Consultation Transcript

0:0:15.115 --> 0:0:15.435
Sheryl Goodreau (Keweenaw Bay Indian Community - KBIC)
OK.

0:0:19.15 --> 0:0:20.295
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Good afternoon, everyone.

0:0:25.315 --> 0:0:26.155
Barbara A. Laman
Good afternoon.

0:0:25.535 --> 0:0:26.95
Dee
Hello.

0:0:36.115 --> 0:0:41.835
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
We'll get started here in just about a minute. Make sure everyone enters the meeting.

0:0:43.345 --> 0:0:45.625
Sheryl Goodreau (Keweenaw Bay Indian Community - KBIC)
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

0:0:52.305 --> 0:0:54.145
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
I have a couple people joining.

0:1:19.655 --> 0:1:28.255
Michelle Bodine (Lac Courte Oreilles)
Good afternoon. This is Michelle Bodine of the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe. In I come up as CR, our conference room.

0:1:29.275 --> 0:1:31.635
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Yes, the Council conference room.

0:1:32.255 --> 0:1:36.865
Michelle Bodine (Lac Courte Oreilles)
Yes. Thank you.

0:1:37.575 --> 0:2:28.465
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
You're welcome. Thank you. Alright, it is 1:02. We will get started. Good afternoon and welcome everyone. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Arlene Danzy, and I will be facilitating today's session on behalf of the Office of Child Support Enforcement. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge and honor the tribal nations and communities represented here, and to thank you for taking the time to engage with us today. We greatly value your perspectives, guidance, and partnership, and we appreciate your continued willingness to share your experiences and priorities with us. To begin our consultation, it is my honor to introduce Deputy Commissioner Linda Boyer, who will offer opening remarks. Deputy Commissioner Boyer, thank you for being here with us today. I will now turn it over to you for your opening remarks.

0:2:29.195 --> 0:4:7.305
Boyer, Linda (ACF)
Well, good afternoon and thank you all for joining us today. I am Linda Boyer and I am the Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Child support Enforcement, and I want to take the time to welcome you and thank you for taking the time to participate in this tribal consultation. We are so honored by your presence and grateful for your continued partnership. We recognize and respect tribal nations as sovereign governments, and we approach today's consultation in the spirit of our government-to-government relationship. Your perspectives, your experiences, and expertise are essential to informing our work, and we truly do value the opportunity to listen and to learn from you. The purpose of today's consultation is to seek your input on the proposed rescission of the final rule for Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program. We are here to listen and to better understand your perspectives on how this may affect tribal child support programs, service delivery, and families that you serve. We appreciate your willingness to share your insights and your recommendations. We are committed to taking what we hear today seriously as we move forward. So, I want to thank you again for your participation and I look forward to a productive discussion. Thank you.

0:4:10.25 --> 0:4:26.905
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Deputy Commissioner Boyer, for your opening remarks. Before we begin today's consultation, we would like to open with a prayer. We are honored to have Michael Kidder, director Osage Nation, who has graciously agreed to offer the opening prayer. Michael, are you on the call?

0:4:27.885 --> 0:4:28.925
Michael Kidder (Osage Nation)
I am here.

0:4:29.5 --> 0:4:30.165
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you.

0:4:31.245 --> 0:4:32.125
Michael Kidder (Osage Nation)
Everybody hear me.
0:4:33.85 --> 0:4:35.85

Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Yes, loud and clear.

0:4:35.385 --> 0:5:42.75
Michael Kidder
Oh, thank you. Well, thank you and I appreciate the opportunity to open up this meeting with prayer. And with that said, I'll start. The Lord, come today and ask you to watch over us. Take care of us as we go through this meeting today, dear Lord. Help guide us. Help guide our words. Help guide our decisions along this path, dear Lord. If you can help us in that way, dear Lord, I ask that of you. Take care of us in that way if you can, dear Lord. I ask you to watch over all the child support offices out there today, dear Lord. Take care and take care all the clients. Take care of each and every one of them take care of all their needs, all their sicknesses, anything that stresses them out, any worries they may have dear Lord. You take care of them in that way. I ask you to watch over all of us as our little tribal child support offices, all our people that work in these offices and help us along this path. Help guide us take care of our people the way we can, dear Lord. And I ask you to watch over each and every one of us here today, dear Lord? Like I said, take care of any worries, any stress in our lives dear Lord. You do that for us. Ask all this in your name. Amen.

0:5:49.5 --> 0:5:55.365
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Michael, for that prayer and for grounding us as we begin today's consultation. We are grateful to you for sharing that with us.

0:5:57.215 --> 0:5:59.775
Michael Kidder (Osage Nation)
You're very welcome. I appreciate you guys asking me.

0:6:3.645 --> 0:7:2.635
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Excuse me. Today, we will begin with the presentation from Kimberly Curtis, the director of the Division of Policy and Training. Kimberly will provide us with an overview of the employment and training services for noncustodial parents in the Child Support Program final rule and the proposal to rescind that final rule. Following the presentation, we will

open the floor for testimony and any questions you may have after that discussion, Deputy Commissioner Boyer will offer our closing remarks to conclude today's consultation. There will also be an opportunity to provide written testimony and we encourage you to submit that written testimony by February 14th, to the OCSE tribal resource e-mail box at OCSE.Tribal@acf.hhs.gov. Tristan has put that, excuse me, that e-mail in the chat for you. With that, I will turn it over to Kimberly Curtis.

