

WORKING INTER-TRIBALLY TO PREVENT CHILDREN FROM GOING INTO STATE PROTECTIVE CUSTODY WITH OCS

- WHEREAS,** Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) is an Alaska Native tribal health and social services consortium established by the Interior Alaska tribes and tribal communities, to provide a unified voice in advancing sovereign tribal governments through the promotion of physical and mental wellness, education, socioeconomic development and culture of the Interior Alaska Native; and
- WHEREAS,** TCC and the Interior Tribes strive to support tribal self-determination, improve community wellness, and reverse the health, education and socio-economic disparities affecting Native people to ensure that the next generation is healthy and striving; and
- WHEREAS,** TCC Region consists of 37 federally recognized Tribes and each are listed on the United States list of Federally Recognized Tribes under the Tribal List Act of 1994, reserving sovereign and aboriginal rights in perpetuity; and
- WHEREAS,** Each Tribal Government is responsible for asserting their sovereign authority within their own tribal jurisdiction to promote and protect the health and welfare of the members of the Tribes, especially the most vulnerable and valuable, minor child Tribal members; and
- WHEREAS,** In order to advance Tribal governments and reverse long-standing socio-economic disparities, Native children must be prioritized in education, safety, nurturing and care. Without a focus on children, TCC tribes will be continually combatting high rates of substance abuse, suicide, crime, and children in government custody; and
- WHEREAS,** Tribal Courts are a powerful tool that can both protect children and also preserve families, cultural values and Tribal communities; and
- WHEREAS,** Currently funding and human resources for Tribal courts are limited. This often forces Tribal courts with open child protection cases to transfer a case to state court and OCS custody due to turnover, conflict of interests, or difficult family dynamics; and
- WHEREAS,** The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 recognized that it is both in the child's and Tribe's best interests for children to remain with their families, villages, and values.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Tanana Chiefs Conference Full Board of Directors hereby directs staff to assist Tribes in applying for intertribal court funding for regional intertribal courts and to assist interested Tribes in developing intertribal agreements and processes for establishing regional tribal courts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that TCC provide technical assistance and support to Tribal Courts in the transfer of cases to regional intertribal courts rather than to OCS when a Tribe is no longer able to handle a Tribal court case; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Full Board of Directors authorizes TCC to co-operate, in partnership with TCC Region Tribal Governments that want to participate in a Regional Intertribal Court.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference Full Board of Directors on March 16, 2023 at Fairbanks, Alaska and a quorum was duly established.



Charlie Wright
Secretary/Treasurer



Submitted by: Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government