



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Health, Education, and Human Services Committee reviews Division of Children and Family Services 477 Transition Plan



The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received an update on the implementation of the Division of Children and Family Services' 477 Plan.

**Window Rock, Ariz.** — On Monday, the Navajo Nation Council's Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) received an update from the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on the transition and implementation of its 477 Plan, a federal framework consolidating multiple human-services programs into a single coordinated system.

DCFS Deputy Director Sonlatsa Jim reported that DCFS is preparing to launch the 477 Plan on October 1, 2025. Jim said the plan will establish a streamlined, wraparound service model for Navajo families by pooling funding sources, reducing administrative burdens, and improving direct services.

HEHSC Committee members asked about funding expenditures, salary adjustments, program participation, and access to services for families in rural and urban areas. HEHSC Vice Chair Germaine Simonson called for transparency in funding allocation.

"We need a clear breakdown of expenditures, carryover balances, and timelines. Our families depend on these services, and the committee requires oversight to prevent delays or misuse of funds," said Simonson.

Delegate Dr. Andy Nez underscored the importance of supporting grassroots providers while strengthening accountability. He noted that nonprofits often carry a heavy service load for families yet face delays in accessing funding, and he urged DCFS to implement the 477 Plan in a way that ensures local partners are resourced in a timely and transparent manner.

Council Delegate Helena Nez Begay stressed outreach to single parents and remote communities.

“Many relatives lack transportation to reach central offices. The plan must guarantee chapter-level outreach and direct assistance, so no family is left behind,” Nez Begay said.

Members also urged DCFS to continue coordination with the Indian Health Service regarding the Navajo Treatment Center for Children and Families, which is not yet integrated into the 477 Plan.

The Committee requested DCFS to deliver a full financial breakdown of funds, guarantee Oct. 1 salary adjustments without payroll disruption, and provide a list of contracted shelters. The committee also directed stronger outreach, including potential staffing in urban centers like Phoenix, and required updated organizational charts and coordination reports with IHS on the Navajo Treatment Center for Children and Families.

HEHSC further requested DCFS to strengthen evaluating the placement of virtual or in-person staff at service centers in metropolitan areas such as Phoenix, as well as returning to the committee with updated organizational charts, a revised Master Plan of Operation, and the status of coordination with IHS regarding the Navajo Treatment Center for Children and Families.

The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approved the report with a vote of three in favor with none opposed, affirming HEHSC’s oversight role to monitor human-services delivery, ensuring that programs are accessible and client-centered.

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