0:7:4.815 --> 0:12:26.345
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Thank you, Arlene. Good afternoon and good morning, everyone. My name is Kimberly Curtis, and I serve as the director of the Division of Policy and Training within the Office of Child Support Enforcement. I appreciate the opportunity to provide some background and context to support today's consultation discussion. The purpose of my brief presentation is to walk through a high level overview of the Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program Final Rule and the proposal to rescind that final rule. This overview is intended to provide context for the discussion and is not meant to replace consultation or limit feedback we received today.

The slides are intentionally brief and high level. They focus on what the final rule did and what the proposal to rescind that final rule will do, as well as the rationale for the change. We recognize that tribal child support programs operate under unique authorities and circumstances, and we want to better understand how this proposed rescission may affect your programs and the families you serve. With that, I will briefly walk through the slides and then we look forward to hearing your comments, questions and recommendations during the discussion portion of today's consultation. Next slide please.

So the employment and training services for noncustodial parents in the Child Support Program Final Rule was published on December 13, 2024, and it allowed state and tribal child support agencies to use IV-D funding to provide certain, optional and non-duplicative employment and training services For eligible noncustodial parents involved in the in the, Excuse me, in the child support program. Next slide.

As with any new administration, priorities may shift and, as such, a review is often times conducted to determine whether actions recently taken align with the new administration's priorities. To that end, the president issued Executive Order 14219, which required OCSE to conduct a review of all current rules, looking at necessity, effectiveness, and budgetary impacts. As a result of this review, and based on cost, necessity, and effectiveness, OCSE is proposing to rescind the Employment and Training for Noncustodial Parents Final Rule. As it relates to cost, The final rule projected substantial federal expenditures over time reaching $98.5 million per Budget year by 2034. Under the current administration, it has been concluded that the policy approach reflected in this rule is not the most cost effective or efficient means of advancing Title IV-D objectives. Concerning necessity and effectiveness, it has been deemed not necessary or effective because it sets up a separate

service and funding system within child support agencies that overlaps with existing federal workforce programs, making administration more complicated and fragmented even when coordination is possible. Next slide.

If the rule is rescinded, the following sections will be impacted. We would remove and reserve 45 CFR 309.121 which provided the option to tribes to provide employment and training services to eligible noncustodial parents. This section also provided eligibility criteria and limited employment and training services to job search assistance, Job readiness training, Job development, and job placement services, Job retention services, Work supports, such as transportation assistance and occupational training and other skills training directly related to employment. 45 CFR 309.65 details what a tribe must include in its tribal IV-D plan in order to demonstrate capacity to operate a tribal IV-D program. And subsection B Currently allows employment and training services for eligible noncustodial parents to be included in the tribal IV-D plan, and this would be removed. 45 CFR 309.145 covers allowable costs for tribal IV-D programs and subsection C5 which allows employment and training services would be removed. And finally, 45 CFR 309.155 covers what uses of tribal IV-D program funds are not allowable. Subsection F referenced expenditures under section 309.121 the employment and training section, and this would be removed.

That concludes my short presentation, and I respectfully now turn it over for testimony.

0:12:30.165 --> 0:13:13.145
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Kimberly. We'd like to open the floor at this time for any feedback or testimony. Feel free to use your virtual hand raise or, if you have any other commentary, or you can also put it in the chat. We have Tristan monitoring the chat.

Maria. OK. I have some hands raised starting with the council room is, is it Maria? Uh oh.

0:13:14.515 --> 0:13:18.915
Michelle Bodine (Lac Courte Oreilles)
No. This is Michelle Bodine, secretary, treasurer of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band.

0:13:16.125 --> 0:13:23.785
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Michelle. I am so sorry, Michelle. Your hand was raised. You can go ahead. I apologize.

0:13:23.645 --> 0:20:44.135
Michelle Bodine (Lac Courte Oreilles)
OK, I will lower my hand. Oh, so I want to read our testimony because we are submitting this in in writing to you as well.

But the Lac Courte Oreilles tribal governing board supports the Lac Courte Oreilles Child Support program in the efforts of of other tribes, states, and national organizations to provide education on the needs of employment services directly from child support agencies. Child support programs offer unique access to individuals to promote employment and training services in companion with parenting skills. The Lac Courte Oreilles tribal governing board, Like the Administration for Children and Families, recognizes that an awareness of financial responsibility by parents is directly related to the increase in child support payments. How we increase awareness of financial responsibility is directly tied to an understanding of parenting roles.

