/she personally provides full-time care to a child under the age of 6.	
(h) A person for whom employment is not accessible.	There is a minimum commuting time of one hour each way.	

**No Child Left Behind: Title X; Section 1045: (a) In General.—The Secretary of the Interior shall not disqualify from continued receipt of general assistance payments from the Bureau of Indian Affairs an otherwise eligible Indian for whom the Bureau is making or may make general assistance payments (or exclude such an individual from continued consideration in determining the amount of general assistance payments for a household) because the individual is enrolled (and is making satisfactory progress toward completion of a program or training that can reasonably be expected to lead to gainful employment) for at least half-time study or training.”*

Burial Assistance (BA)

Burial Assistance provides assistance with the burial expenses of deceased tribal members, who do not have sufficient resources to meet basic funeral expenses.

- Assists low-income households and communities by providing financial assistance for basic needs, training / educational expenses, employment expenses, medical expenses, and housing needs.
- NFAS will also provide financial assistance with shelter needs resulting in displacement or from natural disasters.

Cash Assistance

DSS is responsible for the overall administration of the Navajo Nation's TANF program to provide Tribal TANF assistance and related support services to individuals and their families, who meet established eligibility criteria. *See Appendix I - TANF Payment Rates*

Prevention of Duplicative Assistance

A family cannot receive assistance from DSR while simultaneously receiving similar assistance from another State or Tribal program. As a result, DSR will ensure prevention of duplicative assistance include:

- a. The DSR Application for Assistance includes a question regarding current and prior public assistance received by family members. The Application also includes a section where Customers acknowledge they understand their responsibility to provide complete and accurate information, report changes timely and cooperate with DSR staff.
- b. DSR will conduct thorough eligibility determination interviews to solicit responses that may indicate potential receipt of similar assistance.
- c. If there is an indication that an applicant may be currently receiving similar assistance (State or other Tribal TANF, General Assistance or Supplemental Security Income) at the time of application, DSR will contact will the applicable State/Tribal program(s) to verify that the applicant is currently not receiving assistance from the State or Tribal program.

- d. The DSR Pathway to Quality Services staff development training requires continuous development in the areas of quality case management.
- e. The DSR Fraud Investigation Unit will investigate potential fraud.

Time Limit

- A. The Time Limit for an adult or minor parent to receive DSR assistance is sixty (60) countable months, whether or not consecutive. The time limit only applies to adults and emancipated minor parents included in a benefit group.
- B. All prior months of TANF assistance received from a State or other Tribal TANF Program will count towards the DSR's time limit, except for any month that was exempt or disregarded by statute or regulation.
- C. Applications submitted by an Adult who has received sixty (60) Countable Months of Assistance shall be denied, unless they are applying for continued assistance and are granted a Hardship Exemption.
- D. Rationale for Time Limits

DSR will use the maximum number of months to prepare Customers for self-sufficiency because the majority of DSR Needy Families reside in remote areas with limited economic and employment opportunities that contribute to Customer needing an extended amount of time to gain the education or skills necessary to become self-reliant.

- E. Exemptions to Time Limit.

A month of assistance will not count toward the 60-month time limit if the adult or minor parent:

- 1. Is not included in the Benefit Group and the Benefit Group only includes minor children, or
- 2. Received assistance while residing in Indian Country where the official not-employed rate, for the month they received assistance, is greater than 50%. The exterior boundaries of the Navajo Nation, including trust/fee lands, and the satellite communities of Alamo, Ramah, and Tohajiilee are considered Indian Country.

- F. Hardship Exemption

A hardship exemption from the DSR Time Limit may be granted to an adult who reached their 60 countable months and who is experiencing a condition that hampers or inhibits his/her ability to maintain work or enter into work related activities. If an adult benefit group member is granted a hardship exemption, the month is not counted towards their sixty (60) Countable Month time limit. Adults granted a hardship exemption are included in the overall work participation rate.

Examples of a hardship include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Adult victims of domestic violence whose participation in work activities may cause an immediate threat to his/her own safety or the safety of his/her children.
- 2. Adults who have a medical condition, as confirmed by a physician, that prevents the individual from participating in work activities.

3. Adults with significant cognitive, physical, and/or mental disabilities that limit their educational and job skills attainment and/or their ability to secure and retain employment due to a disability (documentation of disability is required).
4. Adults responsible for the full-time care of an elderly person or a disabled dependent (documentation of disability is required).
5. Families who are homeless due to vandalism, hazardous living conditions, acts of nature, or their home is destroyed by fire and is uninhabitable.
6. Families who are homeless due to eviction.

Hardship Exemptions will be assessed on a monthly basis and will be limited to no more than twenty percent (20%) of the average monthly caseload.

Eligibility for Assistance

The DSR will provide eligible Needy Families with monthly assistance as defined 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 related assistance for those TANF recipients who are participating in work activities but are not employed.

Needy Families must meet all non-financial, financial, and, if applicable, supplemental eligibility criteria, as defined in the DSR Pathway to Self- Reliance Policy Manual, for each month of assistance they receive.

1. The Non-Financial eligibility criteria for receipt of DSR assistance are:
 - A. Minor Child
 - B. Service Area
 - C. Service Population
 - D. Residency: All members of the Benefit Group must have resided with the head-of-household for at least thirty (30) consecutive days at the time of application or addition to the Benefit Group, unless an exception applies.
 - E. Citizenship
 - F. Time Limit: The head-of-household and, if applicable, their spouse must not have received sixty (60) Countable Months of TANF assistance, unless a Hardship Exemption from the Time Limit has been granted.
2. The Financial eligibility criteria for receipt of DSR assistance are:
 - A. Assets
The Benefit Group's Total Countable Assets must not exceed \$3,000.
 - B. Gross Countable Monthly Income
The Benefit Group's Monthly Gross Countable Income must not exceed the National Poverty Guideline at 200% for the applicable Benefit Group size.

C. Total Net Countable Income

The Benefit Group's Monthly Net Countable Income must not exceed the Payment Standard for the applicable Benefit Group size.

D. Income Disregards

The following income disregards shall be applied in determining eligibility for DSR assistance:

- i. Earned Income – Unsubsidized Employment: The first \$300.00 of the Needy Family's Net Monthly Earned Income.
- ii. Earned Income -Subsidized Employment: All income earned from participation in the DSR's Subsidized Employment.
- iii. Unearned Income: The first \$100.00 of the Needy Family's Net Monthly Unearned Income.

3. If applicable, the following must meet Supplemental eligibility criteria:

A. Caretakers: Caretakers must have legal guardianship/custody of the minor child(ren) on whose behalf they are applying, unless the following time-limited exception applies:

A Caretaker, related by blood or marriage to the minor child(ren) on whose behalf he or she is applying and does not have Legal Guardianship/Custody of the minor child(ren) at the time they are initially applying shall be allowed a one-time opportunity to include the child(ren) in the Benefit Group for up to twelve (12) months, without establishment of Legal Guardianship/Custody, on the condition they agree to comply with established criteria. If justified, the timeline may be extended for up to an additional twelve (12) month period.

B. Stepparent: A stepparent may be included in a DSR Benefit Group if he/she is legally married to the Legal Custodial Parent of a minor child included in the Benefit Group.

C. Minor Parent(s)

- i. A Custodial Minor Parent under the age of eighteen (18) may apply for DSR assistance on their own behalf if they are emancipated.
- ii. A Custodial Minor Parent(s) under the age of eighteen (18) who is/are not emancipated may receive DSR assistance if an adult applies on behalf of the minor parent(s) and the minor parent's child(ren).
- iii. A Custodial Minor Parent who has not attained a high school diploma must be attending a high school or equivalency program.
- iv. A Custodial Minor Parent(s) must live in a place of residence maintained by a parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative.
- v. An emancipated Minor Parent receiving assistance shall be subject to Work Participation, Personal Responsibility Plan and Time Limit requirements.

Ineligibility for Assistance

1. Applications for DSR assistance submitted by or on behalf of the following shall not be approved:
 - A. Adults, who have met the DSR Time Limit for Assistance unless they are applying for continued assistance and are granted a Hardship Exemption.
 - B. Adults who received Diversion Benefits or Transitional Support and are currently in the three (3) month disqualification period.
2. A Custodial Legal Parent, who is ineligible for DSR assistance due to one of the reasons below will not be included in a Benefit Group and their income and assets will be counted in determining the Benefit Group's eligibility:
 - A. Is not a U.S. Citizen
 - B. Is disqualified due to one of the following:
 - i. Felony conviction for fraudulent misrepresentation of residence within the ten (10)-year period preceding the date of application, in order to obtain assistance simultaneously from two (2) or more States/Tribes for the following:
 - programs funded under Title IV of the Social Security Act (SSA), which includes TANF;
 - programs funded under Title XIX of the SSA;
 - programs funded under the Food Stamp Act of 1977; or
 - receipt of benefits in two (2) or more States under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program under Title XVI.
 - ii. Currently fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or confinement after conviction for a crime or an attempt to commit a crime, which is a felony under federal or state law.
 - iii. Currently violating a condition of probation or parole imposed under Federal or State law.
3. The following are ineligible to be included in a DSR Benefit Group and their income and assets will be disregarded in determining the Benefit Group's eligibility:
 - A. Individuals receiving SSI.
 - B. Relative/Non-Relative Caretakers
 - C. Dependent children who are nineteen (19) years of age or older.
 - D. Protective Payees
 - E. Authorized Representatives

Non-Assistance Benefits

1. Diversion: subject to availability of funds, a diversion benefit may be provided as an alternative to monthly assistance to eligible families who are at risk of becoming dependent on public assistance due to a barrier that:
 - A. Is prohibiting a custodial parent from accepting a bona fide offer of long-term, sustainable employment,

- B. Is putting a custodial parent's continued employment at risk, or
- C. Resulted in a custodial parent losing their full-time employment and the parent will be re-employed with the removal of the barrier.

Diversion may be provided to eligible families whose Monthly Countable Gross Income does not exceed 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for the applicable family size. The total amount of the Diversion benefit shall be the actual amount to remove the barrier or \$2000.00, whichever is less. Eligible families may receive a Diversion Benefit once in a twelve (12) month period.

Adults who receive Diversion shall be ineligible to apply for DSR assistance for a period of three (3) months from the date of closure.

- 2. Transitional Support: transitional services shall be available to DSR Customers who gain sustainable employment and are no longer receiving DSR assistance.

Subject to availability of funds, Customers, who meet eligibility criteria may receive a one-time series of Transitional Support benefits for up to three (3) months following closure of their DSR assistance case to assist him/her with costs associated with transitioning from welfare to work. DSR staff will follow up with customers to ensure a smooth transition to employment.

Adults, who receive Transitional Support, shall be ineligible to apply for DSR assistance for a period of three (3) months from the date of closure.

