

**Yurok Tribe  
Five-Year Child and Family Services Plan  
Federal Fiscal Years 2015-2019**

**1. Description of Organization Administrating Funds:**

Title IV-B parts 1 and 2

Name of Tribal Agency

Yurok Tribe  
190 Klamath Boulevard  
P.O. Box 1027  
Klamath, CA 95548

**A. Description of Tribe:**

The Yurok Tribe is a federally recognized Indian tribe that is located in Del Norte and Humboldt Counties in California. The Yurok Tribe is the largest Native American Tribe in California with 5,982 members. The federally recognized service area includes both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.

The Yurok Tribe is governed by a nine-member Tribal Council elected by the general membership. In addition to the Chair and Vice-Chair, there is a member from each of the seven districts located throughout Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. Tribal Council has delegated day-to-day tribal operations to Tribal Administration. Departments within the Tribal administration include Social Services, Fisheries, Self-Governance Enrollment/Election, Education, Forestry, Environmental, Economic Development, Planning, Culture, Finance, Human Resources, TERO, Office of Tribal Attorney, Public Safety, Tribal Court, Watershed, Maintenance, and Information Services. Please see Yurok Tribe Organization Chart attached in appendix for the internal structure of the Yurok Tribe.

**B. Description of Responsible Office**

The Yurok Tribe's Social Services Department will be responsible for the operation of this plan. Yurok Social Services as well as the Office of the Tribal Attorney will play a large part in implementing the goals set forth in this plan. Please see the attached Social Service Organization Chart in appendix for structure of Department.

Yurok Social Services program provides advocacy services under the Indian Child Welfare Act for Yurok children and families at risk of child abuse and neglect. Any Yurok child at risk is eligible to receive advocacy services. Services include advocacy through court intervention and with Child Protective Services where the child is located, assisting with services to either prevent placement into substitute care or hasten reunification or permanency planning, or referral and follow up. The primary duties of the Social Workers are to ensure compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act by state agencies.

Yurok Social Services employs five Social Workers. Social Workers offer a variety of services for any Yurok Tribal member including those in State or Tribal dependency cases. Under this Children's Family Services Programs (CFSP) the child welfare team will seek to offer the best family preservation and the most timely support services possible.

### **C. Vision Statement**

The Yurok Tribe believes the safety and healthy development of all Yurok children is critical to the continuing strength of the Tribe and the preservation of the culture and life-ways of our ancestors. We believe that strong, stable Yurok families are the best role model for development of our children. The Yurok Tribe is committed to providing programs and services, based in traditional cultural family values, which fosters positive growth of our children and families.

#### **Child and Family Services Continuum**

The Yurok Tribe currently utilizes a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) approach to ensure the most comprehensive staffing and services for cases. This team approach allows for the Tribe to offer services and approaches available to address the various need(s) of the children and families served.

Services directed toward the accomplishment of the goals and objectives of this plan include the following:

- i. protecting and promoting the welfare of all children, including handicapped, homeless, dependent, or neglected children;
- ii. preventing, remedying, or assisting in the solution of problems which may result in the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children;
- iii. preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families by identifying family problems, assisting families in resolving their problems, and preventing breakup of the family where possible;
- iv. restoring to their families, children who have been removed, by the provision of services to the child and the families;
- v. placing children in suitable homes, in cases where restoration to their family of origin is not possible or appropriate; and
- vi. ensuring adequate care of children away from their homes, in cases where the child cannot be returned home or cannot be placed for adoption.

In recent years, the need for additional social service staff has become apparent. The Tribe has members involved in the Child Welfare system all throughout Humboldt and Del Norte Counties as well as in many California counties and other states. The Court system requires constant advocacy and there are many times where staff must choose among priorities because there are not enough staff to cover all the needs. Our Tribal Council is working with us to find permanent staffing solutions to adequately address the needs of our Social Services Program. We began using Title IV-B, Part II funding for a part-time Social Service worker in Humboldt County (Humboldt County has the largest caseload of the two counties) in 2013. This additional staff has proven both helpful and successful. We will continue to use Title IV-B part II funding to maintain this part time advocate position, assigned to ICWA cases in that County.

Foster home maintenance and recruitment is another large necessity for our Program. The additional funding that has been provided via our Promoting Safe and Stable Families grant helps by providing funding for a position within YSS to work directly on foster parent recruitment.