October 1, 2025, the LCO tribal governing child support began the implementing implementation of the Mino Bimaadiziwin Project pilot program. Our experiences have been when noncustodial parents come first, come in for an assessment, they are often hesitant, expecting more hoops to jump through and no help. By the time they leave, they feel hopeful and encouraged because they've discovered A place that honors who they are and where they come from? The reason is simple. We take a holistic approach rooted in traditional tribal values. Our program addresses the full spectrum of individual challenges such as substance use, alcohol dependency, mental health concerns, and reentry after incarceration. And I might add one more thing, Historical trauma. When we look at those things, and, and the non-parenting skills that people have stems back from removal of our people from their families and their parents and not learning how to be nurturing and and and taking on those parenting skills from learning them from their parents.

So, I digressed a little bit from the letter. So, but while reconnecting participants to their identities and traditions, the Mino Bimaadiziwin Project program integrates the tribally relevant 7 Grandfather Teachings in every session, reminding parents of their sacred responsibilities to family and community. These teachings help restore balance and self-worth fostering healthy Relationships with their co-parent, and strengthening families, connections to their traditional tribal values. This foundation of traditional teachings transforms the program from a service into a path of healing and empowerment, which teaches and inspires parents to prioritize their children's well-being and to recognize the need for consistent child support obligations. The 7 Grandfather Teachings creates a stronger, stronger family bonds, Increased financial supports, and brighter futures for children by reconnecting parents to traditional values through responsible parenting and economic upward mobility. Success stories are important to help to understand importance of employment and training services for noncustodial parents in the child support program, such as the Mino Bimaadiziwin Project.

one account of a parent in the LCO Child support Mino Bimaadiziwin Project program is as follows: A young parent was extremely anxious when he had upcoming child support court appearances. His previous court experiences usually ended with an arrest. He learned that through attending several Mino Bimaadiziwin Project sessions, how to prepare for court. he was encouraged to write down his accomplishments and goals, both within our program

and in other supportive services, including his steps to provide for his children, And respect for his co-parent. When he presented his accomplishments, the court recognized those and encouraged his efforts. Instead of being arrested, he left feeling proud and motivated. He accepted full responsibility for his past actions and is now actively working to correct them in a way that benefits his children and strengthens his role as a parent in his employment efforts.

Approximately 25% of referrals to our program Originate from court recommendations. While 75% come from child support case workers. Of those referrals, nearly 50% enroll in actively participate in our services. This demonstrates a critical role these programs play in engaging parents and supporting compliance with child support obligations. A noncustodial parent participating in the Mino Bimaadiziwin Program increases the likelihood of paying child support Through the wage withholding and increases that effectiveness of the tribal child support program. The La Courte Oreilles tribal governing board recognizes the need for programs to provide well-coordinated, coordinated and non-duplicative training services. We ensure that our services for noncustodial parents are not duplicated. We use formal memorandums of understanding to refer participants to specialized services already in place, Such as career development, substance use treatment, and mental health support.

During our initial assessment, we carefully review which programs each parents is currently engaged with to avoid duplication and ensure coordination with agencies. This approach allows us to focus on filling gaps rather than duplicate efforts, creating a streamlined and effective network of resources for parents. Lac Courte Oreilles Child Support program has taken into consideration other tribal agencies Providing employment services such as TANF, workforce resource, vocational rehabilitation, and by developing policy and procedures to ensure that noncustodial parents are not receiving the same employment and training services from other federally funded employment and training programs.

The Lac Courte Oreilles tribe is federally recognized tribe located in northern Wisconsin and one of the 11 federally recognized tribes in Wisconsin. The La Courte Oreilles Child Support Program has a comprehensive tribal IV-D child support program since 2013. In that time, we have realized that our agency has a unique access to address high unemployment of noncustodial parents, both through direct office contact as well as court action.

in closing, the La Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians support the retention of the final rule Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program. Beguiled (native language), which means thank you for taking our comments under consideration.

0:20:46.805 --> 0:20:53.625
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Michelle. I think up next we had Calvin.

0:20:57.595 --> 0:20:58.555
Calvin Jilot (Chippewa Cree)
Yep. Can you guys hear me, OK?

0:21:1.435 --> 0:21:2.115
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
One more time.

0:21:2.835 --> 0:21:3.635
Calvin Jilot (Chippewa Cree)
Can you hear me, OK?

0:21:4.545 --> 0:21:5.665
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
It's a little low.

0:21:6.645 --> 0:21:25.455
Calvin Jilot (Chippewa Cree)
Uh, oh. A little worried about that. I'd have to skip me once, so I go get a microphone. I get set.

0:21:24.385 --> 0:21:28.225
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Nope, we can hear you. It it it? The volume went up. We can hear you.

0:21:28.275 --> 0:21:29.235
Calvin Jilot (Chippewa Cree)
Oh, you can hear me now.

0:21:29.705 --> 0:21:30.345
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Yes, I can hear you now.

0:21:30.785 --> 0:21:37.945
Calvin Jilot (Chippewa Cree)
OK, perfect. Well, first thank you very much for the time and opportunity you guys are giving us to be able to read off our testimonies.

0:21:33.195 --> 0:21:34.155
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you.

