



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

*PO Box 47890 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7890
Tel: 360-236-4030 • 711 Washington State Relay*

June 21, 2021

The Honorable Steve Kutz, Chair
American Indian Health Commission
808 North Fifth Avenue
Sequim, Washington 98382

RE: Consultation on the development and implementation of DOH-Tribal Data Sharing Agreements (DSA)

Dear Chair Kutz:

On June 16, 2021, the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) requested the Department of Health (DOH) host a consultation on the development and implementation of DOH-Tribal Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs). Our staff reviewed the background, issues, and requests you presented in your letter. We offer the following clarifications in response:

1. The DOH DSA is not intended in any way to limit tribe or tribal epidemiology center (TEC) access to the Washington Disease Reporting System (WDRS).
2. Rather, the primary reason for the materials sent to tribal data partners was to allow us to include data from other data systems (governed by different statutes) in WDRS, notably immunizations and death data. This will greatly facilitate investigation of breakthrough cases and deaths, and allow access to this information for tribes and tribal epidemiology center staff as well as local health jurisdiction (LHJ) staff.
3. Before we can add new data to WDRS, we need to have agreement and signatures from tribes, TECs, and LHJs. This was the reason for the rapid time frame. Until there is agreement, **we will continue to work as we have been.**
4. There is currently no DSA for WDRS. It was not needed historically because jurisdictions only had access to information on people in their jurisdiction. With COVID, that has changed to facilitate investigation and response. Since users have access to information on all COVID cases across the state, we are implementing a DSA to cover this.
5. The COVID response has identified several data governance issues impacting multiple data systems. We plan to engage with tribes, TECs, and LHJs on these data governance issues more broadly without any specific time constraints, and will develop a process that incorporates formal tribal consultation.

With all due respect and in accordance with Chapter 43.376 RCW and the Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989, DOH collaborates with Indian tribes and tribal organizations in the development of policies, agreements, and program implementation that directly affects Indian tribes and tribal people. Therefore, DOH will host a consultation in response to the request from the AIHC using the following proposed schedule:

- **Roundtable 1: July 15, 2021, 4 pm**
Microsoft Teams meeting; **Join on your computer or mobile app**
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only) - [+1 564-999-2000,,197031411#](tel:+15649992000197031411)
Phone Conference ID: 197 031 411#
- **Roundtable 2: August 3, 2021, 4 pm**
Microsoft Teams meeting; **Join on your computer or mobile app**
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only) - [+1 564-999-2000,,317312866#](tel:+15649992000317312866)
Phone Conference ID: 317 312 866#
- **Consultation: August 26, 2021, 9 am**
Microsoft Teams meeting; **Join on your computer or mobile app**
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Or call in (audio only) - [+1 564-999-2000,,530261877#](tel:+15649992000530261877)
Phone Conference ID: 530 261 877#

If you have any input or concerns that you would like to direct to DOH staff supporting the consultation, please contact:

Technical	Tribal Relations
Cathy Wasserman, PhD, MPH cathy.wasserman@doh.wa.gov 360-791-3485	Tamara Fife, MPH (Chickasaw) tamara.fife@doh.wa.gov 360-870-8903

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH
Secretary of Health

cc: Cathy Wasserman, State Non-Infectious Disease Epidemiologist, Department of Health
Tamara Fife, Tribal Relations Director, Department of Health
David Bayne, Deputy Secretary of Strategic Partnerships, Department of Health
Jessica Todorovich, Chief of Staff, Department of Health
Kristin Peterson, Deputy Secretary of Policy and Planning, Department of Health
Elizabeth Perez, Deputy Secretary of Public Affairs and Equity, Department of Health