- 3. Short-Term, Non-Recurring Benefits: subject to availability of funds, a Non-Recurring, Short-Term Benefit (NRSTB) may be provided to assist eligible families receiving DSR assistance in addressing a specific crisis or episode of need that is not recurrent and will not extend beyond four (4) consecutive months. NRSTB will not be provided to meet recurring or ongoing needs. The amount of NRSTB provided to eligible families shall not exceed \$1000 in a twelve (12) month period.
- 4. Emergency Non-Recurring, Short-Term Benefits: subject to availability of funds, an Emergency Non-Recurring, Short-Term Benefit (ENRSTB) may be provided to assist eligible families during a government (federal, state, county, or Navajo Nation) declared natural disaster, emergency, or pandemic. ENRSTB may be provided to eligible families whose Monthly Countable Gross Income does not exceed 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for the applicable family size. The ENRSTB amount shall not exceed \$1000.00 for each event.

Negotiated Work Participation Rate

The Navajo Nation's Minimum Work Participation Rate for each year is:

- Fiscal Year 2022 33%
- Fiscal Year 2023 33%
- Fiscal Year 2024.....33%

Work Participation

All adults and custodial minor parents receiving assistance will be subject to the Minimum Work Participation Hours (MWPB) requirement.

1. Minimum Work Participation Hours Requirement

All adults and emancipated custodial minor parents receiving assistance are subject to the DSR's MWPB for each month of assistance they receive. In order to be counted toward the MWPB requirement, a work activity must be a pre-authorized work activity or Customer's Personal Responsibility Plan.

- A. The MWPB requirement shall be twenty- four (24) hours per week for each month of assistance received. The MWPB requirement is established based upon remoteness, limited economic and employment opportunities, limited number of day care centers, low educational levels of the DSR Customers, and the lack of public transportation.
- B. Adults and Minor Parents required to meet the MWPB requirement shall not be subject to penalty until the month after their initial Personal Responsibility Plan is completed and implemented.
- C. Adults and Minor Parents subject to the MWPB requirement will be deemed as meeting the MWPB requirement if they are:
 - i. A single custodial parent, with a dependent child under the age of six (6), who is the only caretaker in the family, and participated in an authorized work activity for at least an average of twenty (20) hours per week during the reporting month.
 - ii. A minor parent who maintains satisfactory school attendance; or
 - iii. A minor parent who participates in education directly related to employment for an average of at least twenty (20) hours per week during the reporting month.
- D. When a customer's worksite is closed due to a federal, state, or tribal holiday, or for authorized closures, the Customer will be given credit for the hours they were scheduled to participate in authorized work activities on that day.

Authorized Work Participation Activities

Work Participation Activities that may be authorized for adults and minor parents receiving assistance to move them and their family toward self- sufficiency are:

- 1. Unsubsidized Employment
- 2. Subsidized Private Sector Employment
- 3. Subsidized Public Sector Employment
- 4. Self -employment
- 5. Work Experience
- 6. Vocational/Technical Educational Training
- 7. On-the-job training directly related to employment.
- 8. Job skills training directly related to employment.

9. Participation in education is directly related to employment, where the Customer has not received a high school diploma, GED or High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED).
10. Participation in education, other than post-secondary, directly related to employment, where the participant has a high school diploma, GED or HSED.

This includes cultural education as an apprentice learning and assisting with cultural ceremonies. This will aid in the understanding the use of items of cultural significance for the purpose of job readiness, learning traditional stories to become traditional storytellers, and other cultural education that leads to becoming self-sufficient, productive, and contributing members of the community.

11. Satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or course of studies leading to a High School Diploma or its equivalent (e.g. GED/HSED).
12. Participation in Adult Basic Education (ABE), Remedial Education, and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.
13. Post-secondary education at a college or university.
14. Job Search
15. Study or Research Time for Customers participating in an authorized education related work activity.
16. Job Readiness
17. Community Service
18. Providing childcare services to another DSR Customer who is participating in authorized work activities.
19. Participation in Assessments, as part of case management services, conducted by the DSR or another program.
20. Participation in Orientation Sessions provided by the DSR or another program.
21. Participating in activities to remove barrier(s) related to Personal Responsibility Plan goals.
22. Time spent in substance abuse and drug intervention counseling, behavioral and mental health services, domestic violence intervention counseling, including being a patient of cultural traditional ceremonies.
23. Participation and education in prevention, intervention, or treatment of mental/physical health-related illnesses. This includes being a patient of cultural or traditional ceremonies.
24. Providing support and care to a dependent child with a special need(s) who requires full-time care, as verified by a licensed medical professional.
25. Providing care to an immediate relative with a medically verified disability who requires full-time care.
26. Traditional Support and Mentoring
27. Agricultural Subsistence
28. Reasonable Transportation Time

Penalties

1. A Benefit Group that includes an adult(s) or emancipated custodial minor parent(s) shall be subject to penalty if they do not comply with the following DSR requirements, unless exempted in accordance with the DSR Pathway to Self-Reliance Policy Manual:

- A. Develop an initial Personal Responsibility Plan within thirty (30) working days from the date of approval.

- B. Meet the Minimum Work Participation Hours requirement, for a month of assistance they received.
- C. Review and, if necessary, update their Personal Responsibility Plan at least once every four (4) months.
- D. Failure to attend and complete a DSR Customer Orientation within thirty (30) working days of approval.
- E. Failure to complete a TABE within thirty (30) working days of approval.

2. Penalty Levels

Prior to imposing a First Level Penalty, a Written Warning shall be issued to a Customer. After issuing a Written Warning, subsequent non-compliance with a DSR requirement will result in imposing a penalty to reduce the benefit group's calculated monthly assistance amount in part, or in full, in accordance with the following:

First Level: Twenty percent (20%) Reduction.

Second Level: Forty percent (40%) Reduction.

Third Level: Sixty percent (60%) Reduction.

Fourth Level: Eighty percent (80%) Reduction until the Customer returns to compliance with the program requirement.

Data Collection and Reporting

The Navajo Nation will comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory reporting requirements pertaining to the TANF program.

Retrocession

If the Navajo Nation chooses to retrocede the TANF program, it will comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements pertaining to retrocession.

Related Services

• **Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Services**

Preserve the rights and cultural heritage of Native American children and their families regarding the treatment of Native American family's children who are removed or may be removed from their families. To protect the best interest of Indian Children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families by the establishment of minimum Federal standards for the removal of Indian children and placement of such children in homes.

Case Management Services includes, but not limited to:

- Attend court hearings
- Attend Child-Family Team Meetings, Treatment Team Meetings, and Case Staffing to provide recommendations on case plan, treatment, placement, etc.
- Coordinating and Collaborating with State Social Workers to ensure Active Efforts are made to reunify parents and child(ren).

- Provide Qualified Expert Testimony regarding traditional child rearing practices.
- Locating family members for possible placement of the child(ren)
- Conduct relative searches to identify potential kinship placement.
- Conduct relative home studies on the Navajo Nation
- Assist with referrals for relative placements and children who live on the Navajo Nation
- Provide transportation (as needed) to children, parents, relatives to achieve case plan outcomes.
- Assist with Tribal Enrollment.
- The Navajo ICWA staff provides on-going cultural awareness education, supportive counseling, parent education and training to foster parents, relative foster homes and adoptive families, and state/tribal representatives. Cultural awareness education includes Navajo traditional child-rearing practices. Cultural awareness education, supportive counseling, and training is provided in-person and virtually.

- **Adoption Promotion and Support Services**

At the request of the natural parent(s), the Adoption Support Services assists child(ren) with establishing a permanent placement. Completes adoptive and kinship home studies with potential adoptive/kinship families prior to children being placed in their home. The Navajo adoption social worker will conduct the following:

- Provides a thorough overview of the voluntary relinquishment services.
- Provides adoption counseling and case management services to establish permanency for the newborn child.
- Identifies a Navajo certified family interested and willing to provide permanent placement for the child(ren).
- Ensures Parent Skills Trainings are intended to increase overall parental awareness and skills for potential adoptive and foster parents.
- Provides Community and Public Awareness/Recruitment Activities concentrated on the promotion of APSS activities with emphasis on recruiting potential adoptive and kinship families.
- Recruit eligible adults who are interested and committed to providing a permanent home for children.
- Recruit individual(s) who can promote, preserve, and educate on Navajo culture.
- Recruit individual(s) who can provide a permanent home environment and can meet the child's physical, spiritual, cultural, emotional, financial, and developmental needs. Eligible adult: one or both adult household members must be enrolled with the Navajo Nation.

- **Child and Family Well Being Program/ Child Services**

Receives and investigates reports of child neglect and abuse. DSS also receives and coordinates with appropriate agencies, reports of suspected human trafficking and missing/abducted children within the jurisdiction of the Navajo Nation.

- Children's Case Management

- Involves working with families to create and monitor case plan goals to assist families in their progress toward achievement of permanency goals.
- Child Welfare Services
 - Supports, preserves, and/or reunites children and their families. This includes funding to support child abuse/neglect investigations and case management activities.
- Healthy Families Program
 - To keep children safe from maltreatment, allow children to maintain with their families in lieu of court intervention, and to ensure timely permanency of child(ren) in foster care.
 - Family Support Services are intended to help Navajo families provide safe and nurturing environments for their children. Services are aimed at improving parenting skills, strengthening parental relationships, promoting healthy marriages/relationships, and enhancing child development knowledge.
 - Family Preservation Services are targeted to Navajo families in crisis and include placement prevention services, post-reunification services, and parenting skills education.
 - Family Reunification Services aide Navajo families that are seeking to address conditions that led to the removal of their children. Services include general case management to address counseling, substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence.
- Title IV-E Services
 - Provides support for safe and stable out-of-home care for eligible children and youth until they are safely returned home, placed permanently with adoptive families or legal guardians, or placed in other planned arrangements for permanency. Provides Guardianship Assistance and Adoption Assistance to support relatives assuming legal guardianship or adoption by providing financial and medical assistance until the child meets the ages of 18 years, or 21 years in certain circumstances.
 - Provides support for the Social Services Education and Training Services program which offers financial assistance to Navajo students pursuing a Social Work degree and are working in or have an interest in working with the Navajo Nation's child welfare programs.
- Foster Care Licensing/ Kinship Care Licensing
 - Assists in out of home placements for Navajo and Native American children by licensing foster parents and kinship parents.
- Dine Elderly Protection Program
 - Receives and investigates reports of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, exploitation, isolation/abandonment for vulnerable adults and elders within the jurisdiction of the Navajo Nation.

- Adult In-home Care
 - Provides in-home daily living assistance to eligible adults who are at risk of institutionalization due to economic, physical, or psychosocial reasons.
- Adult Case Management Services
 - Coordinates alternate plans for out of home placements for physically disabled adults, and ambulatory elderly who are not able to meet their basic needs and who need supervised or skilled nursing care.
- Family Harmony Program (Family Violence Prevention and Services Act)
 - Provides services and support to individuals who have been harmed by domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.
 - Case Plan to reflect service goals for adults and youth to gain and maintain a livable wage job, and to become self-sufficient. This may include referrals to resources that will assist in becoming more employable.
 - Foster Care/Kinship Care payments are available per completion of licensing requirements.

Child Care Assistance

Department of Child Care and Development (DCCD) is a large size allocation based on the FY16 CCDF Final Allocation Table. DCCD provides child care services through child care certificates for eligible children, tribally operated centers, family child care, and in home child care.

