



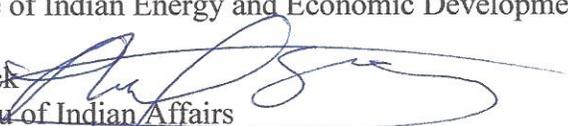
United States Department of the Interior

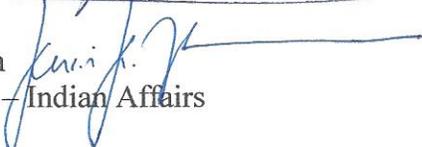
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

FEB 27 2015

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors
Director, Office of Self-Governance
Director, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development

Through: Michael S. Black 
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

From: Kevin K. Washburn 
Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs

Subject: Guidance: 2015 Welfare Assistance Funding Distribution Methodology

The 2014 Financial Assistance and Social Service Report (FASSR) is the only report that Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agencies and tribes operating under Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) Title I Contracts, ISDEAA Self-Governance Funding Agreements and Public Law (Pub. L.) 102-477 (477) Plans will be required to submit for the Welfare Assistance Program.

The BIA Regional Offices, Office of Self Governance (OSG), and the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development (OIEED-DWD) are responsible for collecting, certifying and submitting FASSRs to the BIA, Office of Indian Services (OIS), Division of Human Services (DHS). The OIS, DHS is responsible for distributing Welfare Assistance funds to tribes and BIA agencies based on the approved methodology as described in this memorandum and in accordance with each tribe's approved ISDEAA contract, Self-Governance funding agreement, and/or approved 477 plan. Tribes and BIA agencies must submit the 2014 FASSR in order to receive a final distribution of 2015 Welfare Assistance Funds. The FASSR is available online at the BIA website's main page at:

<http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/OIS/SocialServices/index.htm>

The memorandum dated July 13, 1993, "Authorized Use of Welfare Grant Assistance Funds" (attached) was rescinded in the 2013 Welfare Assistance Distribution Methodology signed on May 3, 2013. Specifically, the BIA Regional and Agency offices are not authorized to reallocate surplus grant assistance funds available in tribally contracted, compacted, or BIA-administered programs to other programs when shortfalls occur. All offices will be responsible for distributing Welfare Assistance funds based on the approved methodology outlined in this

memorandum. If you have questions regarding the rescission of the July 13, 1993 memo, please call Babette Herne, Program Manager, DHS at (202) 513-7608.

2015 Welfare Assistance Funds Distribution Methodology

The Initial Distribution of Welfare Assistance Funds

At the beginning of Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, the BIA will use actual expenditures reported in the 2013 FASSR submitted by each tribe and BIA agency, adjusted for carryover, to calculate the 2015 estimated need for each tribe and BIA agency. The BIA defines the 2015 estimated need as actual 2013 expenditures as reported on the 2013 FASSR, subject to carryover adjustments and fixed amounts for Tribal Redesign Plans for General Assistance consistent with 25 CFR §20.202 to §20.210.

In a year when Congress enacts a full year appropriation by the start of the FY, October 1, the initial distribution of Welfare Assistance funds is intended to meet 75 percent of a tribe or BIA agency's 2015 estimated need for that year. For FY 2015, Congress enacted Public Law 113-164 [H.J. Res 124] into law on September 19, 2014 which is a continuing resolution to provide appropriations through December 11, 2014. The distribution of Welfare Assistance funds will be made by the OIS, DHS prorating the funding based on the calculated 75 percent of a tribe or BIA agency's 2015 estimated need. The BIA Regional offices, OSG, and OIEED-DWD are responsible for allocating funds directly to each tribe and BIA agency based on the tribe or BIA agency's operating year FY or Calendar Year (CY).

The BIA Regional Offices, OSG, and OIEED-DWD will be notified when further amounts become available to complete the remainder of the initial 2015 distribution to meet 75 percent.

