

## **Section 127 (d) 5: IHS Hiring Plan for 500 Behavioral Health Positions**

**Requirement: Sec. 127 Plan:** “Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment...the Secretary shall develop a plan under which the Service will increase the health care staff providing behavioral health services by at least 500 positions within 5 years after the date of enactment of that Act, with at least 200 of such positions devoted to child, adolescent, and family services.”

**Background:** Increasing the number of positions by 500 across the system is an ambitious undertaking. As described below, execution of the plan for hiring would require resources not currently available. However, the agreed upon strategic plan for implementation identifies an approach IHS may utilize to hire if appropriations become available. The four phase development and implementation plan outlined below will provide the necessary roadmap to implement a comprehensive recruitment effort if resources become available.

**Recommended Plan:** Four Phase Development and Implementation Plan based on appropriations and completed contract:

### **1. National Behavioral Health Scan and Analysis (150 days)**

Perform national scan for current behavioral health service provision/needs and current positions throughout the system (IHS, Tribal, and Urban); current and projected administration, infrastructure, and associated requirements for hiring, supervising, and supporting the positions across the system (IHS, Tribal, and Urban); current recruitment programs for mental health staff in other federal Agencies/Departments (i.e., Defense Centers of Excellence, Veterans Administration, etc.), and; projected overall requirements for developing and executing a national recruitment effort of this magnitude and timeframe.

### **2. Tribal Consultation Among the National Stakeholders (120 days)**

Upon completion and analysis of the national scan, IHS will convene a consultation process to seek recommendations for most appropriate distribution of new staff positions across the IHS, Tribal, and Urban Indian health system.

### **3. National Recruitment Plan (90 days)**

Based upon the scan and tribal consultation, a national recruiting plan will be finalized addressing: the distribution of these new positions within the system (IHS, Tribal, and Urban); administrative, policy, regulatory and infrastructure requirements to support and manage this level of staff increase, and; the plan to recruit personnel for these positions which may include support for tribal programs as well.

### **4. Program Execution and Management (ongoing)**

IHS management and tribal liaison for recruitment, retention, and reporting.