Coordination of Activities

DCCD will work with the following organizations to deliver child care services and expects the following outcomes:

Health: DCCD will refer children needing immunizations and health-related support to the local Indian Health Service (IHS) Hospitals/Clinics. Parents will have a choice of immunizing children, according to their religious beliefs and DCCD will ensure that culturally relevant case management is utilized for wholistic care. By encouraging all children in the program to be immunized, we promote that they are protected against life threatening diseases and sicknesses.

Education: DCCD will support children enrolled and attending HeadStart, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and elementary education through the use of curriculum-based lesson plans and referrals for educational services. This includes working with various early childhood education programs to provide screenings, child development information, and other key resources to support educational endeavors to identify children with special needs early, to help families receive early education assistance for their children and have access to child development tools and screenings.

Employment: DCCD will refer adults and guardians needing employment skills, knowledge, and abilities to tribal and state workforce departments. This includes job search, employment experience and on the job training. DCCD will also accept referrals from Navajo Department of Workforce to provide child care to Navajo families actively engaging in employment. As a result, families seeking employment will have access to child care to support their profession.

TANF: DCCD will take referrals from the Department of Self Reliance (DSR) and coordinate services with families that are DSR eligible that need child care. This includes coordinating eligibility for child care services to be provided by DSR participants for other DSR recipients. DCCD will work with DSR for provider-related job training and certification. As a result of this coordination parents may have access to trained, informed, and sustained providers that can meet individual children's needs while providing a safe and healthy childcare experience.

Definitions

Center-Based Child Care Provider – A licensed or tribally operated child care center that provides child care for less than 24 hours per day and is in a nonresidential setting.

Co-Payment – (Suggest) *waiving co-payments for families below poverty level, receiving or needing protective services or at-risk families.*

Disregarded Income – Income that is not counted toward a household's income, including 401K, Savings Account under \$3,000.00, Scholarships, Educational grants, TANF, Subsidized and Unsubsidized Employment, and other income as determined by DCCD to be exempt from income calculations.

Earned Income – Income earned from employment, self-employment or selling of personal belongings in excess of \$1,200.00 per month.

Education – Engaging in high school or post-secondary education for a minimum of 5 hours per week with the intention of earning a diploma, certificate, or degree.

Employment – Engaging in a work activity for a minimum of 5 hours per week with the intention of earning income. This includes self-employment activities that generate 'earned income'.

Family Child Care Provider – An Independent Regulated Provider that provides direct child care services in the provider's home for less than 24 hours per day.

Household – One or more custodial adults and children related by blood or law, or another person standing in loco parentis, residing in the same household. Multiple households may reside together and be treated as separate households.

Indian Child – An enrolled Navajo child under 13 years of age; or under age 19 and physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself, or under court supervision.

In-home Child Care Provider – An Independent Regulated Provider that provides direct child care services in the home of the child(ren) for less than 24 hours per day.

Other Eligible Activities – Child care services may be accessed during times of transition between employment, education, and training. This includes, but is not limited to job search, medical leave, short term disability, subsistence activities, and other unforeseen circumstances that prevent full time education or employment activities.

Priority of Child Care Assistance – Navajo Nation will prioritize children at risk, children with special needs, and children experiencing homelessness.

Protective Services - Children who receive or are in need of child protective services or respite care; children who are homeless; children that are wards of the tribe or state of Arizona, New Mexico, or Utah with tribal enrollment; and children referred from Department of Family Services (DFS) or Navajo Indian Child Welfare Act Program (NICWAP).

Quality Activity Expenditures – Quality funding that may be used for activities to improve the quality of child care as determined by DCCD.

Relative Provider – Relative providers are grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if such providers live in a separate residence), aunts, uncles. Child care providers over the age 18 that provide direct child care services to eligible children who are related by marriage, blood, or court decree (e.g. grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.). Child care may be provided in the home of the relative or the child's home.

Service Delivery Area – The Navajo Nation boundaries, including those near reservation communities identified for 638 services.

Training – Engaging in training related to employment, TANF or Workforce placement, with the intention of building skills, knowledge, and abilities, for a minimum of 5 hours per week.

Unearned Income – Income that is not earned through employment, such as SSI, disability, lottery winnings, per capita income, etc.

Child Count Declaration and Resolution

See Appendix J

Health and Safety Standards

DCCD requires that the following health and safety standards are met by tribally operated centers. Relative providers are exempt from health and safety standards. In addition, DCCD will promote health and safety standards through referrals to appropriate training, provide incentives for meeting certification requirements, and reimburse independent providers for fees related to meeting health and safety standards.

Standard	Tribally Operated Centers
Prevention and control of infectious diseases	1. Promote good oral hygiene through learning activities 2. Follow a diaper changing procedure, and post in the changing area. 3. Follow Hand hygiene as defined by the CDC 4. Follow a routine schedule of cleaning, sanitizing, & disinfecting. 5. Adopt the use of the CDC's Standard Precautions to handle potential exposure to blood and other potentially infectious fluids. 6. Notify parents or guardians when children develop signs or symptoms of an illness. 7. Require children to have updated immunization records for enrollment at tribally operated centers and care provided by independent regulated providers. Unimmunized children may be cared for by relative providers. Caregivers should be current with all immunizations.
Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe sleep practices	1. Follow safe sleep practices as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
Administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental control	1. Providers can only administer medication with parent/guardian's consent.
Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions	1. Comply with child's care plan concerning food allergies. Including completing training related to each child's care plan. 2. Provide readily accessible clean sanitary drinking water. 3. Follow safety recommendations for the preparation and storage of expressed human milk, and infant formula that ensures the health and safety of all infants, as outlined by the Academy of Breastfeeding Minimum Health and Safety Standards. 4. Comply with local health standards (e.g. IHS) regulations concerning safe food protection and sanitation practices.
<i>Continue onto the next page</i>	

Safety of Building and physical premises, including the identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury, such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic	1. Active supervision must be maintained when any child is in or around water. 2. Caregivers should not be impaired due to the use of alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, or prescription medication during program hours. 3. Ensure sun safety for children by keeping infants younger than 3 months out of direct sunlight, limiting direct sun exposure (e.g. use of sunblock) 4. Long strings and cords should not be accessible to children. 5. Inspection of buildings will be completed by a building inspector to ensure compliance with applicable state and local building codes and safety requirements. 6. Comply with tribal, state, or nationally recognized fire prevention codes. 7. Place guardrails or protective barriers, at open sides of stairs, ramps, & other walking surfaces over 30 inches in vertical distance. 8. Accessible electrical outlets should have safety covers. 9. No electrical devices near water sources. 10. Have a pest control process to ensure pest suppression through practices 11. Meet state, or local laws regarding carbon monoxide detectors & test monthly. 12. Complete regular inspection of equipment, materials, furnishings, and play areas. 13. At least one wireless communication device for general and emergency use on the premises. 14. Cribs will only be used for sleeping purposes and free of strangulation and suffocation risk. 15. Medication, weapons, and ammunition, that are present in a family child care home or in-home care, should be locked and inaccessible to children. 16. Equipment used for climbing should not be placed over, or next to, hard surfaces. 17. Children may only be released to authorized adults by written permission from parents or guardians.
Prevention of shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment	1. Caregivers should be educated and establish a child abuse and neglect prevention and recognition strategy. 2. The use of corporal punishment, physical discipline, restricting a child's movement through physical force or restraints, and/or withholding of food, water, or sleep as punishment, is strictly prohibited by all caregivers. 3. Caregivers should be trained on the prevention and recognition of potential signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma.

Emergency preparedness and response planning resulting from a natural disaster or a human-caused event (such as violence at a childcare facility)	1. Caregivers should have a procedure for responding to situations when an immediate emergency medical response is required. Emergency procedures should be posted and readily accessible. All providers and staff should be trained to manage an emergency until emergency medical care becomes available. 2. First Aid and emergency supplies should be maintained up to date first aid and emergency supplies in each location where children are cared for. 3. Written plan and training for handling urgent medical care or threatening incidents. 4. Disaster planning, training, and communication, and emergency and evacuation drills. 5. Contents of child records should be kept onsite and confidential. Access to the records should be made available upon request by the child's caregiver and/or parent or guardian.
Handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants	All toxic substances should be inaccessible to children and should not be used when children are present. Toxic substances should be used as recommended by the manufacturer and stored in the original labeled containers. The telephone number for the poison control center should be posted and readily accessible in emergency situations.
Precautions in transporting children (if applicable)	Not applicable – DCCD will not transport children and does not give permission to licensed exempt providers to transport children in care under the DCCD program.
Pediatric first aid and cardiopulmonary (CPR) certification	All DCCD child care center staff should have up-to-date documentation of satisfactory completion of training in pediatric first aid and pediatric Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).
Recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect	Follow the state, tribal procedures for recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Pre-Service / Orientation and On-Going Training

- DCCD will not require any pre-service training for certified independent or center providers. Independent regulated providers have ninety (90) days to complete their First Aid and CPR training along with twenty-four (24) hours of Health and Safety training.
- Thereafter, independent regulated providers must complete a minimum of three (3) hours annually of ongoing health and safety training which must be on at least (1) subject from the health and safety standards.
- Relative unregulated providers are exempt from completing health and safety training, but will be encouraged to complete the training and become independent regulated providers.
- DCCD will require tribally operated center staff to complete their First Aid and CPR training along with twenty-four (24) hours of Health and Safety training within 90 days of employment. Thereafter, tribally operated center staff must complete a minimum of three (3) hours annually of ongoing health and safety training.

Monitoring and Enforcement Procedures

- The Indian Health Services, Office of Environmental Health, monitors the DCCD tribally operated centers on the Navajo Nation on an annual basis.
- DCCD monitors independent regulated providers on an annual basis. A copy of the independent regulated provider's certificate will be issued on an annual basis and kept on file.
- Monitoring of independent regulated providers includes conducting home visits and utilizing a checklist to conduct inspections. In addition, improvement plans should be developed for areas of deficiencies during the inspection and should be focused on increasing the quality of child care. Relative unregulated providers are monitored annually.
- The expansive area of the Navajo Nation makes routine monitoring and home inspection difficult. As a result, technology, including virtual platforms, emails, and so forth will be used to monitor and inspect independent regulated providers. Independent regulated providers with deficiencies should address the non-compliant issues within six (6) months of written notice. DCCD will work with providers to address major deficiencies and provide guidance on implementing health and safety standards that meet the needs of child care.

Monitoring of Required Health & Safety Standards			
	Agency Responsible for Monitoring	Monitoring Type	Monitoring Timeline
Independent Regulated Provider	Department of Child Care and Development	Self-Report Checklist	During application process
		Announced- On-Site	Annually
Relative Unregulated Provider	Department of Child Care and Development	Announced	Annually
State Licensed Centers	Arizona, New Mexico, or Utah Child Care Authority	State Standards	Annually

Staff and Inspector Qualifications

State Licensing: Meet the requirements set for the respective state(s) of Arizona, New Mexico, or Utah.