#### **D. Service Programs**

Services currently offered through the Yurok Tribe include but are not limited to:

- Family Preservation Services including reunification, services to maintain the safety of children in their homes, follow-up care, respite care, and parenting skills instruction.
- Family Support Services which include transportation, parenting skills instruction, respite care, parent-child relationship building, and information and referral services to access other community services.
- Time-Limited Family Reunification Services which include transportation to and from the following services: counseling, substance abuse treatment, DV counseling, and respite child care.
- Pre-placement preventive services programs designed to help children at risk of placement to remain with their families.
- Foster care maintenance.
- Permanency Planning.
- In-home visits.
- Information and referral services.
- The Yurok Tribal Court's Wellness Court Program which provides AOD Treatment referrals and support services.
- Tribal Foster Parent Recruitment and home approval.
- Tribal Foster Parent Support.

The target population to be served includes all children and families of the Yurok Tribe focusing on families at risk or in crisis. Additional programs within the Yurok Tribe that provide services to members include General Assistance, Vocational Education, Higher Education, Head Start, Housing, Environmental Education, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), Johnson O'Malley (JOM), Tribal TANF, DV/SA Program and the Tribal Youth Prevention Program.

#### **E. Planning Body and Data Collection**

The Social Services Advisory Committee and the Justice Advisory Board contribute to the CFSP. This input is vital to the planning necessary to meet the needs of the community. The members of the Committee represent various Native American agencies and each member represents one of our seven districts. The purpose of the committee is to advise on the social services programs and justice needs. This committee meets one time monthly and by special meeting when necessary. The committee members assimilate information discussed at these meetings and then distribute the information at their own monthly district meeting held with the Tribal members of that district. They also bring to the monthly meetings with Yurok Social Services input from the Tribal membership. This is how we address many needs of our Tribal community.

The Justice Advisory Board (JAB) membership includes Department Directors or their representative(s) from Planning, Education, Social Services, Office of Tribal Attorney, Public Safety, Court, Executive, Council, and Self Governance. The purpose of JAB is to plan and collaborate on community social justice/program development.

Additionally, in recent years, Social Services staff went to monthly district meetings at each of the seven districts. Social Services currently administers a SAMSHA Circles of Care planning grant. A major focus of this grant has been determining the gaps in services for tribal members through a number of community engagement events. Through district meetings and numerous other community events, Social Services sought to determine the most prominent needs directly from the Tribal community. Those needs include the need to building a sense of community through community events, lack of employment and job training for adults and youth, substance abuse treatment, housing, transportation, child care for the more remote areas of the reservation, and more cultural activities for youth were among the needs brought forth and discussed at these meetings and events.

Information for completing the CFSP was also collected from management staff within our Social Services Department.

The plan has been reviewed by and reflects the input of staff and community members.

#### **F. Goals, Objectives and Measures of Progress**

The goals of this plan as follows:

##### **Goal 1: Completion and Implementation of direct and/or state Title IV-E Child Welfare agreement and program.**

The Tribe's Social Services Program staff has been diligently working with the Federal Children's Bureau to finalize an approvable Title IV-E plan with the federal government and expects to have it submitted by the end of July 2014. The Tribe expects to be able to implement a Title IV-E Program in the year 2019.

The specific objectives contained in this goal are as follows:

- A. To develop the Tribe's IV-E Cost Allocation Methodology, allowing the Tribe to receive Title IV-E administrative cost reimbursement. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by the approval by the Federal Government and/or the State
- B. Establish the Tribe's system for submitting Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) reports. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by the submittal of these reports upon implementation of the Title IV-E Program.
- C. Negotiate with the State of California, under the Tribe's existing Title IV-E Intergovernmental Agreement between the California Department of Health and Human Services and the Yurok Tribe to receive the non-Federal match from the State of California. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by implementing such an agreement with the State.

## **Goal 2: Foster Care Recruitment and Retention**

The Tribe will actively and diligently seek to recruit new foster care homes and to retain the homes already approved to provide the highest quality foster care to the Yurok children and families receiving assistance.