0:21:38.345 --> 0:26:46.905
Calvin Jilot (Chippewa Cree)
I'll too, I'll, I'll read off exactly what, First, I guess my name is Calvin Jilot. I'm the one of the tribal leaders for the Chippewa Cree Tribe. I'm also the chairman of the Child Support Office for the Chippewa Cree Tribe. So, I'll be reading our testimony to you guys Right now, as we also will be sending this off to you. But again, our tribe appreciates the opportunity that is provided to be able to read this written testimony regarding the proposed recission of the Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program Final Rule. our tribe believes strongly in the proposed responsibility of the child Support program. As the first tribal tribal support program in Montana, we have a long history of supporting initiatives that strengthen service delivery, improve family stability, and prioritize the well-being of children. We have consistently welcomed efforts that allow tribal programs to move beyond enforcement alone and toward solutions that address the underlying barriers families face.

To start touching on just a few bullet points, our good faith participation in the 1115 waiver process. When the employment and Training Service Services Initiative was introduced, our program engaged in the process in good faith. We viewed the initiative as an important opportunity to enhance child support outcomes by supporting noncustodial parents and becoming employable, stable, and able to meet their obligations.

Our program worked towards the development of an 1115 waiver proposal in coordinated internally in preparation for submission. A significant staff time and planning were invested based on federal guidance Encouraging tribal participation and innovation. Our program was prepared to submit when we were informed that the waiver pathway was being rescinded. The recission occurred after tribes had already already begun planning and development efforts, leaving programs without the ability to move forward despite readiness and demonstrated needs.

Our our tribal realities and service gaps, our tribal communities, you know, face unique and pursuant challenges that directly affect child support outcomes. These include geographic isolation, limited employment opportunities, transportation barriers, and reduce access to training and accredited programs.

These realities are adequately addressed through enforcement-based approaches alone. Employment and training services are not duplicative existing programs. Rather, they fill a critical service gap for noncustodial parents who may not qualify for other assistant programs, yet still face significant barriers to employment. without these services, Child child support programs are left with fewer tools, proactively for two practically supported families.

Our child support programs exist to serve children. I'm supporting noncustodial parents to obtaining employment and stability leads to more consistent child support payments,

reduce arrears, and improve long term outcomes for families. Unemployment and training services address the root cause of noncompliant root causes of noncompliance Rather than relying solely on who live enforcement measures which are which are often less effective and more costly. These services allow parents to meet the responsibilities in a meaningful way, ultimately benefiting children and strengthening families.

Our request to OCSS, you know, we're we're respectfully urging That the Office of Child Support Services to reconsider the recission of the Employment and Training Services Final Rule. At a minimum, we're requesting to restore restoration of a pathway, such as a waiver and alternative mechanism that allows child support service programs to implement employment and training services under the IV-D program. Tribal programs need flexibility to design solutions that affect the realities of their communities and to continue building programs that support parents, children's family, and families effectively.

In closing, our program welcomed the Employment and Training Services initiative and prepared to implement it responsibly. The removal of this option limits tribal innovation and reduces the tools available to improve child support outcomes. We urge OCSS to preserve or restore this important opportunity, so tribal support programs may continue to serve children through strategies that promote employment responsibility and family stability. Again, we really appreciate the time and opportunity you guys have given us to be able to provide this testimony.

0:26:50.665 --> 0:27:15.875
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Calvin. We appreciate your testimony. I think we have Donna up next. Donna? Think you may be muted, Donna, if you're speaking.

0:27:39.425 --> 0:27:42.545
Donna Thompson (Shoshone-Bannock)
There you go. OK. Are you able to hear me now?

0:27:43.5 --> 0:27:45.805
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Yes, hello, good afternoon or good morning.

0:27:46.215 --> 0:28:12.945
Donna Thompson (Shoshone-Bannock)
Yeah, it's good morning still here. I'm Donna Thompson and I am the chairwoman for the Fort Hall Business Council of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. But before I begin my testimony, I just have a real quick question After listening to some of the comments that were being made here, and. I just, could you please confirm has this rule been rescinded or is it being proposed for rescission?

0:28:15.985 --> 0:28:20.145
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Hi Donna, it is being proposed for rescission.

0:28:19.375 --> 0:28:19.975
Donna Thompson (Shoshone-Bannock)
OK.

0:28:20.185 --> 0:28:22.785
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Nothing has been published yet.

0:28:23.285 --> 0:33:0.505
Donna Thompson (Shoshone-Bannock)
OK. Great. Thank you. I, I just had a question, and I want to thank the previous individuals for their comments.

But OK again. I am Donna Thompson, chairwoman of the Fort Hall Business Council of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. We are one of three Idaho tribes that are federally funded to operate a title IV-D Child Support Service program and are appreciative of the working relationship with the we have with the Office of Child Support Services.

With over 6000 enrolled tribal members on our 550,000 acre reservation within Idaho, the United States has a trust responsibility to our tribe that is encompassed in the Fort Bridger Treaty of July 3, 1868. This treaty affirms the tribe's sovereignty and the federal obligation to support the health, welfare, And well-being of our people. Federal child support policy must be implemented in a manner consistent with these treaty obligations and the government-to-government relationship.