Final Distribution of Welfare Assistance

The final distribution of Welfare Assistance funds will be based on information received in the 2014 FASSR. In order to receive funds in the final distribution, all FY tribes, CY tribes, and BIA agencies must submit the 2014 FASSR, according to the due dates (see page 4), to the appropriate office, either the BIA Regional office, OSG, or OIEED-DWD, using the 2014 FASSR form. Self-Governance tribes operating the General Assistance program under an approved 477 plan should submit their 2014 FASSR to the OSG with a courtesy copy submitted to the OIEED-DWD. Tribes operating an approved 477 plan through an ISDEAA contract should submit their 2014 FASSR directly to the OIEED-DWD.

The methodology for the final distribution will use 2014 reported *actual expenditures* to adjust the 2015 estimated need to meet the actual need for 2015. The final distribution is subject to shortfall and carryover adjustments and to fixed amounts for Tribal Redesign Plans for General Assistance consistent with 25 CFR §20.202 to §20.210.

For FY 2015, the final distribution is expected to be made by the OIS, DHS to the BIA Regional offices, OSG and OIEED-DWD by Friday June 5, 2015.

If the FY 2015 Appropriation Act caps the amount of Welfare Assistance funding that can be distributed and the national Welfare Assistance need, as determined by expenditures reported on the 2014 FASSRs, is greater than the capped Welfare Assistance amount, the following will occur. The OIS, DHS will conduct a prorata distribution based on the final calculated 2015 actual need for all tribal and BIA agencies operating Welfare Assistance programs. A prorata distribution will be conducted to ensure the distribution of funds remains within the available capped Welfare Assistance appropriation funding amount.

The following Welfare Assistance categories are funded in 2015 at the rate established by the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs: Child Assistance (state rate), General Assistance (state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families rate), Adult Care Assistance (state rate), Burial Assistance rate (a maximum of \$2,500 per burial), and Emergency Assistance (a maximum of \$1,000 per household). The Disaster Assistance Program and the Tribal Work Experience Program (TWEP) are not authorized and will remain unfunded in 2015.

Shortfall of Funding – Request for Additional Funding

If a tribe or BIA agency projects a potential shortfall in Welfare Assistance funds for 2015, it must collaborate with its BIA Regional office, OSG or OIEED-DWD to submit a *Request for Additional Funds* (RAF) form. The RAF must show how the level of need for the 2015 funding year is expected to be greater than the tribe or BIA agency's reported expenditures on the 2014 FASSR. Additionally, the RAF must describe what would happen if the tribe or BIA agency were to experience a shortfall in funding for 2015, as appropriate. Tribes and BIA agencies operating on a FY or CY must submit supporting documentation (i.e., financial reports or other budgetary documents) with actual expenditures to support a RAF.

All tribes and BIA agencies must use the approved 2015 RAF form. The BIA Regional office, OSG, or OIEED-DWD has the responsibility to analyze the information in the tribe or BIA agency's RAF and all supporting documentation before submitting the RAF to OIS, DHS. The BIA Regional office, OSG, and OIEED-DWD must provide a written recommendation in memorandum form to the OIS, DHS and attach the documents provided by the tribe or BIA agency. The written recommendation with the RAFs and supporting documentation must be submitted to the OIS, DHS by the due date identified below in order for the OIS, DHS to consider the RAF before the final distribution of Welfare Assistance. *No RAFs will be accepted after the due date.*

The OIS, DHS will then make a determination for adjustments based on the information and recommendation of the BIA Regional office, OSG or OIEED-DWD before the final distribution of Welfare Assistance funds. A RAF does not guarantee an increase in funding. If a Tribe or BIA agency's RAF is approved and the need is adjusted to the higher level requested, the tribe or BIA agency is still subject to prorata distribution (if applicable).

This methodology is being utilized in an effort to be fair and equitable to all potential recipients of Welfare Assistance funds; to address shortfalls in funding; and to avoid the shutdown of one or more Welfare Assistance programs.

Responsibility of Tribes and BIA Agencies

All FY tribes, CY tribes, and BIA agencies must submit the 2014 FASSR, according to the due dates below. If the tribe or BIA agency does not submit a 2014 FASSR, it will not receive funding in the final distribution of 2015 Welfare Assistance. The reports are to be submitted to the BIA Regional office, OSG, or the OIEED-DWD.

