



For Immediate Release
March 1, 2023

The NDSS Hosts Groundbreaking Work Session with Family Shelters



Shelter Home Directors and staff work session to share challenges and solutions regarding their contracts with NDSS.

Shiprock, NM –The Navajo Division of Social Services' (NDSS) Office of the Executive Director hosted a groundbreaking work session with its contracted family shelters, Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren, and three members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council on Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

“NDSS contracted shelters need our attention. It is my mission and goal to work with both the Legislative Branch and Executive Branch to improve the divisions contract and funding process for family shelters,” stated Executive Director, Thomas Cody.

“This is the first time that there has been a meeting like this. You have three council delegates present, Honorable Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty with the Budget and Finance Committee, Honorable Delegate Curtis Yanito with the Health, Education and Human Services Committee, and me from the Law-and-Order Committee,” said Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton. “You also have the members of the Office of the President and Vice President present at this meeting. We are here to help improve the process.”

The NDSS contracts with 7 family shelters, operates the Northern TREE House shelter in Shiprock, New Mexico, and partners with the Utah Navajo Health System that operates the Gentle IronHawk Shelter in Blanding, Utah. Family shelters serving the Navajo Nation are awarded the Family Violence and Prevention Services Act funding to provide emergency shelter for families who are in immediate threat and in need of safety.

“The ongoing issue is the lengthy time it takes to get the shelters’ contracts approved and paid. The Nation’s internal processes need to be resolved and improved, for which we are having this meeting,” stated Cody. “Today’s discussions will lead to a supported and improved internal strategy to spend the Family Violence funding efficiently.”

The Navajo Division of Social Services (NDSS) is under the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation's three-branch government. Under the leadership of the NDSS Executive Director, NDSS programs and departments provide social services and human services, consistent with professional social work ethics and values, and human services in accordance with Navajo cultural values to help reduce and alleviate hardship.

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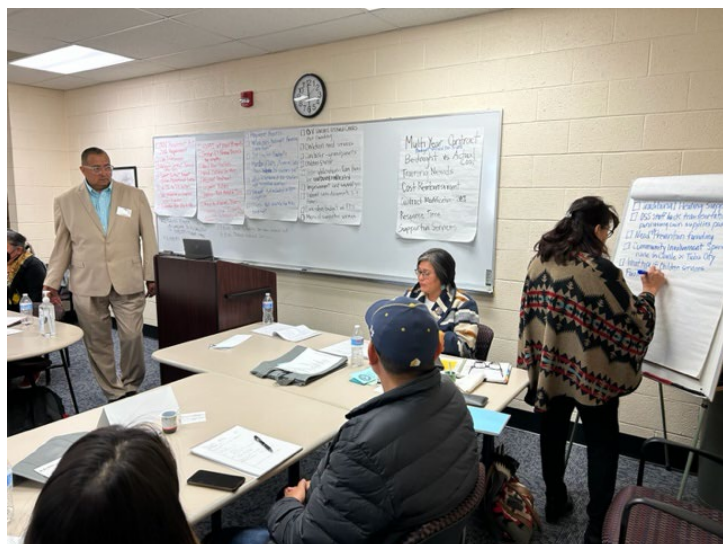
The Navajo Nation
Division of Social Services
Office of the Executive Director



Pictured from left: NDSS staff, Council Delegate Curtis Yanito, Council Delegate Amber Crotty, Executive Director Thomas Cody, NN President Dr. Buu Nygren, and Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton.

“Over the past several months, I have met with some of you (shelter directors). Many of you have expressed that you need the assistance of the President’s office. I am committed to do what I can within the Executive Branch to make sure that the right people are in place and the resources are being distributed,” said Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren.

“I am not the type of leader who sits behind a desk in Window Rock. Navajo Nation President Nygren appointed me to lead the Division of Social Services, visit Navajo communities, hear directly from those we serve, and those we partner with,” stated Cody.



Executive Director Cody receives input from Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton as NDSS staff member records work session input.

The family shelter providers expressed their concerns and provided valuable solutions. The NDSS plans to use the input to streamline the contracting process and announced that the Request for Proposals for the new multi-year family shelter contracts will be released in March 2023. The NDSS will host a follow-up work session in two months.

For more information, contact NDSS Office of the Executive Director at (928) 871-6851.

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