We are extremely disappointed in the proposed recission of the Final Rule for Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program that would have allowed our tribes tribal Child support program to apply for the 1115 waiver to fund employment and training services for noncustodial parents. This reduces our options to secure sufficient funding to help noncustodial parents gain financial stability for their families.

The majority of families involved in cases do not have a steady income and are unable to provide consistent files, Consistent financial support to their families. Noncustodial parents are faced with significant barriers to employment because they often lack the necessary training and education to qualify for well-paying jobs. So, they often take jobs That pay wage is well below the federal poverty level. Additional seasonal or intermittent work and transportation challenges can lead to job and financial insecurity, especially in unplanned circumstances, when they must take on responsibilities of providing for additional children.

OCSS offered in in correspondence that the Rule being proposed to be rescinded because tribes already have the ability to offer employment and training services using tribal funds under other federal funding sources. We feel this decision was premature. While we do have other services, other programs do not account for providing training and employment Opportunities for our population of over 200 open cases involving 285 children. Therefore, before rescinding the rule, the ability for other programs to absorb noncustodial parents should have been considered available housing, excuse me, should have been considered available funding and eligibility for other programs should have been addressed and tribal consultation should have been conducted. OCSS should not have simply should not simply assume that other tribal programs could meet this need.

Each tribe is unique, while every child child is important. Thus, if a tribe has an unmet need, options should be should not be eliminated No matter how many tribes have applied in the past. By rescinding this final rule only hinders tribal family stability and the opportunity for the noncustodial parent to be financially responsible to the family.

We respectfully ask that OCSS reinstate the option for tribes to apply for the 1115 waiver to enable us to provide this resource to our noncustodial parents. and I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. I look forward to your response.

0:33:2.925 --> 0:34:4.425
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, chairwoman. And the floor is still open for any testimony.

If it is helpful, you're also welcome to share any general comments today, as well as provide these comments as written testimony. Again, our tribal resource mailbox. I will give it a few more minutes. Tristan, Is that something? Oh, sorry.

0:34:2.475 --> 0:34:9.315
Johnson, Tristan (ACF)
We have. Yeah, we've got a comment in the in the chat that asks if, can staff ask questions?

0:34:11.345 --> 0:34:28.785
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Yes, if you have a question, you are more than welcome to ask. Sheryl? Cheryl, you have your hand raised.

0:34:30.665 --> 0:35:21.755
Sheryl Goodreau (Keweenaw Bay Indian Community - KBIC)
I do. I would just like to Make a comment. We here at KBIC in Michigan, we do have a program within our tribe which is to help tribal members. And our problem is is that we have noncustodial parents who are nontribal. So, they are not eligible for that program. And

so that's causing a bit of a problem for us with this Decision that's been made. So, I just wanted to bring that to the attention that even though we may have some tribal services here, they don't, they won't apply to nontribal members. And I asked, I even asked the question of what if the children that they're obligated to? What if they are tribal and it it doesn't help?

0:35:27.585 --> 0:35:34.905
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you for your input, Sheryl. Tish, you have a question or want to provide testimony?

0:35:40.735 --> 0:35:48.275
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
Fair. I am going to go to the to the Council.

0:36:0.305 --> 0:36:6.745
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
Thank you. I think that way if you have to speak. Kimberly, can you hear me? (echo) Kimberly, Kimberly, can you hear me?

0:36:8.765 --> 0:36:9.485
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Yes, I can.

0:36:10.495 --> 0:37:30.265
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
Thank you. The question I have is when you did your original. If we can do this now. When you, Kimberly, when you did your overview, you mentioned four different subsections on the CFR that this would remove should this, should this rescission take place. I'm just wondering if you could go back to that a little bit? I, I realized that the final rule did allow for several things under 309 section. But all of these, The, the comment that all of these under the proposed rescission will remove everything, if you could go into that a little bit further. Are you saying that the original final rule Alters these to the extent that removing them would take us back to what it what our CFR 309 look like prior to the final rule? Or is this removal going to change Things substantially If, if it happened? I don't know if that makes much sense.

0:37:28.945 --> 0:38:4.865
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Sure, I think I understand the question. So, the the parts of the of 309 that would be removed and or reserved all pertain to employment and training services. It wouldn't impact anything outside of what was promulgated under that final rule in 2024. So, it would, it would essentially, as you said, take us back to what it looked like prior to the promulgation of the final rule.

0:38:16.895 --> 0:38:55.195
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
OK. Thank you. I'm, I'm not sure if we're interpreting in that way, but we would certainly amend our comments to address that if there was more concern on that. I, I do know that on, Within the comments to the final rule, there was some interpretation that we already had that ability in some areas to deal with employment. But we will, we will address In, we will amend and beef up some of our comments if we see that in that area. So, thank you for the time.

0:38:55.685 --> 0:38:56.645
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Thank you.

0:39:0.935 --> 0:39:3.815
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Tish. I think Reagan, I see your hand up.

0:39:5.645 --> 0:39:7.365
Raegan Hendrickson (White Earth Nation)
Hi, good afternoon, everyone.

0:39:6.185 --> 0:39:6.705
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Yes.

