

NATIONAL INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Child Welfare Director Job Description

Position Title: Child Welfare Director
Supervisor: Senior Program Director
Department: Program

FLSA Status: Exempt, Salaried
Classification: Regular, Full-time
Location: Portland, Oregon
Salary: \$ 99,064–\$123,830

Position Summary:

The child welfare director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) is responsible for empowering and supporting Native communities to improve the lives of their children and families by developing and implementing programs and resources designed to mobilize and assist Tribal and urban Indian communities and delivering high-quality, timely services. This position is responsible for the delivery, oversight, and successful completion of multiple programs, grants, and contracts within the program department.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Serves as project lead for assigned initiatives, developing detailed workplans, timelines, and budgets; oversees the effective implementation of program activities, including membership, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and objectives, compliance with grant and contract requirements, and maintenance of interagency planning and relationships
- Collaborates with the senior program director to provide accurate, timely, and effective technical assistance, including assessments, consultations, and training, as outlined in specific grants, contracts, and partnerships
- Ensures that all training and services are culturally relevant and designed to meet the unique needs of the populations served
- Oversees requests for information with compassionate social work support, offering guidance, information, and referrals to family members, relatives, service providers, and court personnel on navigating the child welfare system, implementing the Indian Child Welfare Act, and accessing services for Native families and children

Essential Functions:

- Supports the senior program director in advancing the program department's vision, ensuring alignment with NICWA's practice model and core values

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- Trains and mentors program staff in responding to information requests and develops or refines reporting and tracking systems to ensure accurate data collection and effective service delivery
- Ensures high-quality, timely delivery of culturally relevant, professionally sound services and trainings to meet grant, contract, and program deliverables while monitoring resource utilization to comply with fiscal policies and requirements
- Actively fosters strong working relationships and partnerships with Tribes and organizations to enhance service delivery
- Under the direction of the senior program director and in partnership with program staff, ensures that training is provided in response to current and emerging issues to increase the level of workforce competence and that training materials and methods are professionally sound and culturally relevant: this may include recommending training topics, assisting in NICWA curriculum development and updating, and training delivery to continuously provide the best resources for child welfare and other professionals
- Assists in the development and implementation of NICWA's membership program and ensures that program staff listen to and involve NICWA members at all levels
- Facilitates identification of and access to resources to meet a program or community's child welfare needs, such as funding, partnerships, systems development, operations, evaluation, intergovernmental relationships, and staff development
- Monitors new and potential challenges, trends, and promising practices in Indian child welfare and child welfare generally, supports NICWA's capacity to respond to emerging issues, and promotes tribal community awareness of these issues
- Oversees departmental staff management, including recruitment, onboarding, setting clear performance expectations, providing ongoing feedback, conducting performance evaluations, and addressing disciplinary matters as needed

Additional Responsibilities:

- Performs other duties and assignments as directed
- Participates in NICWA activities, internal teams, and other tasks as required
- Contributes to organization-wide initiatives and special projects as needed

Supervision:

- This position reports directly to the senior program director

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- This position supervises the community development specialist

Core Competencies:

- Models ethics, integrity, and accountability
- Exercises sound judgement and decision-making
- Upholds high standards of accuracy and quality of work standards
- Actively contributes to NICWA's learning community
- Effectively manages workload and prioritization of tasks
- Navigates adversity with resilience and adaptability
- Develops strategic perspectives to enhance organizational success
- Demonstrates professional effectiveness in all aspects of the role
- Champions and promotes NICWA's mission, vision, philosophy, and goals
- Builds and shares organizational knowledge
- Maintains a strong constituent focus, building and deepening constituent knowledge
- Champions and supports organizational change
- Builds and nurtures relationships across teams and stakeholders
- Communicates clarity, influence, and impact
- Encourages collaboration and fosters teamwork
- Inspires and motivates others to achieve high levels of performance
- Adheres to NICWA's policies, procedures, and organizational framework

Qualifications:

- Master's degree in social work, social services, public administration, or a closely related human services field
- Eight to fifteen years of experience in child welfare services or social work; progressive management experience to senior-level roles
- Strong knowledge of Native cultures and social service systems, with proven experience working with Tribal organizations, Tribal service systems, and Tribal government structures

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- In-depth knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and its implications for policy, practice, and advocacy within Native communities
- Skilled in directing, coordinating, and implementing effective, culturally competent, and comprehensive social services programs
- Experienced in managing interagency and intergovernmental relationships, serving as an effective liaison among staff, upper management, and external partners
- Skilled in delivering effective oral presentations to diverse audiences with high-level facilitation skills to guide discussions, resolve conflicts, and achieve consensus in diverse settings
- Exceptional interpersonal skills, including sensitivity, empathy, active listening, and fairness in understanding and responding to the needs, experiences, and perspectives of others
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate in a team environment, exhibiting leadership and peer engagement to motivate collective success
- Proven ability to manage complex projects with competing deadlines, using effective tools and time management strategies to balance internal and external demands while maintaining high-quality standards
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to develop practical solutions to complex challenges and adapt knowledge and skills to various contexts.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office with the ability to learn and adapt to new technologies and a variety of software applications

Travel Requirements:

Ability to travel approximately 25%–30% of the work year

Work Environment:

This role operates in a hybrid work setting, with specified in-office and remote workdays. In-office collaboration at NICWA's Portland office location is required on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Remote work requirements include the ability to work in a virtually professional, quiet, and distraction-free environment while maintaining availability and responsiveness during work hours; reliability and readiness of technology is also required.

Regular use of standard office equipment, including computers, phones, photocopiers, and filing cabinets is required.

Physical Demands:

Frequently involves prolonged periods of sitting or standing. May require occasional

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bending, stooping, and lifting of up to 15 pounds.

Physical requirements are representative of those that must be met to successfully perform the essential functions of this position with or without reasonable accommodation.

Disclaimer:

This job description provides a general overview of the responsibilities associated with the role. Duties, responsibilities, and activities are not intended to be construed as exhaustive and may change with or without notice.

NICWA is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. Qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, sex, disability, veteran, or any protected status.

To Apply:

Complete application materials include a cover letter, resume, and NICWA's employment application, found at <https://www.nicwa.org/employment>. Please submit completed applications materials to Operations Coordinator Andrea Zaragoza at andrea@nicwa.org by August 11, 2025.