



## **TULALIP TRIBAL MEMBER BEDA?CHELH ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

### **ESTABLISHMENT AND POLICY**

#### **1.1 Declaration of Policy**

It is the policy of the Board of Directors of the Tulalip Tribes to foster and encourage a Tulalip member and beda?chelh partnership to protect and cultivate the best future for the children in the Tulalip Tribal community who have been abused or neglected or are otherwise in need of services to prevent the break-up of their family. The Tulalip Board of Directors finds that such a partnership will provide the necessary community vision and support to promote protection, justice and healing for these children by optimizing systems collaboration, advocacy, training and best practices. The Board of Directors further finds that a Tulalip member and beda?chelh partnership should strive to bring people together around common goals of ensuring the well-being of children and ensuring children have the opportunity to learn about their unique culture and heritage, to grow up healthy and strong, and to become productive members of the Tulalip Tribal community.

#### **1.2 Creation**

In order to promote the goals and objectives of the above-stated policy, there is hereby established an entity to be called the “Tulalip Tribal Member beda?chelh Advocacy Committee,” (hereinafter beda?chelh committee).

#### **1.3 Composition, Appointment, Terms, and Attendance**

1. *Composition and qualifications.* The beda?chelh committee shall be composed of five (5) members. Each committee member shall be a Tulalip tribal member. All candidates must submit a letter of interest to the Family Advocacy Executive Assistant. In addition, candidates are required to complete a criminal background check through Tulalip Tribes Background Investigation Agency (TTBIA) and a Child Protective Services (CPS) history check through beda?chelh (both checks shall hereinafter be referred to as a “background check”). Final review and approval of a candidate’s background check will be done by the Family Advocacy Executive or designee. All candidates must pass a background check consistent with the Native American Children’s Safety Act (“NACSA”) requirements (amended PL 101-630), which is the standard beda?chelh uses for placement homes. NACSA requires fingerprint-based background checks as well as checks of state abuse and neglect databases in every state where any adult in the placement (foster) home resided for the past five years. An exception will be made in the background check criteria for a prior client of beda?chelh who has successfully reunified and has a closed case. That alone will not disqualify a person from being considered for appointment as a committee member.
2. *Appointment.* The Board of Directors may appoint all members based on staff recommendations.
3. *Term.* All appointments shall be reaffirmed every 3 years. Only members in good standing may be re-appointed. If during the course of their appointment a beda?chelh committee member could no longer pass a background check they must resign their position or they will be removed by the Board of Directors.



4. *Attendance.* A member of the beda?chelh committee who misses three (3) consecutive meetings or four (4) in a calendar year for any reason shall be considered removed as a member of the beda?chelh committee. The Managing Director of Community Enrichment shall propose a replacement to the Board.

#### **1.4 Board Organization**

The beda?chelh committee shall adopt rules and regulations relating to its powers and duties that are consistent with this Policy. Annually the committee shall designate a chairperson to call meetings, set the agenda and preside over meetings, a vice-chair person to fill in for the chairperson and/or secretary in their absence, and a secretary to maintain the committee meeting agendas and meeting notes that they take. A staff member from beda?chelh and from the Office of Reservation Attorney shall attend committee meetings.

#### **1.5 Reports**

The beda?chelh committee shall report in writing to the Managing Director of Community Enrichment, Executive Director of Family Advocacy, and Board of Directors semi-annually and shall submit such additional reports as it deems necessary, or as requested by the Board of Directors. The reports may provide brief information as to the scenarios in which they have assisted families working with beda?chelh, however they shall not contain the names or easily identifiable information of the persons and families with whom they have worked. The beda?chelh committee's annual report shall be filed on or before February 1 of each year covering the prior calendar year and by September 1 for the semi-annual report.

#### **1.6 Limitations of Powers**

The beda?chelh Advocacy Committee as individuals or as a whole are not authorized to:

1. Incur tribal expense or obligate the Tribes in any way without prior written authorization of the Board of Directors.
2. Make any written or oral report of any beda?chelh committee activity to any individual or body.
3. Independently investigate complaints against beda?chelh or individual beda?chelh employees.
4. Conduct any activity which might constitute or be construed as a quasi-judicial review of beda?chelh actions.
5. Violate the confidentiality of any information related to matters involving a case, personnel, or beda?chelh process.
6. Review or comment on the investigation of a complaint in any case.
7. The Committee will not take a political position on any issue.
8. beda?chelh Advocacy Committee members shall not post or comment on social media any case/investigative information which they may have obtained during the course of working with families. Committee members may inform tribal members of their status on the committee or information that they feel the community may benefit from in working with beda?chelh and the committee.