Department of Child Care and Development (DCCD): Inspectors will receive training on how to conduct and complete a home inspection report. Training will also include health and safety standards, Tribal Assistance System (TAS) electronic case management required CCDF reporting, and mandatory reporting of child abuse/neglect.

Child-Staff Ratios and Qualifications

The license child care provides that are located outside of the Navajo Nation and that receive services from DCCD will be required to meet their respective state (Arizona, New Mexico, or Utah) requirements.

DCCD Tribally Operated Centers – The appointed Navajo Nation entity under 13 N.N.C. § 2301 *et. seq.* is responsible for certifying tribally operated centers. Tribally Operated Centers are subject to the following child-staff ratios:

- Infants: Birth to 12 months of age; Ratio of 3 infants to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 6 infants.
- Toddlers: 13 months to 36 months of age; Ratio of 4 toddlers to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 8 toddlers.
- Preschool: 3 years to 5 years of age; Ratio of 7 preschoolers to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 14 preschoolers.
- School Age: 5 years to 12 years of age; Ratio of 8 school age children to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 16 school age children.
- Mixed Group: Ratio of 12 children to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 24 children.

Independent Regulated Providers – DCCD certify independent regulated providers that are subject to background checks and health and safety requirements for the care of non-relative children. Independent providers can provide care in their own home (Family child care provider) or in the home of the child (In-Home Child Care Provider). Independent providers are subject to the following child-staff ratios:

Family Child Care Provider

- Infants: Birth to 12 months of age; Ratio of 2 infants to 1 provider; Maximum group of 2 infants.
- Toddlers: 13 months to 36 months of age; Ratio of 3 toddlers to 1 provider; Maximum group of 3 toddlers.
- Preschool: 3 years to 5 years of age; Ratio of 6 preschoolers to 1 provider; Maximum group of 6 preschoolers.
- School Age: 5 years to 12 years of age; Ratio of 6 school age children to 1 provider; Maximum group of 6 school age children.
- Mixed Group: Ratio of 6 children to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 6 children.

In-Home Child Care Provider

- Infants: Birth to 12 months of age; Ratio of 2 infants to 1 provider; Maximum group of 2 infants.
- Toddlers: 13 months to 36 months of age; Ratio of 3 toddlers to 1 provider; Maximum group of 3 toddlers.
- Preschool: 3 years to 5 years of age; Ratio of 6 preschoolers to 1 provider; Maximum group of 6 preschoolers.
- School Age: 5 years to 12 years of age; Ratio of 6 school age children to 1 provider; Maximum group of 6 school age children.
- Mixed Group: Ratio of 6 children to 1 teacher; Maximum group of 6 children.

Equal Access to Quality Child Care for Low-Income Children

DCCD determines income eligibility on an annual basis or sooner if the family's income increases above 85% State Median Income (SMI). The 477 Plan will provide childcare services that will increase the availability, affordability and by providing quality childcare services to children and families in support of self-sufficiency.

DCCD staff may refer families to child care providers, these include Independent Regulated Providers, Relative unregulated provider, or tribally operated centers. Community resources may be provided to help families select a provider to meet their individual needs. If no providers are available, parents are encouraged to inform DCCD in writing and may receive Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds directly for short-term child care assistance. In the case that a parent receives direct funding for child care, the parent will provide verification that the funding was used for child care services.

Criminal Background Check Requirements

*Alternative approach under development

DCCD currently works with the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah to conduct a name based criminal background check and FBI check with fingerprints. Due to the vast size and remoteness of Navajo Nation Agencies, DCCD is proposing to use a refutable on-line criminal search database to obtain the information and an electronic case management database to store the information with random annual checks for each provider. DCCD is also proposing randomly select independent regulated provider cases on a quarterly basis to run through the on-line criminal background check database in lieu of annual background checks. Self-attestation will be used in all instances of background check requirements and processes.

Independent regulated providers cannot be approved and/or receive payments under this program if they refuse a background check; make materially false statements in connection with the background check; are registered or required to be registered on the State or National Sex Offender Registry; have been convicted of a felony consisting of: murder, child abuse or neglect, crimes against children, spousal abuse, crime involving rape or sexual assault, or a kidnapping, arson, physical assault or battery, a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; or have been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

Timeliness of background checks – Background checks will be conducted as quickly as possible and will not exceed forty-five (45) days. DCCD will provide a written response to the provider applicant regarding their eligibility decision based on the results of the background check. Due Process will be provided to the provider applicant along with assurance of non-disclosure of personal information, except that which is authorized per the Navajo Nation Privacy and Access to Information Act (NNPAIA).

Provider Type	Background Check Requirement	Timeline
Independent Regulated Provider	Background checks conducted by the State of Arizona.	Prior to receiving certification by DCCD
Tribally operated centers	Background checks: State Court View Check, Online State Sex Offender Registry, National Sex Offender Registry, and Child Abuse and Neglect check from Office of Children Services (OCS).	Prior to employment

Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan

In the event of an emergency, DCCD will have the flexibility to continue providing child care services despite disruptions to families and providers. The use of child care funds may be used to provide immediate assistance to families affected by a declared disaster or state of emergency, or to license exempt childcare providers to continue providing the quality of care, specifically in areas where existing child care facilities are not operating or have been determined unsafe.

DCCD will follow all rules and guidelines associated with a declared State of Emergency for the Navajo Nation, such as closing tribally operated child care centers. Childcare payments to existing providers that are delayed due to the disaster will be processed as soon as normal office services are available. All families currently enrolled with DCCD will be able to switch to an authorized child care provider as long as they are eligible.

DCCD direct service staff, parents, and providers are to work together to ensure child safety. This may include pre-emergency plans, updating of contact information, updating of emergency persons to be contacted, a list of criteria and necessary supplies in different types of emergencies. Additional requirements may include communication protocols with the parents of children as well as 911 or other emergency services and personnel. DCCD may provide portable emergency kits and other health and safety provisions during declared state of emergencies. Independent Regulated Provider providers are required to obtain training in emergency preparedness and response planning. Relative unregulated providers are exempt from this requirement but are encouraged to meet with the parents to determine a safety plan.

Quality Activities

DCCD will provide quality spending at 3% for Infant- Toddler, 9% Quality measures for a total quality expenditure of 12% per year.

DCCD Quality Improvement activities provided under this plan may include:

- Supporting the training, professional development, and postsecondary education of the child care workforce as part of a progression of professional development.
- Implement early learning and development guidelines and technical assistance to eligible child care providers and tribally operated centers.
- Enhance the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development and overall well-being of participating children.
- Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities and children who need care in non-traditional hours.
- Establishing a network of child care resources and referral services.
- Cost of annual provider training with opportunities for early childhood conferences.
- Reimbursement to providers for the purchase of developmental and educational materials that will enhance learning opportunities for children.
- Reimbursement or assistance for field trip expenses.
- Training for staff/inspectors that conduct health and safety monitoring visits.
- Travel expenses related to home inspections and related equipment/material provided.

- Payment to childcare consultants who conduct home visits/inspections to improve the quality of care.
- Materials and information regarding health and safety standards.
- Outreach to increase the number of qualified approved childcare providers.

Childcare Program Eligibility

DCCD will determine initial and ongoing eligibility for child care services. Eligibility is re-determined every 12 months or as necessary due to significant ongoing income changes for border town communities. The child's verification of being an "Indian child" is to be provided at the initial determination for eligibility or redetermination if an official tribal enrollment verification was not received at the initial eligibility determination. Acceptable documentation used to verify if a child is an "Indian child" is a copy of a Certificate of Navajo Indian Blood (CIB), for children residing within the Navajo Nation or Border Town Service Delivery Area (SDA). Verification of tribal enrollment with any federally recognized Indian tribe is required for a child who resides within the Navajo Nation SDA. Verification for children under protective services or newborns/infants residing within the Navajo Nation SDA, may submit verification within ninety (90) days from date of approval.

DCCD has the following categorical eligibility requirement variations by Service Delivery Area (SDA):

- 1.) Navajo Nation SDA: All communities within the Navajo Nation, including Trust lands, Fee lands and the satellite communities of Alamo, Tohajiilee, and Ramah. Residents of the Navajo Nation SDA will have categorical eligibility applied and their income will not be counted toward the 85% State median income limit. Children within the Navajo Nation must be an enrolled member of any federally recognized tribe. Priority will be given to the children most in need, according to DCCD Priority listing. Co-pay amounts, based on income level, will be utilized to determine co-pay amounts. In addition, parent(s)/guardian(s) are subject to work, job training, or education participation requirements.
- 2.) Navajo Nation Border Town SDA: The city limits of a federally designated "near reservation" communities, as listed in the Federal Register (Vol. 44, No.9, January 12, 1979, pg. 2693). Residents of the Navajo Border Town SDA must meet the income requirements of having countable income below 85% of the applicable state median income. In addition, children residing in the Navajo Border Town SDA must be an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and have a Navajo Census Number.

A child determined eligible shall be considered eligible and will receive services at least at the same level, regardless of:

1. A change in family income, if that family income does not exceed 85 percent of SMI for a family of the same size; or
2. A temporary change in the ongoing status of the child's parent as working or attending a job training or educational program. A temporary change shall include, at a minimum:
3. Any time-limited absence from work for an employed parent due to reasons such as need to care for a family member or an illness;
4. Any interruption in work for a seasonal worker who is not working between regular industry work seasons.
5. Any student holiday or break for a parent participating in training or education;
6. Any reduction in work, training or education hours, as long as the parent is still working or attending training or education;

7. Any other cessation of work or attendance at a training or education program that does not exceed three months, or a longer period established by Navajo Nation;
8. Any change in age, including turning 13 years old during the eligibility period; and
9. Any change in residency within tribal service area.

With a non-temporary change such as loss of an eligible activity that goes on for longer than (3) three months, families will be provided with an initial 3 months of continued assistance.

FY 2024 Arizona State Median Income (SMI)

DCCD Income Eligibility Level is set at 85% for "Border Town" eligibility determination:

Family Size	Arizona Median Income	85% of SMI
1	\$40,865	\$3,405
2	\$53,438	\$4,453
3	\$66,012	\$5,501
4	\$78,586	\$6,549
5	\$91,160	\$7,597
6	\$103,733	\$8,644
7	\$106,091	\$8,841
8	\$108,449	\$9,037

The public is informed of the availability and the process by which they can apply for childcare assistance using a variety of media like flyers, radio announcements, email, social media, and telephone calls. DCCD staff conducts outreach at various events and partners with other Navajo Nation programs and departments to provide information and/or updates. Through ongoing collaboration and commitments, Navajo families can receive consumer education materials and provide feedback on the services provided.

Improving Access for Vulnerable Children and Families

DCCD provides referrals to the local behavioral health center for children with significant challenges and referrals for medical and learning interventions for children who may need these services.

DCCD plans to partner with all programs under the 477 Plan, such as Department of Family Services (DFS), DSR, NTCCF, Navajo Indian Child Welfare Act Program (NICWAP), and other Navajo Nation Departments, such as Department of Health (DOH) which may result in quality training that is offered to all child care providers.

