



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
PO Box 47890 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7890
Tel: 360-236-4030 • 711 Washington State Relay

November 25, 2024

Re: Informative - Update on Native & Strong Lifeline Expansion Requests

Greetings Honorable Tribal Leaders, Partners, and Professionals:

We are writing today to provide information of recent requests from federal partners and partners from other states to expand access to the Native & Strong Lifeline for American Indian and Alaska Native people across the country. This communication follows the guidelines of [Chapter 43.376 RCW](#), the [Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989](#), and the [DOH Consultation and Collaboration Procedure](#).

Since the launch of [Native & Strong Lifeline](#), in November 2022, administered by [Volunteers of America Western Washington \(VOAWW\)](#), has provided crisis call services as part of the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) for all Indigenous people in Washington. This includes American Indian and Alaska Native people, Tribal members and unenrolled descendants, and First Nations people. |

As the first state in the Nation, this line currently provides support to around 600 help-seekers each month. Due to the success and unique services of Native & Strong Lifeline the VOAWW has received inquiries from partners outside of Washington who hope to offer Native & Strong Lifeline services in their communities. The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and VOAWW will explore these requests with a focus on making sure that any expansion does not compromise the quality of services that we offer in Washington.

For additional information, please contact Elaina Perry, 988 Program Supervisor, at (360) 766-0191 or elaina.perry@doh.wa.gov or Candice Wilson, Executive Director, Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations (OTPHR), at candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov or 360-819-7626.

Sincerely,

Michele Roberts, MPH, MCHES
Assistant Secretary
Division of Prevention and Community Health

cc: Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health, WA-DOH
Candice Wilson–Quatz'tenaut (Lummi), Executive Director, OTPHR, WA-DOH
Kristopher Holiday, Chief, Office of Strategic Partnerships, WA-DOH
Kristin Peterson, Chief, Office of Policy, Planning & Evaluation, WA-DOH
Elizabeth Perez, Chief, Office of Public Affairs and Equity, WA-DOH
Jessica Todorovich, Chief of Staff, WA-DOH
Lacy Fehrenbach - Chief of Prevention, Safety, and Health - WA-DOH
Elaina Perry - 988 Program Supervisor – WA-DOH
Lonnie Peterson - 988 Crisis Systems Section Manager - WA-DOH