0:39:7.645 --> 0:39:38.785
Raegan Hendrickson (White Earth Nation)
I'm Reagan Hendrickson and I'm with the White Earth nation. I just want to let you guys know that White Earth nation will be submitting written comments. It was just kind of hard getting the notice during the holidays and not having the proper, not being able to follow the proper chain to get approval for testimony. So, I'll just. I just want to let you know that White Earth Nation will be submitting their comments.

0:39:40.905 --> 0:40:14.875
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Reagan.
We're still open and receiving any testimony, thoughts, questions you may have.
Oh, hi Maria. you have your hand up.

0:40:15.335 --> 0:40:32.165
Maria Huynh (Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe)
Hi sorry I've been sick, but I just wanted to say that Port Gamble will be submitting our

comments as well. I don't have permission to speak today, but yeah, due to the holidays and the late notice, we weren't able to get a Council member present. So, thank you.

0:40:35.595 --> 0:40:37.235
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you and I hope you feel better.

0:40:46.805 --> 0:40:53.565
Johnson, Tristan (ACF)
In the chat we have from Janessa, that Bear River will also be submitting written comments due to the time constraints.

0:40:58.385 --> 0:41:28.265
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Have another hand raised Sis? The floor is yours. Sis, I see you have your hand. Nope, your hand. Your hand is raised. You're welcome to come off mute.

0:41:33.185 --> 0:41:54.175
Willowa “Sis” Horn (Fort Belknap Indian Community)
Good afternoon. I was really talking. I said, I don't have the, I didn't get the permission to speak, but my president of the Council was supposed to be on today to present our testimony. I do have written a written statement. I don't know if you want me to read it or just submit it.

0:41:55.985 --> 0:42:5.145
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
It is entirely up to you if you'd like to read it in the Open Forum today, we'll be happy to hear. And you can also submit it to our resource mailbox as well.
0:42:6.435 --> 0:42:15.115

Willowa “Sis” Horn (Fort Belknap Indian Community)
OK Well, I will go ahead and and read it. I will skip the first part where it mentions the president's name, but.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. We strongly oppose recission of the final rule to Employment and Training Services for Noncustodial Parents in the Child Support Program. The Fort Belknap Indian community urges the Office of Child Support Enforcement to maintain the final rule and continue to support employment and training services within the child support program.

The child support program establishes and enforces child support responsibilities. When parents do not live with their children, the laws enacted by Congress over the past five decades have generally strengthened child support programs and established a public

understanding that noncustodial parents are expected to help their children as they grow up. We expect Congress to continue strengthening the child support based employment services function in rural tribal communities.

At Fort Belknap there's a strong emphasis on prioritizing children's needs and protecting them from stressors, which often translates into ensuring the child is loved and cared for by the parents, regardless of the parent marital status.

No duplication. Tribal service programs often partner effectively but face significant service gaps due to chronic underfund funding for employment, training, workforce development, education, health, transportation, and housing. Additionally, funding disrupts, like recent federal cuts and potential future funding freeze, freezes, disproportionately impact tribal programs and core services.

I, I just wanna add something here. We got a intergovernmental grant a few years back and one of the one of the goals of that program was for us to partner with our other tribal programs here on the reservation so that we were not duplicating services. We developed the referral form. If somebody came to my office and needed a payment for a driver's license, let's say, if he was not our client, I would refer him to either TANF for Tiwahe or one of the other programs that could help him.

So, we developed that partnership with tribal programs. We meet monthly, so we can say there's no duplication of services. At Fort Belknap, there's no service program offering a dedicated employment and training fund source specifically for the noncustodial parent target group. Not all noncustodial parents are automatically eligible for TANF, and they're not always enough funds to support noncustodial parent employment and training under the consolidated fund the tribe has under the 102-477 employment and training program.

Extending employment services reach. Funding from the Office of Child Support Enforcement, employing, employment and training services for noncustodial parent provides that service gap and adds flexibility.

Recognizing this in 2014, the Fort Belknap Child Support program successfully implemented the two-year Tribal Innovation Grant focusing on overcoming noncustodial parents' barriers and becoming gainfully employed. We demonstrated work with nine noncustodial parents each year with positive outcomes, three obtain custody of their children, three enrolled in college, and five gained employment. Focusing on the NCP to overcome their barriers and become gainfully employed.

That is why we, we were looking forward to the Office of Child Support Enforcement finalized rule retaining federal funding available for tribal agencies to provide employment and training services to noncustodial parents, allowing those programs to expand significantly and to strengthen our tribal child support partnerships with Montana

Department of Labor, 477 employment and training, Tribal Employment Rights Office, the tribal court social services, head start and the Aaniih Nakoda College.

Complementary design. Child support employment service programs are designed to reach people where other systems do not. In 2024, the Fort Belknap dedicated months of time and work constructing a very effective and compelling pilot program application designed to help noncustodial parents find stable employment, increasing their ability to pay child support for the purpose to improve family life and positive outcomes of our tribal children.

