

FY 2005 FDPIR Funding Methodology Work Group



Introduction

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recently proposed the formation of a work group, comprising FNS staff and FDPIR Program Directors from the Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) and State agencies, to develop a new methodology for distributing FDPIR administrative funds.

We believe that a new funding methodology is needed because the current system for distributing FDPIR administrative funds among the FNS Regional Offices is not based on an objective methodology, and it is inequitable. In addition, the system is not administratively efficient, since it requires the individual negotiation of 102 detailed administrative budgets each year. We have asked the work group to develop a solution that best meets the needs of all ITOs and State agencies. This process is one in which each ITO and State agency should play an active role.

The goal is a funding methodology that is equitable, objective, and easy to understand. The point of departure for the work group will be the recommendation developed by the Federal/Tribal TrailBlazers for New-Triton (TNT) team in 1999. FNS and the members of the National Association of Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (NAFDPIR) have identified shortcomings with the TNT recommendation. However, it is a good starting point for the work group since the TNT team examined many of the factors involved in the funds allocation process, and addressed many of the same issues facing the current work group.

Because of the structure of FDPIR, the ITOs and State agencies share many basic costs and needs. It should be possible for the work group to develop a fair, objective, consistent funding methodology to capture these similarities. However, the ITOs and State agencies also differ in many ways, and it is difficult to imagine a funding formula, no matter how carefully and conscientiously developed, that would respond perfectly to all the differences among the ITOs and State agencies. For this reason, the work group may wish to combine a funding formula with a set-aside of funds for Regional Offices to allocate among the ITOs and State agencies, through negotiation, in response to factors not adequately addressed by a formula.

FNS is committed to supporting in every reasonable way a positive, open, active discussion in which **all** stakeholders can be heard. This process will include numerous opportunities for ITOs and State agencies to influence the work group's deliberations.

- The work group includes Program Directors and NAFDPIR Board members who were appointed to represent the ITOs and State agencies in each of the FNS regions. Each representative is expected to present the concerns of all ITOs and State agencies within his or her region. We strongly encourage the ITOs and State agencies to consult with their representatives, and provide them with input throughout the deliberation process. To access a list of FDPIR State/ITO Contacts posted on the FD Website, please [click here.](#)]
- The [schedule of work group sessions](#) and the minutes of the sessions are posted at this site for review by the ITOs and State agencies.
- When the work group completes its recommendation, a detailed description will be posted at this site, and also forwarded for review and comment to NAFDPIR and each individual ITO and State agency, as well as all the Tribal and State governments. The work group will review the comments received, and modify the proposal accordingly.

We understand that the final recommendation may entail a redistribution of funds among ITOs and the State agencies, and we do not take this possibility lightly. We also acknowledge that it takes time to resolve complex problems. We believe that a disciplined, structured developmental process that includes all stakeholders and has an honorable and important objective will ultimately succeed. I would like to thank all of the members of the FDPIR Funding Work Group for volunteering their time to this important issue. FNS is committed to the same level of cooperation in this initiative that we have enjoyed working with program directors and NAFDPIR on other projects that have benefited FDPIR and its participants.



Cathie McCullough
Director
Food Distribution Division