DCCD will provide training and resources for all providers but in particular will support providers caring for special needs children, children in non-traditional hours of care, and families in crisis. In addition, the use of incentives will be used to increase certified providers and access for vulnerable children and families.

Child Care Sliding Fee Scale & Program Rate Schedule - See Appendix K

DCCD Sliding Fee Scale shows the contribution each family is responsible for and is based on income and family size. The contributions are broken down by percentages based on level of income.

Payment Rates for Child Care Providers - See Appendix L

To ensure payment rates are sufficient for equal access, family/parent complaints that are received regarding established payment rates are reviewed and brought to the attention of DCCD leadership and decision-makers to address and to determine if increases in the payment rates need to be initiated. The DCCD Tribal market rate survey utilized the 75th percentile within each child care market category as the benchmark for payment rates to ensure equal access. DCCD will process payments to providers within 21 days of invoice.

Parental Complaint Process

DCCD will maintain a record of substantiated complaints, aggregated data on deaths, serious injuries, and number of substantiated child abuse and will make it available to the families and public upon request. Records are maintained in the provider's file.

DCCD uses the "due process" (Appeal Procedure), as a written process for parental and/or community complaints. Witnesses, supporting documentation, and interviews from key individuals in the written grievance substantiate complaints. Monitoring of the grievance will take place by the Department/Program Manager until the grievance is resolved to ensure effective and timely completion. Parents receive a copy of the complaint process with the acceptance/denial of service communication and is available by in/person, phone, fax, or email request.

Child Care Provider Consumer Statement- See Appendix M

The DCCD consumer education statement will be amended from time to time to ensure the most updated information is shared with the general public. In addition to the consumer statement, DCCD applications, payment table and other relevant information will be shared with the general public and requesting parties.

Construction

CCDF funds may be used for planning cost in the development of DCCD application for construction or major renovation of a child care center to include child-focused and culturally appropriate elements into the construction or renovation design. DCCD will submit an application for major construction and renovation and receive approval prior to using CCDF funds on construction and renovation projects.

Support Services

The following are supportive services to include, but are not limited to:

- Worksite Related Expenses (e.g. uniforms, tools, safety equipment, business attire etc.)
- Fee Expenses (e.g. testing, background check, physical exams, training / certification fees etc.)
- Transportation Related Expenses (e.g. mileage, bus passes, minor repairs, tires, travel expenses etc.)
- Training Related Expenses (e.g. uniforms, tools, safety equipment, housing, meals, etc.)

- Education Related Expenses (e.g. tuition, registration, textbooks, supplies, course enrollment fees etc.)
- Child Care Related Expenses (e.g. co-payments, fees, etc.)
- Assist members in addressing a barrier(s) to their successful participation in a work participation activity and to transition toward gaining and maintaining employment.
- To provide financial assistance to address unmet need for families during reunification.
- To provide transportation for child(ren), parent(s), and relatives to attend visitation, court hearings, case related meetings, and appointments to give the family every opportunity to work towards becoming a healthy family unit.
- Conducting extensive relative searches on the Navajo Nation to assist with compliance with the ICWA Placement Preference.
- Refers child(ren), parent(s), and relative care providers for traditional healing services.
- Support families to ensure that support is provided to assist parent(s) in reunifying with their child(ren).
- Referrals made to local agencies for supportive services, as needed.
- Provide utility assistance for heating, cooling and during emergencies.
- Provide equipment repairs and replacement for heating and cooling.
- In-kind purchases like blankets, fans, and energy kits.
- Personal hygiene items, clothing, household cleaning supplies, or to help pay for outstanding household bills.
- Housing related needs such as rental assistance, security deposits, utility payments related to crisis situations, and assistance.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Eligible households shall be assisted on a first come, first serve basis.

- Priority One will be given to household members who are sixty (60) years and older and receiving disability income, or has a disability that is verified by a physician or federal agency;
- Priority Two will be given to household members who are sixty (60) years and older; 2. Priority Three will be given to household members who are receiving disability income or has a disability that is verified by a physician or federal agency.
- Priority Four will be given to household members with young children who are five (5) years old or younger.

A life-threatening crisis is limited to individuals, who are exposed to extreme indoor/outdoor temperatures that adversely affect their health and/or well-being within days of running out of fuel/utilities being shutoff. A household member's health and/or well-being will likely be endangered if energy assistance is not provided. Utility services are disconnected if the households heating/cooling system requires electricity. Deliberate failure to maintain account up to date does not qualify as a crisis or life-threatening crisis.

Crisis benefit amounts is determined where the safety and well-being of a vulnerable household member is at risk as a result of disconnection of energy services, depletion of energy supplies, inoperable furnace, unsafe stove, natural disaster or declaration of state of emergency etc. The benefit amount is determined by household size, income, fuel type and shall not exceed FAU payment benefit matrix amount. A household that experienced power outage and/or impassable road conditions caused by severe rain, snow, wind storms, or mud creating

health and safety hazards due to extreme cold during the winter months and extreme heat during the summer months, for which they will be eligible for crisis assistance.

If an applicant is determined eligible for crisis assistance due to inoperable heating/cooling services they will be provided with blankets, space heaters, fans to meet their heating/cooling needs.

Renters: Eligible households, who rent, will be provided weatherization only if the landlord provides written authorization for the minor repairs/improvements.

Renters living in subsidized housing: Eligible households who are applying for weatherization assistance and are living in subsidized housing must obtain prior authorization and approval from the housing agency. Weatherization assistance includes cost-effective energy related Minor Home Repair, AC unit, and Wood/Pellet Stove. Dwellings which do not meet the criteria for weatherization assistance will be given the option to receive other types of energy assistance e.g. cooling or heating assistance. Thereafter, priority shall be provided, in accordance with the following, to households which include at least one (1) vulnerable member.

Incentives

All participants will be eligible for incentives. Incentives or recognition may be offered to participants for their successful participation in and completion of education or training services and tied to the goals of the respective program. Incentives may include but are not limited to fee reimbursement, gift cards, gas, school supplies, event door prizes, or traditional crafts sold by local artists. And are dependent upon program funding.

Cultural Training and Other Educational Activities

DSS' mission is to provide quality, culturally sensitive, and value-based support, and services to our Navajo people. To accomplish this mission, DSS will promote and preserve our cultural and traditional heritage by providing emphasis on the importance of traditional tribal values and cultural practices. Therefore, this 477 Plan offers holistic approaches to address the need for family support, education, support services, and providing culturally sensitive services that encourage our Tribal relatives to be successful and to aid in their efforts towards self-sufficiency.

The following are cultural services that DSS will provide:

- Promotes Navajo/Diné and Native American holistic healing and treatment services through utilization of sacred traditional ceremonies to promote healing for the emotional, physical, and psychological trauma and restore the psychological state of *íł hózhó* (balance and harmony) by participating in traditional services.
- Include our Navajo language in service delivery whenever possible. Learning and preserving our Navajo language are vital. Healing through learning and incorporating our Navajo language is a form of prevention/treatment modality.
- Offer the opportunity to engage and utilize traditional services and cultural learning.
- Provide financial assistance for Diné Traditional Services.
- Utilize culturally based curriculum and provide Prevention education sessions, wherein the
 - Traditional Practitioner will provide services to restore the spiritual and holistic state of *Iiná Díłzin* (Honoring Life) within the family.
- Provide cultural resources to children placed in non-relative, non-Native American placements.
- Provide Dine Parenting Training, Navajo traditional child-rearing practices and encourage positive Diné/Native American Traditional Cultural family values and life skills. Provide on-going

cultural awareness education, supportive counseling, and training to foster parents, relative foster homes and adoptive families, and state/tribal representatives.

Economic Development

The Navajo DSS 477 Plan may allocate up to 25% of combined 477 Program funds for economic development and job creation activities. The Program may partner and/or collaborate with Tribal administrations and Navajo Division of Economic Development for research, due diligence activities, and determination of appropriate fund expenditures. We will increase indigenous business development of individuals and companies by promoting skills to build human capital, business plans/development and problem solving.

Emergency Disaster, Crisis, and Mitigation Response

The primary role of government is to provide for the welfare of its citizens. The welfare and safety of citizens is never more threatened than during disasters. The goal of emergency management is to ensure that mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery actions exist so that public welfare and safety is preserved, and community resilience is improved. In addition, such disasters imperil the Navajo Nation's and 477 Program participants' efforts toward self-sufficiency, job training and skill development, and economic development. Effective and efficient responses will help the Navajo Nation and participants get these efforts back on track in the event of an emergency or disaster.

The Navajo Nation All Hazards Mitigation Plan provides a comprehensive framework for tribal emergency management. It addresses the roles and responsibilities of tribal organizations and provides a link to local, State, Federal, and private organizations and resources that may be activated to address disasters and emergencies in the Nation Nation.

The Navajo Nation All Hazards Mitigation Plan ensures consistency with current policy guidance and describes the interrelationship with other levels of government. The plan will continue to evolve, responding to lessons learned from actual disaster and emergency experiences, ongoing planning efforts, training and exercise activities, and Federal guidance.

It is the responsibility of officials under this plan to save lives, protect property, relieve human suffering, sustain survivors, repair essential facilities, restore services, and protect the environment. All components of the Tribe's 477 Plan serve in critical areas in support of the Tribe's All Hazards Mitigation Plan. Navajo Childcare maintains a robust emergency response plan that operates in concert with the larger operations of the tribe. The plan is part of the Navajo Nation's Childcare Health and Safety standards and is fully incorporated here by reference.

The effort starts with pre-mitigation on an individual basis. Through the Safe & Stable Families initiative, each household is guided to prepare and practice emergency response plans. Families will be encouraged to become involved in educational training or events that help them plan for safety. Household education may include how to mitigate conditions or risks; how to prepare Emergency 'Go' Kits; practicing Evacuation Routes; and other Household Mitigation tips.

In the event a disaster occurs, Navajo Nation's efforts includes, but are not limited to:

- Identifying, locating, and coordinating services to adversely affected participant households.
- Responding to new cases created by the emergency.
- Assisting in communication or filling the void with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of the disaster.
- Preserving essential records.
- Coordinating services and sharing information with other service agencies as appropriate.
- Assisting with manpower response.
- Improving preparedness and resilience to protect against future disasters.

Confidentiality

Pursuant to the Navajo Nation Privacy and Access to Information Act, 2 N.N.C. § 81 *et. seq.*, the Act provides the public with a means to access records and information relating to the operation of the Navajo Nation while preserving the privacy interests of the individuals and entities.

Uniform Appeal and Grievance Process

Navajo DSS will establish a uniform grievance and appeal procedure available to participants. *See Appendix N.* It contains provisions that will apply to all program participants engaged in any type of activity under this plan. The procedure will ensure due process and establishes a series of levels, starting with informal resolution at the staff level. The final level of appeal will provide appropriate recommendations.