It is a proactive program. It is proactive programs like this that complement the child support program to increase family income, improve financial stability, and help families make ends meet. These services to rural tribal communities honor tribal sovereignty, strengthen families, and create pathways to long term economic stability.

The Fort Belknap Indian Community Child Support Program 1115 waiver requested $2,000,000 in over a 5-year period to provide a holistic approach to job readiness, training, placement, apprenticeships, and other support services for parents participating in the IV-D program. In August 2025, on the verge of processing an award for our project, OCSE advised us that our section 1115 waiver application was discontinued due to the employment training ruling in the process of being rescinded.

Compliance and fiscal responsibility. With employment and training services for noncustodial parents in the child support program, we can deliver measurable results that can increase the number of children receiving reliable child support. The average amount of current support and child support orders, the number of parents who access the services of this program, the number of parents who successfully complete this program, the number of parents in the child support program with reliable study income from rural economic industry, relevant work and improve the Child Support performance metrics of paternity established, order establishment, current support payments and arrear payments. Without employment support programming systems rely heavily on punitive enforcement, which is more expensive and less effective. I respectfully ask the Office of Child Support Enforcement to retain the final rule and continue supporting employment and training services for noncustodial parents within the child support program. Thank you.

0:49:34.945 --> 0:49:45.905
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you. Thank you very much Sis. Michael? Michael, I see you have your hand up.

0:50:13.145 --> 0:50:13.625
Michael Kidder (Osage Nation)
Hello.
Can you hear me?

0:50:17.325 --> 0:50:19.365
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Hi, yes, we can hear you now, Michael.

0:50:19.655 --> 0:50:20.895
Michael Kidder (Osage Nation)
Oh, sorry about that.
(Laughter)

Thank you. I just want to make a few comments about this 1115 waiver and when this came out, I was very excited for it because I had run the program within the tribe. So, I'm saying it was going to be a great outcome for a child support to have this in our tool chest. It's going to allow us to help our clients overcome barriers. Anything that was in their lives with unemployment at the same time in our tribal program. And what I'm seeing in child support, not all of my clients qualify. So, with this waiver, I was going to be able to fill those gaps. And overcome those lack of jobs skills. Year olds unemployment. Education So we're gonna be able to probably come a lot of barriers in turn would help our CP'S and our collections to receive their funds. I think it'll be very important program that's being rescinded and I hope and I hope not. Because I see a lot of value in this program, I see a lot of people that can be helped a lot. A Community that can benefit also and can help the people because in my area we do not have employment. Obviously, help people who are out there to find these jobs. I mean, you know, in my area you really have to beat the bushes for someone and along with that they may have barriers themselves, and this program was going to help them overcome those barriers and I just hopefully we can come up with a good outcome through this process. Because I believe it's a great program, I believe it's a very positive program. I think. So, with that said, that's all I have to say.

0:52:36.515 --> 0:53:20.75
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you. Thank you very much, Michael. We're still accepting testimony, comments, questions. Feel free to raise your virtual hand or come off mute. Good morning, Danita. Feel free to come off mute.

0:53:23.955 --> 0:54:51.495
Danita Herrera (Klamath Tribes)
Hi, thank you for allowing me to speak. I don't have authorization from my tribe to speak formally, but since I can make comment what I'd like to share is that we're we a lot of our tribal programs are located in such rural areas that when, when there are services available, it's very limited and as Michael was speaking not all of our noncustodial parents are eligible for these services. We have, you know, family members, parents that have criminal records who, you know, maybe they don't qualify for something and this would give us the opportunity to assist them so they could be gainfully employed and receive skills and, you know, work through those barriers that they have, which those things are not available through regular employment programs. So as Sis was saying, this is not a duplication of

service. But this is a much-needed service to be able to provide to noncustodial parents and by eliminating this, you know, is just causing hardship to parents and to the children that, you know, could potentially be supported by this. So, the unemployment rates are higher, our rural communities we're, we're way out, there were like frontier. It's hard to even get employees, so services to parents are, are very scarce. And so, we just want to share that. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

0:54:55.525 --> 0:55:14.525
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you. Thank you, Danita. Reagan. You feel free to come off mute.

0:55:16.645 --> 0:55:26.285
Raegan Hendrickson (White Earth Nation)
Arlene, I just have a quick question. Are you guys gonna be sending out an e-mail with the link to where comments can be provided?

0:55:27.315 --> 0:55:52.455
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
So comments are going to be available to be provided to the tribal resource box. So, I think Tristan has dropped the e-mail box in the chat. I think, Tristan, can you drop it one more time please? And usually, you'll get a response acknowledging receipt of it. So, once you submit your written testimony, we'll respond letting you know that we received it so.

0:55:53.315 --> 0:55:55.635
Raegan Hendrickson
OK. Thank you, Arlene, and thank you, Tristan.

0:55:55.135 --> 0:56:38.255
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
You're welcome.

Kimberly, I received an off the off the meeting e-mail asking about, like, public comments to the NPRM. I didn't know if you wanted to speak to that and how how that process works and where would where they would be able to post comments to for that.

