

Tuberculosis Welcome Packet

Welcome from the Tuberculosis Program in the great state of Washington! This document will give you a quick summary of tuberculosis (TB) care, prevention and control in Washington, including:

- TB public health structure and responsibilities in Washington.
- What systems access you will need depending on your role and responsibilities.
- What to expect from the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) TB Program.
- Where to find resources for TB data, case management, and clinical guidance.
- Who to contact for assistance and additional resources.

Tuberculosis has been an important public health issue for centuries. Worldwide, about 1/4 of the population is infected with the TB bacteria and about 1.5 million people die from TB every year. While the prevalence of TB disease in the United States is considered low, TB continues to be a public health threat given its worldwide prevalence and the existence of drug-resistant tuberculosis.

During 2016–2020, public health detected an average of about 200 cases of tuberculosis per year in Washington State, with about 75% of these cases occurring in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Since TB disease is not common in Washington, most health care providers do not have experience treating TB, and therefore rely on their local health officer for support.

TB Public Health Structure and Responsibilities

[RCW 70.28](#), [RCW 70.30](#), and [WAC 246-170](#) are the primary TB Revised Codes of Washington (RCWs) and Washington Administrative Codes (WACs) outlining DOH and Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ) responsibilities and are comprehensively described in the [Washington State Tuberculosis Law Manual for Local Health Officers](#). The DOH Secretary of Health is responsible for establishing standards for the prevention, treatment, and control of TB and for providing services for persons suffering from TB.

County legislative authorities are required to annually budget funds for TB control ([RCW 70.30.055](#)). Local health officers and LHJs are responsible for the prevention, treatment, and control of tuberculosis within their local jurisdiction. The local health officer needs to either act as or designate a physician to act as the tuberculosis control officer. In this role, they will coordinate all aspects of the prevention, treatment, and control program.

Local health officers and LHJs are required to conduct TB prevention and screening. This includes examination, testing, investigation, management, treatment, and (if necessary) isolation for persons with confirmed or suspected TB disease. Local health officers have the authority to *involuntarily* detain, test, treat, or isolate persons with suspected or confirmed tuberculosis if they are not voluntarily complying. [WAC 246-170-051](#) describes procedures for involuntary testing, treatment, and detention.

The DOH TB Program is here to support you in providing high quality, equitable care and prevention in your jurisdiction. The DOH TB Program provides:

- Medical and nursing consultation
- Surveillance data processing and analysis
- Coordination of ongoing educational events related to various TB topics
- Development of educational tools and materials
- Facilitation of interjurisdictional transfer of TB care
- First line TB medications for active TB disease treatment, and other medications on a case by case basis.

Systems Access

Depending on your TB program structure and your role you may need access to all or very few of these systems. Discuss with your supervisor and the DOH contacts listed to determine to which systems below you will need access.

Access need	What it's for	Who might need access	How to request access
WDRS (Washington Disease Reporting System)	WA state surveillance system used for reporting cases of active TB disease and details of TB contact investigations.	Anyone who will enter case investigation reporting data or contact investigation data, or who may need access to incoming electronic laboratory reports (ELR), e.g., public health nurse, disease intervention specialist, etc.	Work with the data steward at your LHJ to request access *Note: This is accessed through a Washington State portal called Secure Access Washington (SAW).
EDN (Electronic Disease Notification System)	National electronic reporting system that notifies US state and local health departments and screening clinics of the arrival of refugees and immigrants with health conditions requiring medical follow-up. This includes arrivers with Class B status needing additional tuberculosis screening.	Anyone who will be involved in screening for persons arriving to the U.S. with a Class B notification for a TB condition.	Email tbservices@doh.wa.gov to request access. *Note: This is accessed through a CDC portal called Secure Access Management Services (SAMS).
WDRS User Group (WUG) also known as the RAINIER Suite User Group (RSUG)	Forum for DOH to share updates about WDRS changes, and get your feedback on decision points and end-user experience. Each session has a dedicated time for TB topics, GCD (General Communicable Disease), Hepatitis, Lead, etc.	Anyone who will be a WDRS user.	Register using this zoom link.

Ongoing LHJ – DOH Collaboration

Case Review

Longitudinal case management support is offered by DOH TB nurse consultants for all TB cases. Most LHJ TB nurses will have weekly, biweekly or monthly reviews with DOH depending on the acuity of the case, burden of TB in the jurisdiction, and expertise and resources available locally. LHJs can request nurse and/or medical consultation at any time.