477 Plan Public Notice Hearing

DSS Notice(s) of the DSS Public Hearing:

- DSS held a 477 Plan Information Session on February 13, 2024, which was hosted virtually and in-person. There were over 100 attendees that included DSS staff, Directors, and Navajo Leadership.
- DSS published a recorded Information Session on the DSS Facebook page and website.
- DSS hosted collaborative weekly meetings with the Navajo Nation Office of Management and Budget and Office of the Controller for the month of March 2024,
- On March 20-21, 2024, a 477 Plan Information Session was held with each DSS department and program, wherein staff were advised to submit written comments. There were no comments that were submitted or received.
- 477 Plan Information was shared at the scheduled Navajo Agency Council meetings in April and May 2024.
- A recorded Information Session and a copy of the 477 Plan will be made available for a 45-day open public comment period on the DSS Facebook page and website. This will begin in April 2024

Community members will be encouraged to submit recommendations and comments on the plan in writing via a form available at the public comment meeting or via email to the DSS office. All comments, feedback, and recommendations will be recorded and considered to better serve the children and families of the Navajo Nation. *See Appendix O*

Financial Reporting

Navajo DSS will comply with all statutory and regulatory data collection and reporting requirements under P.L. 102-477. DSS acknowledges an annual report (statistical, financial, and narrative) will be filed annually.

Budget

Anticipated Annual Revenue

Federal Funding Sources FY2025 (except as noted below)	Total Amount
Department of Interior; Bureau of Indian Affairs	
General Assistance/ Burial Assistance	\$8,358,428.00
Adult Services	\$12,537,641.00
Homemaker Services	\$12,537,642.00
Navajo Treatment Center for Children & Their Families	\$325,068.00
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) FY 2024	\$1,512,395.00
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) FY 2025	\$1,512,395.00
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services	
DHHS Tribal TANF - Federal 2025	\$ 31,174,026.00
DHHS Tribal TANF – Federal 2024	\$23,380,555.00
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Mandatory	\$6,484,556.00
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Discretionary	\$28,585,464.00
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	\$1,369,489.00
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	\$1,751,843.00
Indian Health Services (IHS) Navajo Treatment Center for Children & Their Families	\$1,198,096.00
Title IV-B Subpart 1 Child Welfare Services	\$898,824.00
Title IV-B Subpart 2 Promoting Safe and Stable Families	\$852,887.00
Title IV-E	\$10,596,619.00
Family Violence Prevention and Services Act	\$2,093,060.00
Total Anticipated Annual Revenue	\$148,286,306.00

Anticipated Annual Expenditures

Program Account	Total Amount
Administrative	\$26,691,535.00
Non-Administrative	\$121,594,771.00
Total Anticipated Annual Expenditures	\$148,286,306.00

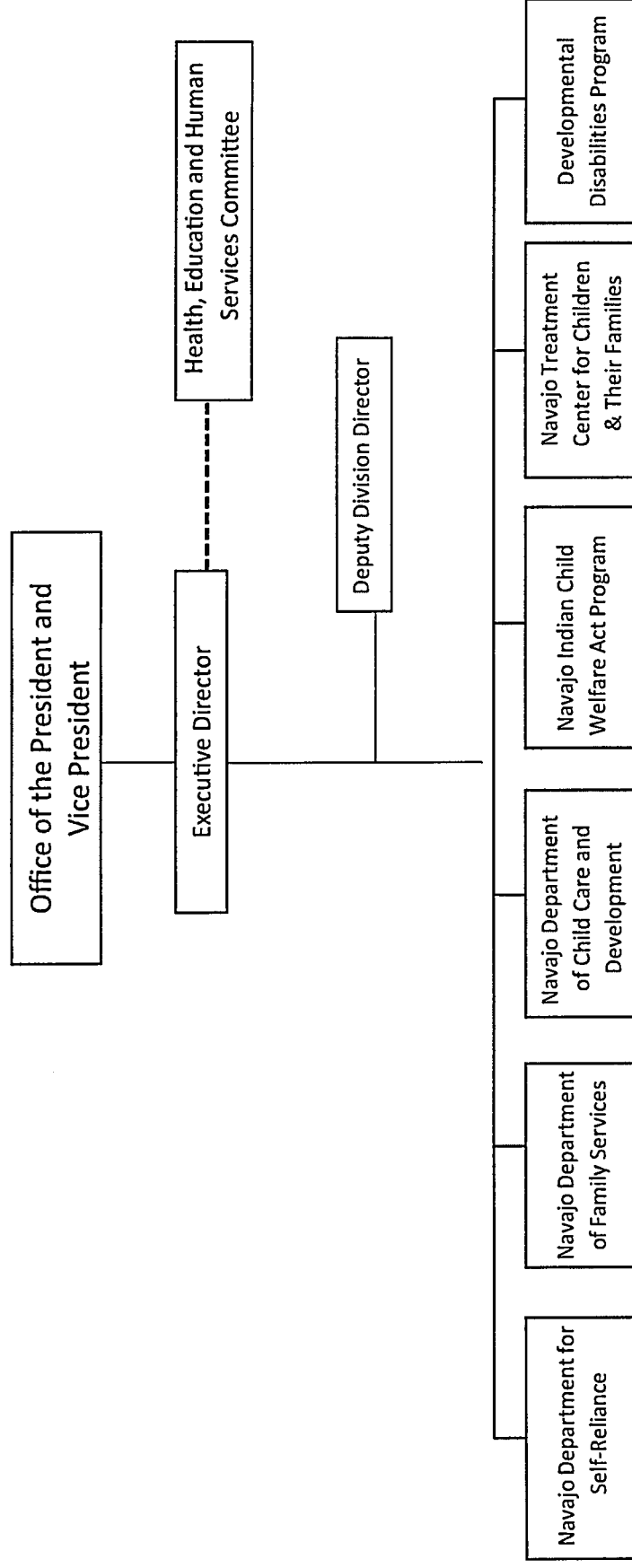
Administrative Expenses and Indirect Cost

For the purposes of the Navajo DSS's 477 Plan, administrative expenses are defined by the Navajo DSS's negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement. The administrative expense category includes direct administrative costs and all indirect costs attributable to the programs, which are costs incurred for a common or joint purpose and benefit more than one cost objective. As noted in the expenditure budget, the Navajo DSS's FY2023 approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with the Department of Interior's Interior Business Center used a fixed with carryforward calculation to determine the rate. The rate is calculated annually based on total direct costs less capital expenditures and pass-through funds. Pass-through funds are normally defined as payments to participants, stipends to eligible recipients, and subawards, which normally require minimal administrative effort.

Section 3413(d)(1) of the 477 law "All administrative costs may be commingled and participating Indian tribes shall be entitled to the full amount of such (costs under each program or departments regulations).

NAVAJO DIVISION of SOCIAL SERVICES

Office of the Executive Director





DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Department for Self Reliance

Payment Standard

(Effective beginning with July 2022 payments)

Appendix I

Benefit Group Size	Payment Standard
1	\$415
2	\$505
3	\$620
4	\$725
5	\$830
6	\$935
7	\$1,040
8	\$1,175
9	\$1,270
10	\$1,365
11	\$1,470
12	\$1,575
13+	ADD: \$155 per additional member

Appendix 1**Triennial Child Count Declaration**

If the Tribal Lead Agency is not a Consortium, complete the information below.

Name of Tribe/Tribal Lead Agency: **Navajo Nation**

This certifies that the number of Indian children younger than age 13 (as defined in CCDF Plan) who reside on or near the reservation or service area (as defined in CCDF Plan) is: **51611** (number).

The Tribal Lead Agency may not count any children who are included in the child count of another CCDF Tribal Lead Agency. To ensure unduplicated child counts, a Tribal Lead Agency is required to confer with all other CCDF Tribal Lead Agencies that have overlapping or neighboring service areas.

The counts above show the number of Indian children younger than age 13 as of **6/30/2022** (date).

Tribal Lead Agencies are advised that ACF will not accept Child Count Declarations based on child counts that were conducted before July 1 of the year prior to the Child Count Declaration.

If the Tribal Lead Agency is a Consortium, complete the information below.

Name of Tribe/Tribal Lead Agency: **Navajo Nation**

The Tribal Lead Agency may not count any children who are included in the child count of another CCDF Tribal Lead Agency. To ensure unduplicated child counts, a Tribal Lead Agency is required to confer with all other CCDF Tribal Lead Agency that have overlapping or neighboring service areas.

The counts below show the number of Indian children younger than age 13 as of (date).

This certifies that the number of Indian children (as defined in CCDF Plan) who reside on or near the reservation or service area (as defined in CCDF Plan) for the Consortium Lead Agency and each Consortium Member are:

NAVAJO NATION 477 PLAN 2025-2029 effective 10/01/2024

INCOME MATRIX & SLIDING FEE SCALE		
Child Care Sliding Fee Scale for Co-Pay Fee		
185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines		
1	\$27,861.00	Co-pay Fee is 4% of Family Unit Net Income
2	\$37,814.00	
3	\$47,767.00	
4	\$57,720.00	
5	\$67,673.00	
6	\$77,626.00	
7	\$87,579.00	
8	\$97,532.00	
9	\$107,485.00	
10	\$117,438.00	
11	\$127,391.00	
12	\$137,344.00	

References:

* 2023 Poverty Guidelines,
Federal Register Notice
Thursday, January 17, 2024
Vol. 89, No. 11; Page: 3424-3425;
Document Number: 2024-00796

**LIHEAP-IM-2024-04, State Median
Income Estimates for Optional Use
in FFY 2023 and Mandatory Use in
FFY 2024

Effective 12.01.2023

**NAVAJO NATION DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Department of Child Care & Development**

**NAVAJO NATION PAYMENT RATES
Approved for Fiscal Year 2023-2025**

FULL DAY RATE	AGE OF CHILD	CENTER	GROUP HOME	FAMILY & CHILD HOME	RELATIVE CAREGIVER Self-certification
	1-12 Months Old	34.00	31.00	28.00	20.00
	12.1 - 36 Months Old	32.00	29.00	28.00	18.00
	3.1 -5 Years Old	29.00	28.00	25.00	18.00
	5.1 -13 Years Old	23.00	23.00	23.00	18.00

PART DAY RATE	AGE OF CHILD	CENTER	GROUP HOME	FAMILY & CHILD HOME	RELATIVE CAREGIVER Self-certification
	1-12 Months Old	26.00	24.00	21.00	16.00
	12.1-36 Months Old	26.00	23.00	21.00	14.00
	3.1-5 Years Old	24.00	21.00	18.00	14.00
	5.1-13 Years Old	19.00	18.00	17.00	14.00

The maximum weekly benefits is authorized for payment up to five (5) full-time or part-time days.
Full-Day Rate: Five (5) or more hours of childcare per day.
Part-Day Rate: Less than Five (5) hours of childcare per day.

All childcare center, group home, family home, child's home and relative's childcare providers on Navajo Nation and near Navajo Nation (pursuant to HHSC-AU-40-89) are subject to use this subsidy payment rate.

If the provider's rate is less than the DCCD Rate, the provider's rate will be approved.
If the provider's rate is higher than the DCCD rate, the DCCD Rate will be approved.
Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) will be responsible for paying the cost difference between what the provider's rate is and what the DCCD's approved rates are.

