

# Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

## PRESS RELEASE



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### CTUIR Holds Monthly Food Distribution Event

MISSION – The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation’s (CTUIR) Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) distributed food to CTUIR members and others on Thursday, June 27 at the tribe’s Tutuilla Food Sovereignty Center.

DCFS Director Julie Taylor said the department’s Food Distribution program gives food each month to CTUIR members and members of federally recognized tribes residing on the reservation, as well as CTUIR members living off it.

“We feel this is important for our community as food security is a basic need, and with the prices of inflation, it is nice to be able to provide for our people in their time of need,” Taylor said.

Food Distribution events began in 2020 after DCFS received American Rescue Plan Act funds. When those funds ended in 2021, the CTUIR Board of Trustees (BOT) approved supplemental funding to continue the program.

“When the BOT funding ended in 2023, DCFS sought out funds elsewhere, and we were able to partner with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) to start them up again in 2024,” Taylor said. “Currently, the funding we have allows us to work with socially disadvantaged vendors within our region. We have been able to find vendors to provide items such as frozen salmon, canned salmon, ground beef, roasts, fresh fruit and vegetables, jerky and even items such as freshly made chips and salsa.”

Although summer Food Distribution events are not tailored to children while they are out of school, they do help ease fiscal strains on families.

“There has been past funding available to focus more on kid-friendly foods/snacks, but the new funding doesn’t allow as much,” Taylor said. “However, the extra items provided can help relieve some of the financial burden of food during summer break.”

DCFS Administrative Assistant Brittney Eickstaedt said Food Distribution also partners with the Yellowhawk Senior Center to deliver food to approximately 25 homebound elders.

“We get a van loaded up with items prior to the start of the big drive-thru distribution so they can get them delivered before the end of the business day,” she said.

The Food Distribution program has no age restrictions, and vendors can currently supply enough food for one event a month.

“We provide one bag of items per family with a max of two bags per car,” Eickstaedt said. “They simply line up, and when they get to the person taking names on the clipboard, they give their name/enrollment number, and if they are picking up for one family or two our team of staff/volunteers get it loaded into the vehicle for them.”

Along with CRITFC, Food Distribution partners with Yakama Nation Farms, Val’s Veggies and Bob Walchli Melons for produce. For meat and fish, it collaborates with Tutuilla True Fish, Cayuse Beef & Cattle, Hines Meat and Wahl Family Farms.

The Tutuilla Food Sovereignty Center is at 46678 Tokti Road.

*The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.*

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Caption1: Lindsey Pasena-Littlesky, a Department of Children & Family Services project specialist, drops off a bag of food on Thursday, June 27 at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation’s (CTUIR) Tutuilla Food Sovereignty Center in Mission. Each month the department’s Food Distribution program gives food to CTUIR members and members of federally recognized tribes residing on the reservation, as well as CTUIR members living off it. CTUIR

Caption2: Workforce Development Director Lindsey X. Watchman and Tania Wildbill, Department of Children & Family Services Family Engagement wrap around specialist, load bags of food into a vehicle on Thursday, June 27 at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation’s Tutuilla Food Sovereignty Center in Mission. CTUIR

Caption 3: Vehicles line up to receive bags of food on Thursday, June 27 at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation’s (CTUIR) Tutuilla Food Sovereignty Center in Mission. CTUIR members and members of federally recognized tribes residing on the reservation, as well as CTUIR members living off it, can pick up food during the monthly food distribution event. CTUIR