The specific objectives contained in this goal are as follows:

- A. Annually recruit and maintain 3 new county licensed, culturally appropriate, homes in the Tribe's service area. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by the number of newly recruited, licensed, culturally appropriate, homes in the Tribe's service area. The Tribe maintains a database of Yurok foster homes which will be reviewed annually to measure the yearly increase in homes and the maintenance of the already licensed homes. Baseline data will be established at the start of fiscal year 2015 in collaboration with the Del Norte and Humboldt Counties Child Welfare Services.
- B. Annually recruit and maintain 10 tribally specified homes in the Tribe's service area. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by the number of newly recruited tribally specified homes in the Tribe's service area and the number of tribally specified homes that were maintained throughout the year. . The Tribe maintains a database of Yurok foster homes which will be reviewed annually to measure the yearly increase in homes and continued maintenance of tribally specified homes. Baseline data will be established at the start of fiscal year 2015 in collaboration with the Del Norte and Humboldt Counties Child Welfare Services.

The benchmarks for the objectives listed above include:

- a. To conduct annual Foster care recruitment luncheons at which prospective foster care families can meet YSS and County staff, learn about becoming a foster care family, and receive information about and guidance in engaging the process. Success will be measured, in part, by the Tribe successfully conducting the recruitment luncheon where attendance is recorded and these records will be compared annually to measure the increase in participation. At each luncheon, feedback will be sought in regards to barriers and needed areas of support through a facilitated focus group at the end of the event. The findings from this focus group will be incorporated into the yearly revisions of the goals in this plan.

- b. Create and maintain a foster parent support group in the service area that will meet at least quarterly. The Support Group will be a resource for foster parents to network with others doing the same work and to find support for the unique struggles faced by foster families. The success of this effort will be measured, in part, by successfully creating the foster parent support group, at the meetings attendance will be recorded and records compared annually to determine if an annual increase in participation is occurring. At one meeting per year, the Tribe will facilitate a focus group to identify barriers and needed areas of support. The findings from this group will be incorporated into the yearly revisions of the goals in this plan.

**Goal 3: To assist 20 families annually who are at risk of referral, from having their children involuntarily removed.**

The Tribe will assist at least 20 families annually who are at risk of having their children involuntarily removed.

The specific objectives contained in this goal are as follows:

- A. To confirm providing assistance to 20 families annually who are at risk of having their children involuntarily removed. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by semi-annually reviewing data collected and maintained in the Tribe's Database by YSS staff to determine the number of families that have been assisted.

**Goal 4: To maintain at least a 75% success rate for reunification, long term guardianship or Tribal Customary Adoption for Yurok children in foster care that are co-case managed with Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.**

To confirm a success rate of at least 75% of reunification, long-term guardianship or Tribal Customary Adoption for children in foster care. The success of this objective will be measured, in part, by semi-annually reviewing available data maintained in the Tribe's Database to determine the success rate for reunification, long term guardianship or Tribal Customary Adoption for children in foster care that are co-case managed with Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.

**Data collection**

Due to the cost and complexity of the TAS data system previously used by the Yurok Child Welfare team, the team has moved to using a Microsoft Access data base, identified above as the Database, designed by the Tribe's IT team to track its case load. This system has been custom designed to track the information necessary for the team to monitor the individual outcomes, as well as to aggregate data about overall performance of the program.

A separate simple excel database system is maintained to track foster home recruitment and retention as described above.

**G. Technical Assistance Needs**

The Tribe has identified a need for technical assistance with the recruitment and retention of foster care families in the Tribe's service area and establishing the Tribe's system for submitting Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) reports.

**H. Health Care Services**

The Yurok Tribe works closely with United Indian Health Services and other native specific service providers for substance abuse, health or mental health services but these services are limited. Most of these services are provided by the state and/or county where the client family resides. The Social Workers are responsible for coordinating and interacting with these services including the agency responsible for child protection. The Yurok Tribe has a team of Social Workers located in both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. They assist one another with cases when needed. YSS Tribal Social Workers will require and uphold that all parents in reunification or Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM) share in the responsibility of keeping the children's

immunizations up to date and provide regular health and dental check-ups and follow all medical treatment recommendations as part of their case plan. The staff will participate in interagency Case Management Team Meetings made up of social workers, health care providers, mental health counselors, juvenile probation, etc. to monitor and make collaborative decisions in regards to client health care services plans in addition, any start up or modifications of regular medications must be court ordered and approved.

Health care oversight and coordination for youth in foster care is covered under the State of California's plan as the Yurok Tribe does not yet operate a foster care program.

The Tribe will be working diligently over the term of this plan to develop and execute updated and formalized agreements with the above agencies to effectively implement the Tribe's Title IV-E agreements with the State of California and the Federal Government.