Due Dates for Tribes and Agencies to submit the 2014 FASSR:

FY Tribes/ BIA Agencies: *Within 45 calendar days from the date of this Memorandum*

CY Tribes: *Within 45 calendar days from the date of this Memorandum*

Responsibilities of the BIA Regional Offices, OSG, and OIEED-DWD

The BIA Regional offices, OSG, and OIEED-DWD are to *review* each report for completeness & accuracy, *certify* and *submit* the 2014 FASSR for each Tribe and/or BIA agency to the OIS, DHS, Central Office, according to the due dates below.

Due dates for BIA Regional office, OSG, or OIEED-DWD to submit the 2014 FASSR to OIS, DHS:

For FY Tribes/ BIA Agencies: *Within 90 calendar days from the date of this Memorandum*

For CY Tribes: *Within 90 calendar days from the date of this Memorandum*

Due Dates to Submit a Request for Additional Funds to the OIS, DHS:

BIA Regional Offices, OSG, and OIEED-DWD: *No later than Friday, May 1, 2015*

The BIA Regional offices, the OSG, and the OIEED will also be responsible for:

1. Distributing the BIA 2014 FASSR form to tribes and BIA agencies.
2. Providing technical assistance to tribes and agencies in partnership with the BIA Central Office, for the accurate completion of reports, using the BIA FASSR form.
3. Collecting reports from tribes and BIA agencies within their region or program.
4. Verifying *accuracy* and certifying the *completeness* of all reports.
A FASSR form is certified when:

- a. The report is in the required Microsoft Excel format (handwritten reports and PDF reports ***will not be accepted, no exceptions***);
 - b. The report is signed by an agency representative and/or tribal representative. An electronic signature is an electronic acknowledgement by the tribal representative or agency representative that the information submitted on the FASSR to the respective BIA Regional office, OSG, or OIEED-DWD is complete and accurate. Tribes can type their name into the excel report to electronically sign the report. The BIA Regional office, OSG and OIEED-DWD must also sign the excel form. All FASSRs must be signed using this method prior to submission.
 - c. The report contains both the data and narrative sections of the form. **Reports that do not include a narrative will not be considered complete.** The narrative section of the report provides the “story” of your program and supports the data and it is an opportunity to inform policy makers of the particular circumstances being faced by the program.
 - d. The allocations, expenditures, and carryover amounts/shortfall information reported are accurate. Each tribe and agency must identify previous year(s) carryover funds into 2015 in the narrative portion of its report as well as in Column Q in the data portion of the report. Column Q should be the sum of the 2013 carryover into 2014 plus the total amount of funding the BIA agency or Tribe received in 2014. This amount must be reported in Column Q, Amount Allocated. 2014 carryover/shortfalls into 2015 from 2014 should be identified in the data section of the FASSR (Column R).
 - e. Only electronically certified FASSRs with both the Data and Narrative Reports will be accepted.
5. The BIA Regional Social Worker, OSG, and OIEED-DWD representative will then be responsible for submitting all tribal and BIA agency reports electronically via email or Google Drive to Babette Herne, Program Manager, OIS, DHS at babette.herne@bia.gov or in her absence to Evangeline Campbell, Division Chief, OIS, DHS at evangeline.campbell@bia.gov

Please note the BIA Regional offices, the OSG, and the OIEED-DWD will be responsible for consolidating the information into a detailed report for the OIS, DHS. The report should outline significant changes in need from 2013 into 2014 and identify the 2015 RAFs received. This information will provide OIS, DHS with a comprehensive overview of each BIA Regional office, OSG, and OIEED-DWD program.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this memorandum, you may contact Evangeline M. Campbell, Chief, Division of Human Services, at evangeline.campbell@bia.gov or Babette Herne, Program Manager, OIS, DHS at babette.herne@bia.gov or call the main Human Services number at (202) 513-7642.

Attachments

- 07/13/1993 Memorandum – Authorized Use of Welfare Grant Assistance Funds
- 1A 2014 BIA Financial Assistance and Social Services Report (FASSR)
- 2A 2015 Request for Additional WAG Funds Form
- 3A 2015 RAF BIA Financial Assistance and Social Services Report (FASSR)
- 4A 4A Instructions for Completing the FASSR and Narrative Report