Children who require nontraditional hours of care i.e., care provided to children at times outside of the traditional workday, between 6:00 pm and 7:00 am, and between 7:00 am and 6:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday are paid at a full-time or part-time rate.

The Navajo Nation Payment Rates are set based on the final triennial Market Rate Survey Report, dated October 2023.

DCCD Approved 12.01.2023

NAVAJO NATION DEPARTMENT OF CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DCCD)



CCDF Consumer Statement

INFORMATION

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is a federal and state partnership program authorized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) and administered by states, territories, and tribes with funding and support from the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Child Care (OCC). CCDF is used to provide financial assistance to low-income families to access childcare so they can work or attend a job training or educational program.

The Navajo Nation implements and provides CCDF services through Navajo Nation Department of Child Care & Development (DCCD). DCCD is under the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation government and is a department under the Division of Social Services.

PURPOSE

OCC allows tribes the flexibility to utilize the CCDF grant to meet the purposes as outlined below:

- 1) Develop child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within the service delivery area
- 2) Promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suits their family's needs;
- 3) Provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings;
- 4) Deliver high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;
- 5) Improve the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards;
- 6) Improve child care and development of participating children; and
- 7) Increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality childcare settings.

DIRECT SERVICES

DCCD provides childcare services to the Navajo Nation through five (5) regions: Chinle Region, Ft. Defiance Region, Northern Region, Western Region, and Eastern Region. Within each region DCCD has a casework unit that provides eligibility determination for families and individuals interested in being independent providers. In addition, each region has child care centers that provide quality child care services to children from 6 months to 13 years of age. DCCD has three (3) types of child care categories: tribally operated child care centers; independent providers; and relative providers.

SERVICE DELIVERY AREA

The Service Delivery Area (SDA) for DCCD includes the Navajo Nation and the border town communities as listed below:

- Arizona: Grand Canyon, Joseph City, Marble Canyon, Flagstaff, Snowflake, Holbrook, Page, Wupatki, and Winslow.
- New Mexico: Farmington, Aztec, Bloomfield, Magdalena, Cuba, Kirtland, Grants, Milan, Socorro, and Gallup.

Please contact your local DCCD Office to request additional information.

NAVAJO NATION DEPARTMENT OF CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DCCD)

ELIGIBILITY

DCCD has eligibility requirements for the following:

1.) Child Care Assistance

- a. At minimum the child must be between the ages of Six (6) months and up to 13 years of age.
- b. The child must be an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation if residing within the identified border towns OR another federally recognized tribe if residing within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.

- *Note: Income may be a factor in determining eligibility, please contact your local DCCD Office for more information.*

2.) Qualifying Provider

- a. Independent licensed and Relative/Family members may apply to become a DCCD provider. A complete federal background check is required of all non-relative providers. The provider must meet qualification standards, such as possession of a first aid certificate and CPR card for infants and children. Additional qualifying factors may be required.

- *Note: Please contact your local DCCD Office for more information regarding relative care and independent provider information.*

DCCD CONTACT DETAILS

Feel free to contact your local DCCD caseworker office to request more information and/or ask additional questions.

- Chinle Region Casework Office:
 - Phone: (928) 674-2388
 - Fax: (928) 674-2010
- Ft. Defiance Casework Office:
 - Phone: (928) 871-7078 and (928) 871-6189
 - Fax: (928) 871-7290
- Shiprock Casework Office:
 - Phone: (928) 871-6911
 - Fax: (928) 871-7290
- Crownpoint Casework Office:
 - Phone: (505) 786-2438
 - Fax: (505) 786-2448
- Tuba City Casework Office
 - Phone: (928) 283-3472
 - Fax: (928) 283-3471
- Central DCCD Administration Office
 - Phone: (928) 871-6629
 - Fax: (928) 871-7077

Division of Social Services Grievances and Appeal Process

The Division of Social Services (DSS) provides an opportunity for an affected individual to appeal a determination when a benefit under the 477 plan is denied. See the DSS' established appeal procedures in the Navajo Nation DSS Quality Assurance Manual, section entitled, "Notification Requirements for Denial, Reduction, Suspension, and or Termination of Social Services. This process applies to individuals, who have submitted an application for 477 services, and DSS has denied the 477 services.

Grievance Conference:

If the client disagrees with the denial, the client may request a review of that decision through a grievance conference with the Program/ Department Manager prior to filing a Client Appeal with the Office of the Executive Director. If a client wants to proceed with a grievance conference, the client should comply with the following:

- The client must submit a written response to the respective program office that denied the 477 services and request a grievance conference. The written response must either be hand delivered or emailed to the respective program/ department manager that issued the denial. Program/ Department contact information is available at the Navajo Division of Social Services website www.nndss.org. The written response must include the following information:
 - Client name and contact information.
 - Summary of the situation (date, names, etc.)
 - Supporting documentation to your claim, if relevant
 - Resolution being sought.
- The client must write to the respective program office within twenty (20) business days of the date of the decision from the respective program office in order to grieve the initial decision.
- The grievance conference will be held between the Program Manager, Principal Social Worker, the Case Manager, and the client within or by the seventh business days after receiving the written grievance.
- A written Grievance Conference Decision will be provided to the client within (5) business days.
 1. If the issue is resolved at the grievance conference, the grievance file is closed.
 2. If there is no resolution, the respective program office will issue a written response. That will provide a reasonable explanation to the decision.
- If the client does not agree with the Grievance Conference Decision, she/he may appeal the grievance decision to the Office of the Executive Director.

Client Appeals:

If a client disagrees with the Grievance Conference Decision, the client may file a Client Appeal with the Office of the Executive Director. Client services will continue pending the outcome of the final decision of the Office of the Executive Director.

- The client must submit a written appeal within (5) business day from receipt of the Grievance Conference decision. The written appeal must either be hand delivered or emailed to the Office of the Executive Director at info@nndss.org which will be directed to the attention of Quality Assurance.
- The written appeal must include:
 - Client name and contact information.
 - Summary of the situation (date, names, etc.)
 - A copy of the Grievance Conference Decision indicated no resolution.
 - Supporting documentation to your claim, if relevant
 - Resolution being sought.
- Once the Office of the Executive Director receives the written appeal request, Quality Assurance will track the appeal request and ensure that the request is carried out according to the established appeals procedures and timeframes.
- The Client Appeal meeting will be held between twenty (20) business days from the date the Office of the Executive Director receives the written appeal.
- The Executive Director will provide an Appeal Decision to the client on the outcome of the hearing within five (5) business days from the date of the hearing.
- The Executive Director's decision is final.

At the conclusion of the Client Appeal meeting, the Executive Director shall provide a copy of the written appeal decision to the respective program office with recommendation for the service to overturn or uphold the Grievance Conference Decision.

477 Plan Public Notice Hearing

Navajo DSS Notice(s) of the DSS Public Hearing:

- DSS held a 477 Plan Information Session on February 13, 2024, which was hosted virtually and in-person. There were over 100 attendees that included DSS staff, Directors, and Navajo Leadership.
- DSS published a recorded Information Session on the DSS Facebook page and website.
- DSS hosted collaborative weekly meetings with Navajo Nation Office of Management and Budget and Office of the Controller for the month of March 2024,
- On March 20-21, 2024, a 477 Plan Information Session was held with each DSS department and program, wherein staff were advised to submit written comments. There were no comments that were submitted or received.
- 477 Plan Information was shared at the scheduled Navajo Agency Council meetings in April and May 2024.
- A recorded Information Session and a copy of the 477 Plan will be made available for a 45-day open public comment period on the DSS Facebook page and website. This will begin in April 2024.

Community members will be encouraged to submit recommendations and comments on the plan in writing via a form available at the public comment meeting or via email to the DSS office. All comments, feedback, and recommendations will be recorded and considered to better serve the children and families of the Navajo Nation.



NAVAJO NATION DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



DOCUMENT REVIEW REQUEST COVER SHEET

DOJ USE ONLY

May 23, 2024

DATE / TIME

NNDOJ #: See HighQ

DOC #: 22833

UNIT: Human Services/Government

Unit

RESUBMITTAL: {...}

*** FOR NNDOJ USE ONLY - DO NOT CHANGE OR REVISE FORM. VARIATIONS OF THIS FORM WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. ***

CLIENT TO COMPLETE			
DATE OF REQUEST:	<u>May 23, 2024</u>	DIVISION:	<u>Division of Social Services</u>
CONTACT NAME:	<u>Mary Descheeny-Reyna</u>		
PHONE NUMBER:	<u>9288716851</u>	E-MAIL:	<u>Mary.Reyna@nndss.org</u>
TITLE OF DOCUMENT: <u>164 22833 NDSS PL 477 Plan</u>			
UNIT REVIEW			
DATE/TIME IN UNIT: <u>May 23, 2024</u> REVIEWING ATTORNEY/ADVOCATE: <u>LaTonia Johnson</u>			
DATE/TIME ATTORNEY REVIEW COMPLETE: <u>{...}</u>			
DATE/TIME OUT OF UNIT: <u>See email transmitting completed document</u>			
DOJ ATTORNEY / ADVOCATE COMMENTS			
<u>Sufficient. I also attached the final version of Appendix M and N to the completed documents.</u>			
LEGAL STATUS: <u>Sufficient</u>		SURNAMED BY: <u>HSGU AAG</u> See Document Review signature sheet for date/time	

Document No. 022833Date Issued: 05/23/2024**EXECUTIVE OFFICIAL REVIEW**Title of Document: NDSS PL 477 Plan Contact Name: DESCHEENY-REYNA, MARYProgram/Division: DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICESEmail: Mary.Reyna@nndss.org Phone Number: 928-871-6851☐ **Business Site Lease** Sufficient Insufficient

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Division: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Office of the Controller: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| (only if Procurement Clearance is not issued within 30 days of the initiation of the E.O. review) | | | |
| 3. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Business and Industrial Development Financing, Veteran Loans, (i.e. Loan, Loan Guarantee and Investment) or Delegation of Approving and/or Management Authority of Leasing transactions**

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Division: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Fund Management Plan, Expenditure Plans, Carry Over Requests, Budget Modifications**

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Office of Management and Budget: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Office of the Controller: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 3. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Navajo Housing Authority Request for Release of Funds**

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| 1. NNEPA: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Lease Purchase Agreements**

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Office of the Controller: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| (recommendation only) | | | |
| 2. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Grant Applications**

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Office of Management and Budget: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Office of the Controller: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 3. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Five Management Plan of the Local Governance Act, Delegation of an Approving Authority from a Standing Committee, Local Ordinances (Local Government Units), or Plans of Operation/Division Policies Requiring Committee Approval**

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Division: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Relinquishment of Navajo Membership**

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| 1. Land Department: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 2. Elections: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |
| 3. Office of the Attorney General: _____ | Date: _____ | □ | □ |

☐ **Land Withdrawal or Relinquishment for Commercial Purposes**

Sufficient Insufficient

1. Division: _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
2. Office of the Attorney General: _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐

☐ **Land Withdrawals for Non-Commercial Purposes, General Land Leases and Resource Leases**