#### **1.7 Training**

1. Initial comprehensive training shall be provided to the committee and to each new beda?chelh committee member as needed. Such training shall be mandatory and shall be designed and



implemented by the Managing Director of Community Enrichment and beda?chelh and paid for by the Tribe. Such training should include, but shall not be limited to, familiarization with:

- a. Title 4.05 Juvenile and Family Code;
  - b. Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporter Laws;
  - c. beda?chelh policies;
  - d. Federal and State Indian Child Welfare Act;
2. After appointment to the beda?chelh committee, members are required to pursue fifteen (15) hours of educational opportunities annually and report these to the manager of beda?chelh. For purposes of this section, educational opportunities shall be defined as:
- a. Children's Justice Conference;
  - b. National Indian Child Welfare Annual training;
  - c. beda?chelh training or Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Training.
3. All committee members shall abide by the laws of confidentiality and TTC 4.05. No information will be shared in violation of tribal, federal or state law, such as HIPAA or treatment records.

### **1.8 Meetings**

1. All meetings, including any special meetings, shall be posted, announced, and minutes kept by the secretary, all documents shall be kept at beda?chelh in the secure file room.
2. Regular meetings will be held once each month or as needed throughout the year at a time to be determined by the beda?chelh committee, all meetings will be held at beda?chelh.
3. A quorum shall consist of three (3) voting members. If a quorum is not met within fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled meeting time, the meeting will be canceled.
4. An agenda will be prepared for each meeting by the chairperson.
5. Prior to a family providing any information to the Committee Releases of Information (ROIs) must be signed by the parent(s) for the entire committee to hear the case information. Only one family will be allowed in the meeting room at a time in order to keep confidential information about each family private.
6. The beda?chelh committee shall provide written recommendations for the family and beda?chelh.

### **1.9 Procedure**

The roles in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Advocacy Committee in all cases to which they apply and do not conflict with the specific provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws, or laws of the Tulalip Tribes.

1. The beda?chelh committee is not authorized to:
  - a. Violate the confidentiality of any information related to matters involving a case, personnel, or beda?chelh process.
  - b. Disseminate records, investigations, or other information concerning beda?chelh related matters or that it has obtained from beda?chelh.

### **2.0 Duties**

The beda?chelh committee shall work with parents/families at their request, to facilitate collaboration and promote the well-being of children and their families. This type of work may require that appropriate Releases of Information (ROI) are signed so the committee may fully review matters that are



brought to their attention. The Committee, while reviewing cases shall hear both what the parent/family has to say and what the social worker has to say before making written recommendations on how the parent/family and beda?chelh may better work together or proceed forward in a good way in accordance with law and policy. If parent(s) refuse to sign ROIs for the committee then the committee shall not bring up that parent/family's case for review or make recommendations to beda?chelh on how to further work with the family until ROIs are signed. The beda?chelh Advocacy Committee is not intended to be an appeal panel for cases that are being heard in Court. The Committee may refer families to TOCLA if the issue must be remedied through the legal process.

### **2.1 Conflict of Interest or Bias**

Tulalip Tribal Code, Chapter 1.15 "Code of Ethics for Tulalip Tribal Commissioners" governs Advocacy Committee members. No Committee Member shall have any interest, personal, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or shall engage in any business or transaction or professional activity, or shall incur any obligation of any nature, which is in conflict with the discharge of his or her duties as a Committee Member. In addition to the Ethics Code, any beda?chelh Advocacy Committee member who has a bias or other conflict of interest shall not participate in the review of a case. Examples of bias or conflict of interest include, but are not limited to:

1. Close familial relationship or close friendship with any of the individuals involved in the case or in the investigation of the complaint.
2. Witnessing the events that led to beda?chelh involvement in a matter.
3. Holding a bias against a particular individual that is sufficient to impair one's impartiality.

### **2.2 Removal**

A beda?chelh committee member may be removed from the committee by the Board of Directors at the recommendation of the Managing Director of Community Enrichment or Family Advocacy Executive Director if the committee member: becomes the subject of a CPS investigation and did not engage with beda?chelh during the investigation; or becomes a respondent in a new dependency case; or is a current guardian and relinquishes their guardianship of a child to avoid being named a respondent in a dependency case. A beda?chelh committee member who can no longer pass a background check after appointment shall step down from the committee or be removed by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall issue a letter rescinding the appointment of the beda?chelh committee member and will appoint a new beda?chelh committee member at the recommendation of beda?chelh staff.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the terms of the above. I fully agree to abide by the Tulalip Tribal law and policies set out and realize that a violation of the same could result in civil penalties.

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Signature

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Date