The Washington standard for multi-drug resistant and extensively drug-resistant cases is longitudinal case consultation. Consultations include local health nurses and physicians, all other physicians involved in the care of the patient, DOH, and subject matter experts from Public Health – Seattle & King County.

Cohort Review

Cohort reviews are an opportunity for local health and DOH to meet to discuss jurisdiction-specific TB outcomes. Outcome measures are based on [established CDC indicators](#).

TB ECHO

[TB Project ECHO® \(Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes\)](#) is a collaborative model of online consultation, education, and mentoring that occurs via videoconference every Tuesday at 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm, PST.

Participants will enhance skills in:

- Screening, testing, and treating patients with TB infection and TB disease.
- Selecting appropriate treatment regimens consistent with best practices.
- Evaluating and managing potential side effects that may require alteration or cessation of treatment.
- Accessing specialty support and educational tools to more effectively engage patients in treatment completion.

The sessions are free to join and CME/CNE credits are available for sessions with didactics. [Sign up here](#).

Class B Arriver Evaluations

All immigrants and refugees are screened for TB using standard protocols before entering the United States. Those with TB-related findings that do not prohibit them from traveling but need medical follow-up after arrival in the U.S. are given a TB Class designation. DOH, local health departments, and providers collaborate to ensure that TB Class arrivals receive follow-up medical evaluations in a timely manner.

Interjurisdictional Transfers and International Case Management Referrals

An [interjurisdictional referral system](#) promotes continuity of care for TB patients who move from one jurisdiction to another during TB treatment. This system also facilitates the completion of contact tracing for contacts who move prior to completion of TB exposure evaluation.

An International Case Management referral is coordinated through DOH to [CureTB](#), a CDC organization that will interview your patient while in the US and connect them to TB care once they have arrived at their international destination.

If you have a TB patient moving out of your jurisdiction and are unsure of the interjurisdictional transfer process or international case management referrals available, please contact the DOH TB Program at tbservices@doh.wa.gov for more information.

Data/Surveillance

The DOH TB team can provide many types of data and surveillance-related support to your team! Check out our [Data Resources page on the Tuberculosis Partners SharePoint site](#) to learn more about our data and surveillance work, see a rundown of common data-related acronyms, and find a wealth of guidance documents and trainings related to TB data. A few examples of support we can provide to your team:

- Data exports, codebooks, help understanding WDRS reports, and tips/tricks for analyzing your data
- Epidemiological data summaries for your program needs
- Training and troubleshooting assistance for navigating WDRS and EDN data systems
- Genotyping and case data specific to TB clusters in your jurisdiction
- Guidance on the interpretation and use of genotyping data

Monthly Washington State TB Newsletter

Get the latest in WA state TB news. A monthly newsletter to keep local health jurisdictions, healthcare providers, and other TB partners up to date on activities in Washington State. Typical content will include job announcements, the latest research, upcoming trainings, and other important updates.

- [Sign up for the newsletter here](#)
- [Access the newsletter archives here](#)

Where to Find Resources

TB SharePoint Site

Resources for Washington LHJs will primarily be found on the internal [Tuberculosis Partners SharePoint site](#). To access this SharePoint site, you may need to be granted access by DOH, please contact tbservices@doh.wa.gov for this.

Here are links to specific sections of the Tuberculosis Partners SharePoint site you can check out now to see all the resources available:

- [Arriver Information](#)
- [Case Management Tools](#)
- [Clinical Resources](#)
- [Data/Surveillance Resources](#)
- [Lab Sciences](#)
- [Other Program Resources](#)
- [Medications Access](#)
- [TB Services & Standards Manual](#)
- [Video Directly Observed Therapy \(VDOT\)](#)

TB Centers of Excellence

CDC funds four TB Centers of Excellence (TB COE) that provide training, education, and medical consultation to their region in the United States. Our region is served by the [Curry International Tuberculosis Center](#). These centers are great resources so feel free to check them out and sign up to be notified of educational opportunities, new products, and other information that will help you stay up to date with the best TB information and tools available. To find out more about TB COEs, visit [this CDC webpage](#).

Other Resources

[Washington Department of Health TB Program website](#) – For the public and community providers.

[National Tuberculosis Controllers Association](#) – For TB Control professionals.

[CDC TB website](#) – For the public, health care providers, and public health professionals.

[APHL Understanding TB Laboratory Testing for Public Health Nurses: Online Course \(2023\)](#)

Who to contact at the WA State TB Program

For questions, please contact the DOH TB Program via email (TBServices@doh.wa.gov) or call (206) 418-5500.

For a list of program staff, their roles, and direct contact information, please use [this link](#).