1. NLD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
2. F&W _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
3. HPD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
4. Minerals _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
5. NNEPA _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
6. DNR _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
7. DOJ _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐

☐ **Rights of Way**

1. NLD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
2. F&W _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
3. HPD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
4. Minerals _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
5. NNEPA _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
6. Office of the Attorney General: _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
7. OPVP _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐

☐ **Oil and Gas Prospecting Permits, Drilling and Exploration Permits, Mining Permit, Mining Lease**

1. Minerals _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
2. OPVP _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
3. NLD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐

☐ **Assignment of Mineral Lease**

1. Minerals _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
2. DNR _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
3. DOJ _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐

☐ **ROW (where there has been no delegation of authority to the Navajo Land Department to grant the Nation's consent to a ROW)**

1. NLD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
2. F&W _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
3. HPD _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
4. Minerals _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
5. NNEPA _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
6. DNR _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
7. DOJ _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
8. OPVP _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐

☒ **OTHER:**

1. Division of Social Services _____ Date: 5/23/2024 ☒ ☐
2. DOJ _____ Date: 5/24/24 ☒ ☐
3. _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
4. _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐
5. _____ Date: _____ ☐ ☐



MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Germaine Simonson
25th Navajo Nation Council Delegate

FROM: K. A. Lowell
Kristen A. Lowell, Principal Attorney
Office of Legislative Counsel

DATE: June 4, 2024

RE: **AN ACTION RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES AND NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEES; RELATING TO THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATIONS' PUBLIC LAW 102-477 PLAN**

Per your request, the Office of Legislative Counsel has prepared the above-reference proposed legislation and associated legislative summary sheet. Based on existing law, the legislation as drafted is legally sufficient. However, as with all legislation, the proposed resolution is subject to review by the courts in the event of a challenge.

The Office of Legislative Counsel recommends the appropriate standing committee(s) reviews based on the authority of the standing committees outlined in 2 N.N.C. §§ 301, 401, 501, 601, and 701. Nevertheless, "the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council shall introduce [the proposed resolution] into the legislative process by assigning it to the respective oversight committee(s) of the Navajo Nation Council having authority over the matters for proper consideration. 2 N.N.C. § 164(A)(5).

Please review the proposed legislation to ensure it is drafted to your satisfaction. If you approve, please sign as "Primary Sponsor" and submit it to the Office of Legislative Services where the proposed legislation will be given a tracking number and referred to the Office of the Speaker. If the proposed legislation is unacceptable to you, please contact me at the Office of Legislative Counsel and advise me of any revisions requested.

THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: _0124-24_

SPONSOR: Germaine Simonson

TITLE: An Action Relating to Health, Education and Human Services and Naabik'iyáti' Committees; Relating to the Navajo Nation Council; Approving the Navajo Nation's Public Law 102-477 Plan

Date posted: June 07, 2024 at 3:15PM

Digital comments may be e-mailed to comments@navajo-nsn.gov

Written comments may be mailed to:

Executive Director
Office of Legislative Services
P.O. Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515
(928) 871-7586

Comments may be made in the form of chapter resolutions, letters, position papers, etc. Please include your name, position title, address for written comments; a valid e-mail address is required. Anonymous comments will not be included in the Legislation packet.

Please note: This digital copy is being provided for the benefit of the Navajo Nation chapters and public use. Any political use is prohibited. All written comments received become the property of the Navajo Nation and will be forwarded to the assigned Navajo Nation Council standing committee(s) and/or the Navajo Nation Council for review. Any tampering with public records are punishable by Navajo Nation law pursuant to 17 N.N.C. §374 *et. seq.*

**THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW SUMMARY**

LEGISLATION NO.: 0124-24

SPONSOR: Honorable Germaine Simonson

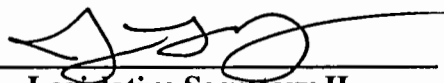
TITLE: An Action Relating to Health, Education and Human Services and Naabik'iyáti' Committees; Relating to the Navajo Nation Council; Approving the Navajo Nation's Public Law 102-477 Plan

Posted: June 07, 2024 at 3:15 PM

5 DAY Comment Period Ended: June 12, 2024

Digital Comments received:

Comments Supporting	<i>None</i>
Comments Opposing	<i>None</i>
Comments/Recommendations	1) Anthony Begay



**Legislative Secretary II
Office of Legislative Services**

June 13, 2024; 7:30 AM

Date/Time

Reply all | Delete | Junk | ...

Legislation 0124-24 Re: Public Law 102-477 Plan



Anthony Begay

Yesterday, 11:27 PM

Inbox

Comments from the Navajo Treatment Center for Children and Their Families program:
Public Law 102-477 Plan is a U.S. Federal program that allows employment, training, and related services into a single program plan, budget, and reporting system to address tribal priorities. Currently, the Navajo Treatment Center for Children & Their Families (NTCCTF) has 5 vacancy positions that need to be filled. The 477 Plan will help the program with the hiring process. Currently, it takes 6 months to hire, which really could be less than a month which the 477 Plan will make this possible. The training that NTCCTF staff will easily be obtained from the Navajo cultural and traditional trainers because the Navajo Nation believes in our own way of holistic healing. The program utilizes hataalii/chanters to help clients heal in combination with western approach of treatment modalities. The NTCCTF program already has made great strides to include the ICWA and DFS clients placed off the reservation with Navajo cultural and traditional services. The program continues to request for funding for foster placement services to help pay for the chanter's assistance with ceremonies at a client request. The program will assist to restart the hataalii apprenticeship program because of the lack of chanters expressed recently at the Hataalii/Chanter Summit. The program realized services need to include the Eastern agency and in the Dilkon areas that the NTCCTF has, because the program is mobile and meet clients at the location that is deemed safe for their environment. The plan for the program includes location of treatment centers that has a hogan, shade house, a corral, and sweatlodge for healing purposes including a modern facility to provide the services. The program also assists with internships and willing to help interns complete their hours. The program helps with the Diné Action Plan (DAP) with the Suicide Surveillance and Prevention. The program also assisted in the Operation Rainbow Bridge (ORB) and continues to help support the HelpORB support phone line. The history of what the program assisted with even with lack of manpower needs to be compensated and the 477 Plan can help to assist with the compensation. The program is not funded to capacity and has learned to use carryover funding to operate the services. The program employees 17 staff and employs licensed clinical staff which is a specialized services for the Navajo Department of Social Services. The program will get support from the 477 Plan partners to help operate the NTCCTF program with its Scope of Work and Plan of Operation. The NTCCTF is in support of the 477 Plan because the law is available and will help to get the plan started and become a success for the Navajo Nation.

Anthony Begay, Program Manager II

Navajo Treatment Center for Children & Their Families
48 W. Hwy 264 Quality Inn Office Complex Suite 106

Window Rock, AZ. 86515

Mission Statement: To provide treatment services to Native American children in a therapeutic environment that is safe, secure, and confidential.

Vision Statement: Every child has the right to grow in a healthy environment free from harm and abuse.

WARNING: External email. Please verify sender before opening attachments or clicking on links.

**HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL**

**SECOND YEAR 2024
COMMITTEE REPORT**

Madame Speaker,

The **HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE** to whom has been assigned:

Legislation No. 0124-24: An Action Relating to Health, Education and Human Services and Naabik'iyáti' Committees; Relating to the Navajo Nation Council; Approving the Navajo Nation's Public Law 102-477 Plan.

Sponsor: Delegate Germaine Simonson

Co-Sponsor: Delegate Dr. Andy Nez

Has had it under consideration and reports a Do Pass with no amendments and thence refers the legislation to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince R. James", written over a horizontal line.

Honorable Vince R. James, Chairperson
Health, Education and Human Services Committee
25th Navajo Nation Council

Date: June 13, 2024

Main Motion:

Motion: Honorable Andy Nez
Second: Honorable George Tolth
Vote: 4-0-2

HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Special Meeting
June 13, 2024

Legislation No. 0124-24: An Action Relating to Health, Education and Human Services and Naabik'iyáti' Committees; Relating to the Navajo Nation Council; Approving the Navajo Nation's Public Law 102-477 Plan.

Sponsor: Delegate Germaine Simonson

Co-Sponsor: Delegate Dr. Andy Nez

VOTE TALLY:

Main Motion:

Motion: Honorable Andy Nez

Second: Honorable George Tolth

Yea: Helena Nez Begay; Andy Nez; Germaine Simonson; George Tolth

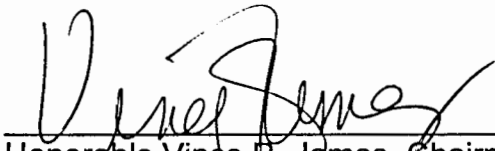
Nay:

Not Voting: Honorable Vince R. James (Presiding)

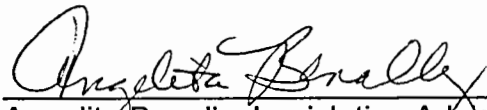
Excused: Honorable Curtis Yanito

Absent:

Vote: 4-0-2



Honorable Vince R. James, Chairperson
Health, Education and Human Services Committee
25th Navajo Nation Council



Angelita Benally, Legislative Advisor
Health, Education and Human Services Committee
Office of Legislative Services

25th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE REPORT Second Year 2024

The **NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE** to whom has been assigned:

NAVAJO LEGISLATIVE BILL # 0124-24

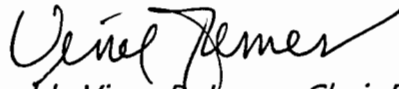
An Action Relating to Health, Education and Human Services and Naabik'iyáti' Committees; Relating to the Navajo Nation Council; Approving the Navajo Nation's Public Law 102-477 Plan

Sponsored by: Honorable Germaine Simonson

Co-Sponsored by: Honorable Andy Nez

Has had it under consideration and reports the same that the legislation **WAS PASSED AND REFERRED TO THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL.**

Respectfully Submitted,



*Honorable Vince R. James, Chair Pro Tem
NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE*

13 June 2024

MAIN MOTION

Motioned by: Honorable George H. Tolth

Seconded by: Honorable Andy Nez

Vote: 15 in Favor, 00 Opposed (Chair Pro Tem James Not Voting)

NAVAJO NATION

394

6/13/2024

Naa'bik'iyati' Committee Regular Meeting

11:28:11 AM

Amd# to Amd#	New Business: Item C.	PASSED
MOT Tolth, G	Legislation #0124-24: Approving	
SEC Nez, A	the Navajo Nation's Public Law	
	102-477 Plan	

Yeas : 15	Nays : 0	Excused : 5	Not Voting : 3
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Yea : 15

Arviso, S	Daniels, H	Parrish, S	Tolth, G
Aseret, L	Jesus, B	Simonson, G	Tso, O
Begay, H	Johnson, C	Simpson, D	Yazzie, L
Claw, S	Nez, A	Slater, C	

Nay : 0

Excused : 5

Charles-Newton, E	Curley, C	Nez, R	Yanito, C
Crotty, A			

Not Voting : 3

Notah, N	Yazzie, C	Begay, N
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Presiding Speaker: James, V