



Yurok Tribal TANF Program LASER TLC Site Journey

The Office of Family Assistance initiative, “Leveraging America’s Social and Economic Resilience TANF Learning Community” (LASER TLC), joined 10 TANF Programs across the country to address the challenges of human service delivery following the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration focused on improving responsive services for TANF families.

Goals & Objectives

The Yurok Tribal TANF program is dedicated to breaking cycles of trauma through delivery of prevention programming. Their LASER TLC goal focused on crafting an efficient and culturally responsive process. They received client, community, and staff input to reimagine and revitalize their TANF program. The Yurok Tribe’s LASER TLC Team identified top priorities which included:

- Maximizing and improving service to TANF participants and the tribal community.
- Creating specialized surveys to gather information from primary target audiences, including clients, the community, and TANF program staff.
- Retaining and increasing TANF program participation.
- Increasing inter-tribal sharing of ideas and innovations.

Change Strategies

The Yurok Tribal TANF Team stressed securing input and engagement from their primary target audiences. The team identified needs and desired services to guide and shape their LASER TLC program improvement initiative. They also considered the tribe’s geographic diversity.

Enhance Client, Community, and Staff Engagement for Program Improvement

- Developed community surveys for youth and adults to identify needs and service interests.
- Collected and analyzed survey data from community events in community locations within the Tribe’s service area.
- Considered how desired services can inform and shape TANF programming.
- Started data collection from Tribal TANF program staff critical to program improvement.
- Developed an ongoing approach for integrating data collection, analysis, and use. This supports continuous TANF program improvement.

Yurok Tribal Site Journey

The Yurok Tribe is the largest in California, with more than 5,000 enrolled members. The Tribe’s ancestral lands include much of the coastline near present-day Klamath. The lands extend up to the Klamath River for over 40 miles.

The Tribe provides services to the community and membership with more than 200 employees. The Tribal TANF program assists eligible tribal Humboldt and Del Norte County residents.



Challenges & Supports

Challenges:

- Responsiveness to tribal geographic diversity.
- Staff vacancies and a long hiring process. It requires current TANF staff to assume multiple program roles.
- Securing client and community input.

Supports:

- Survey development and data collection.
- Committed staff members know tribal community values and culture. They can adapt to emerging TANF program and community needs.

Lessons Learned from Our Journey

- TANF prevention programming can play a key role in breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma.
- TANF program clients, community members, and program staff appreciate being asked for their opinions. Especially when they eventually see their ideas in action.
- Survey data is essential and valuable. But not everyone is comfortable with filling out a survey. Other collection methods are needed.
- Recognize needs and services will vary by location in a tribe with diverse geographic communities.
- Organizational and infrastructure issues need addressing as a base for TANF program improvement.



Focus on Results

- Develop more culturally and community grounded surveys.
- Establish culturally and community responsive data collection processes. Include TANF clients, community members, and program staff.
- Improve capacity to collect, analyze, and use data. This will help strategy development for TANF program improvements.
- Explore non-survey approaches to data collection.

The team believes its participation in the LASER TLC will result in:

- Enhanced service alignment with client and community interests and needs will strengthen client outcomes.
- Client, community, and staff recognition that the Tribal TANF program reflects their needs and can adapt as conditions change.

Journey Insights from Our Team

"We can help break cycles of trauma through prevention services...emphasizing cultural mentoring."

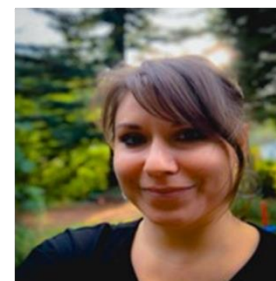
"We want a prevention program that incorporates our Yurok practices, traditions, and values."

"Balancing of both worlds is important."

"Our surveys are super important and essential for getting to know our clients."

What's Next...

- Continue data collection, analysis, and application. Include TANF program clients, community members (youth and adults), and program staff to improve the program.
- Build program capacity to conduct ongoing data collection for TANF program improvement purposes.
- Use survey data to inform change strategies.
- Consider Yurok community location-based needs.



Leveraging
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Economic Resilience