0:56:41.595 --> 0:57:39.15
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Sure, So the vehicle by which the the proposal to rescind the Employment and Training Final Rule will be through a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, that once it is published will have instructions in there about how to comment on the proposal in addition to the comments that you provide through this consultation. I encourage you to also provide comments. to the notice of proposed rulemaking that, as I mentioned earlier, nothing has

been published. But once that once that happens again, encourage you all to submit your comments to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking as well as the comments you submit today.

0:57:42.615 --> 0:57:52.685
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Kimberly. Sis, you have your hand raised.

0:57:53.925 --> 0:58:11.575
Willowa “Sis” Horn (Fort Belknap Indian Community)
Yeah, I do. Kimberly, you said, Notice of the Proposed Rulemaking. excuse my language here, but I'm kind of nervous. Proposed rulemaking now that makes it sound like you guys already made your decision and you're gonna go forward with it.

0:58:13.995 --> 0:58:57.925
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
We are proposing to rescind, and we are seeking comments on that proposal. So, the in the way in which to rescind a final rule would be through the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that through notice and comment. We are here today for the consultation to receive your testimony and your comments on moving forward with the proposal and then the and then, we'll take that into consideration through the drafting process and then what will happen is we will publish a notice of proposed rulemaking, which again offers you another opportunity to submit comments.

0:59:6.195 --> 0:59:16.815
Willowa “Sis” Horn (Fort Belknap Indian Community)
That still makes me think that you guys have already decided you're gonna do this, and you're just going through this motion twice here. That's my personal opinion.

0:59:18.435 --> 0:59:29.515
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
I understand. I encourage comments to be submitted, however, because we are required to take those comments into consideration when it comes to finalizing that proposal.

0:59:51.225 --> 1:0:9.435
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you, Sis and Kimberly. We're still accepting testimony, comments, questions. Feel free to come off mute. Raise your virtual hand. Hi, Tish?

1:0:9.265 --> 1:1:1.375
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
You're on. Oh, there you go. There we go. Sorry, I have permission to ask this question, with my Council Member here, is that when you mention Executive Order 14219, you said that as part of that you were looking at the cost benefits and that I believe you said that it would be

$94 million by the year 2034, and the question is, is that if it's at $94 million by 2034, does that also include the estimated benefits to the program and to the families in additional child support that we anticipate collecting through assisting NCP's in employment programs?

1:1:3.405 --> 1:1:7.925
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
Hi Tish. Thank you for your question. No, it does not take that into account.

1:1:12.285 --> 1:1:18.805
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
That will be a nice, some part of our letter, OK. Thank you for answering that, Kim. Kimberly, thank you.

1:1:16.535 --> 1:1:17.55
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
You're welcome.

1:1:37.745 --> 1:2:45.775
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Any questions? Testimony? Comments?

(Long Pause)

I'll give us a few minutes.

(Long Pause)
OK Any final comments, any additional testimony? Again, please feel free to submit any written testimony to our tribal resource mailbox. I think I have something in the chat. Tristan.

1:2:48.45 --> 1:2:55.45
Johnson, Tristan (ACF)
Yes, we have a question about how much weight does our comments to the NPRM actually have in the final decision to retain the final rule?

1:2:58.65 --> 1:3:28.165
Curtis, Kimberly (ACF)
As I previously stated, the comment, we are required to take all comments into consideration when drafting the final rule. I encourage you to submit your comments, it's not, you know, there are several layers of review when finalizing a rule and the all the comments will be reviewed not just by the OCSE, but those in other departments as well.

1:3:37.625 --> 1:4:31.45
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you. Diane and thank you, Kimberly. OK, going once, going twice, any written, any final testimony? I put in the chat to please have all your written comments submitted by February 14th to our tribal resource box. If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail that resource box as well. We'll be more than happy to try to address any comments, questions or concerns that you may have. Again, thank you to everyone who contributed today through testimony, comments or questions. We appreciate your time and insights again, last time, please submit your written testimony to the tribal resource mailbox and I will now turn it over to the Deputy Commissioner for closing remarks, Linda.

1:4:31.945 --> 1:6:5.845
Boyer, Linda (ACF)
Thank you so much, Arlene, and thank you Kimberly for presenting. So, I want to thank everyone who participated in today's consultation. We sincerely appreciate your time, your expertise, your thoughtful and provoking input that you shared. Your perspectives on the employment and training services rescission is very critical, very, very critical to our understanding and we want to reaffirm that the comments and feedback provided today will be documented and carefully considered. OCSE remains committed to hearing your thoughts and to incorporate them into our work, consistent with our trust responsibility, and government to government relationship. We recognize the importance of continued dialogue and encourage you to please submit any additional written comments or any follow-up information you would like to be considered. And on behalf of OCSE and ACF I want to thank you again for your engagement, your leadership, your dedication to serving tribal families and communities, we truly do value this ongoing partnership and look forward to continuing our collaboration with you. Have a great day.

1:6:8.515 --> 1:6:9.795
Serrano-Danzy, Arlene (ACF)
Thank you everyone.

1:6:18.735 --> 1:6:20.55
Tish Keahna (Lac Courte Oreilles)
Thank you for hosting us.