## **I. Disaster Plan**

Narrative:

The Tribe has a reservation that extends 44 miles from the mouth of the Klamath River at the Pacific Ocean to Weitchpec located at the confluence of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. Some parts of the Reservation can only be accessed by boat. The reservation topography includes ocean shoreline to picturesque steep sided canyons. Disasters that have occurred are flooding, tsunamis and forest fires. The Tribe also has a two county service area that includes large towns such as Eureka, McKinleyville, Trinidad, Crescent City, Smith River and Arcata. The Tribes enrollment is nearly 6,000 members. The reservation and service area is too large and the tribal population too dispersed to develop an effective door to door Emergency Action Plan.

In the event of a disaster the Social Services Department staff will follow the Tribes' FEMA Emergency Management Protocols. Social Services staff will be deployed as directed in the plan. The Klamath office will coordinate efforts with the Del Norte Red Cross to establish a 24/7 Shelter Care facility for individuals and families. Humboldt County will do the same.

90% of the current Social Services staff have received training from the Red Cross in the operation of a facility and have had actual experience.

Social Services will coordinate efforts in the Klamath Area to deploy buses to transport clients to the local Red Cross Emergency 24/7 facility.

Specific:

1. Tribal Social workers will regularly distribute to each of their clients households a fact sheet that identifies local emergency phone numbers, contact persons, specific action plan for their area and shelter and other resources.
2. The Social workers will also regularly provide tribal members with the telephone numbers of their Tribal Designated Information Officer who will maintain an updated Tribal Specific Web Site and current information about resources.

3. Social Workers and Advocates will maintain lists of addresses and phone numbers of their clients so they can be contacted during an emergency as a means of conducting welfare checks on clients.
4. Social Services will work with Tribal Transportation, Yurok Tribal and County Law Enforcement and the Hoopa Tribal Police Department, in the event of forest fires or other disasters, in the eastern section of the reservation (coastal area is generally too wet for forest fires) short term (a few days) evacuation for those elders and person without transportation. Social Services will work with Tribal Transportation, Yurok Tribal and County Law Enforcement and the Hoopa Tribal Police Department.
5. The Tribe has purchased HEPA Filters for the elderly, families with small children, and TANF Clients. Yurok Social workers will coordinate with UIHS and county agencies to assist members in disaster zones.

We have credit cards and emergency cards as well as an emergency checkbook on hand to buy necessities for children under our care or who may come under our care during an emergency situation. Communication will be conducted mainly through cell phones already in our possession.

#### **J. Consultation and Coordination (Including States)**

In order to implement the various goals and objectives of the Child and Family Services plan, the Yurok Tribe has engaged in constructive dialogue and interaction with the State at various levels. One of the primary areas of consultation/collaboration has been concerning the Indian Child Welfare Act.

The Tribe works directly with and meets regularly with, the Humboldt and Del Norte County Health and Human Services on issues related to the ICWA. In Humboldt County, the Tribe continues to participate in the Humboldt County California Partners for Permanency (CAPP) Advisory Committee meetings monthly. Humboldt County is one of three Counties in the State to be awarded a disproportionality grant which spawned the Humboldt County Children and Family Services CAPP Advisory Committee. The CAPP project is a Presidential initiative to reduce the number of children in long term foster care. The federal government is providing a \$100 million investment and CAPP is one of only six projects in the Country to receive this five year grant. In Humboldt County, the project is focused on American Indian children and families. The goal is to improve child and family practice so that children are able to grow up safely with their own families or placed with other family, tribal or community members. As a member of the Advisory Committee, the Yurok Tribe helps plan and guide the Institutional Analysis as well as inform and guide the action plan to address the system barriers identified in the analysis.

In Del Norte County the Tribe meets weekly as a part of a multi-disciplinary team to discuss specific cases as well as general overall policy and collaboration issues. The Tribe's success rate in preventing child removal, reunifying or finding a culturally appropriate permanent placement for children when removed is due in large part to collaborative efforts allowing for co-investigation and case management of all Yurok children that have been reported to the County's child welfare services. This continued collaboration will be critical to the achievement of the goals as outlined in this plan.

Additionally, specific to foster home recruitment and retention, the Tribe currently collaborates in both Counties with:

1. the identification of appropriate relative or other tribal placements when Yurok children are removed,
2. the home assessment process for home approval, and
3. foster/relative care provider orientation and preparation.

