



CENTRAL COUNCIL

Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

320 W. Willoughby Ave., Suite 300 • Juneau, AK • 99801
907.586.1432 • Fax: 907.586.8970 • www.ccthita.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2011

**Tlingit Haida Central Council and State of Washington
Enter into Tribal Child Support Agreement**

In a historic move that will help strengthen tribal families, Edward K. Thomas, President of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit Haida Central Council), and the State of Washington have signed an Indian Nation Program Agreement for the Tribal Child Support Unit (TCSU) Program. Under the Agreement, the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) will provide federal tax offset services for child support orders issued by Tlingit Haida Central Council's tribal court. To be eligible for the service, a case must meet specific criteria as outlined by federal regulations. This enforcement service will benefit tribal children whose parents are owed overdue child support. President Thomas commented that, "This agreement strengthens our goal, which is a community of healthy families invested in the future of the Tribe."

Tlingit Haida Central Council has been operating a federally-funded child support program since 2007. It is funded by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, the same federal source that funds Alaska's Child Support Services Division. The tribal court has been issuing child support and paternity orders for over three years, but has encountered resistance from the State of Alaska. To provide federal tax offset services for child support cases, tribes that operate federally funded child support programs must enter into a written agreement with a state for the state to provide this service. When negotiations with the State of Alaska to provide federal tax offset services failed, the Tribe sought approval from the federal office of child support to begin negotiating with the State of Washington to provide the service. Discussions with Washington State DSHS officials resulted in a mutually acceptable agreement for Washington to provide this service to children and families that have tribal child support orders meeting the requirements for the offset.

The agreement between Tlingit Haida Central Council and the State of Washington recognizes that both the State of Washington and the Tlingit Haida Central Council are sovereign governments. The mutual objective of the agreement is to further the

government-to-government relationship and to ensure efficient and beneficial child support services to children and families.

For additional information, contact Eddie Brakes, Tribal Child Support Unit Manager or Jessie Archibald, Tribal Child Support Unit Attorney. You may also go to the Washington State Child Support web-site to view a copy of the agreement at www.dshs.wa.gov/dcs/tribal/csagreements.asp.

###

Contact:

Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Tribal Child Support Unit (TCSU)

Eddie Brakes, TCSU Manager

Direct: 907.463.7340

Email: ebrakes@ccthita.org

Jessie Archibald, TCSU Attorney

Direct: 907.463.7114

Email: jarchibald@ccthita.org