Recently, the Tribe and Humboldt County Child Welfare Services began holding meetings to discuss collaborative recruitment activities which include developing recruitment materials and events such as fliers, websites, tabling, and community engagement events. During the course of the past year, the Tribe held one collaborative community event in which a number of families were provided information on becoming foster parents. At least 10 of these families were able to begin the background check process that very day thanks to a portable livescan device. Additionally, a draft version of a collaborative flier has been created and is under review by the County legal department. It the hope the of the Tribe that Title IV-B funds will support the staff time to continue this joint planning endeavor as well as financial resources to support further recruitment materials and activities.

The Tribe continually engages the State in discussions concerning the ICWA. As the largest tribe in California, Yurok has cases in several counties in the State. Some of those counties closer to home have worked closely with the Tribe to develop tribal specific protocol regarding these cases, there is ongoing dialogue concerning notice to the Tribe as well as issues of active efforts, placement and transfer to the Tribal Court. The Tribe intervenes at the State Court level in all Tribal ICWA cases and proceeds with the transfer of those cases as appropriate under the ICWA and Yurok Tribal Law. One barrier blocking complete jurisdiction and transfer of cases is the lack of a completed State/Tribal Title IV-E agreement or Federal/Tribal Title IV-E agreement. With recent staff turnover the completion of both of these projects has been delayed.

The issue of proper placement, in compliance with the ICWA, has led to ongoing negotiations with the State over the development of a Tribal/State Title IV-E Agreement. The reasoning for this was to enable the Tribe to transfer cases into the Tribal Court and be able to fund those placements. Through our consultations/negotiations with the State the Tribe has learned that the State is reluctant to fund placements ordered by the Tribal Court. Negotiations began in August of 2007. The Agreement was signed in 2009, but at this time the agreement although in effect has not been effectively implemented. Additionally, the Tribe continues to work with the federal government to develop policies and procedures for a direct Title IV-E funding agreement. It is expected that these negotiations will result in an approved Title IV-E plan by the end of July 2014. As mentioned above the delay in the completion of both of these agreements is largely due to recent staff turnover.

In addition to the IV-E negotiations mentioned above, the Tribe has also entered into negotiations with Humboldt and Del Norte counties on the sharing of jurisdiction over child welfare cases, prevention, and diversified response. These agreements will enhance both the Tribe's and the State's ability to respond to Tribal Children in need of aid. The agreements

clearly define jurisdiction and appropriate response by each entity as well as specified County/State and Tribal contact information. Additionally, the Tribe is working with the counties and appropriate agencies in finding placements for children in need of aid.

The Tribe has continued to work with both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties to develop concurrent jurisdiction in child welfare cases. Because these children are indeed citizens of two sovereigns it is in the best interests of the children to benefit from both and to have true collaboration between the States and Tribe to ensure a better future.

The Tribe also participates in quarterly, and sometimes more often, conference calls coordinated by the State of California's Department of Health and Human Services to collaborate between the State and the tribes within California for the drafting and implementation of the State's and the tribes' Title IV-B plans.

Listed below are internal and external agencies that Yurok Social Services consults and coordinates with on a regular basis:

1. Internal

- Tribal Youth Program
- Head Start
- Child Care
- Johnson O'Malley JOM
- Yurok Public Safety
- Social Services Advisory Committee/Justice Advisory Board
- Office of the Tribal Attorney
- Tribal Court/Programs
- Tribal Council

2. External

- Two Feathers Child Welfare Services
- Harrington House
- Humboldt Domestic Violence Services
- Humboldt and Del Norte County Social Services
- Humboldt and Del Norte County Mental Health
- Humboldt and Del Norte County Office of Education
- Humboldt and Del Norte County Juvenile Court
- Probation Departments-Humboldt and Del Norte County
- United Indian Health Services (UIHS)
- Hoopa Valley Tribal Social Services

**K. Plan Availability**

The CFSP will be made available to all interested parties via our Tribal Website for the Yurok Tribe's Social Services Department.

The CFSP will also be shared directly with the State of California's Department of Health and Human Services by email of the above mentioned link.

#### **L. Conclusion**

HHS child welfare funds provide the means to meet the needs of children and families that are not available to the Tribe from other sources. These funds complement funding from the BIA which provides Advocates and Social Workers. Thus the HHS Title IV-B funding is an integral part of the Yurok Tribe's Social Service delivery system.