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## AIHC Delegate Duties and Responsibilities

**The American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) for Washington State** was created in 1994 by federally recognized tribes, Urban Indian health organizations, and other Indian organizations to provide a forum for address Tribal/ State issues. A collective Tribal government voice is shaped on shared health disparity priorities. The AIHC is a Tribally-driven non-profit organization with a mission of improving health outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) through a health policy focus at the Washington State level. AIHC works on behalf of the 29 federally-recognized Indian Tribes and two Urban Indian Health Organizations (UIHOs) in the state. In Washington, the AI/AN population continues to experience the poorest health outcomes and highest overall mortality rates than any other population. AIHC Tribes and UIHOs then work collaboratively with Washington State health leaders, the Governor’s office and legislature to address these priorities. The Commission’s policy work improves individual Indian access to state-funded health services, enhances reimbursement mechanisms for Tribal health programs to deliver their own culturally-appropriate care, and creates an avenue for Tribes and UIHOs to receive timely and relevant information for planning on state health regulations, policies, funding opportunities, and health-specific topics. By bringing state and Tribal partners together, specific health disparity priorities are addressed across multiple systems—pooling resources and expertise for greater health outcomes.

**AIHC Delegates** are officially appointed by Tribal Councils to represent each individual Tribe, and Urban Indian Health Organization representatives serve as members-at-large. The ultimate goal in promoting increased tribal-state collaboration is to improve the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives by influencing state and tribal health policy and resource allocation. Key activities:

- Identify health policy issues with potential impacts to AI/AN and advocate Tribal Urban Indian concerns
- Coordinate policy analysis and Tribal and Urban Indian Program engagement
- Collaborate with the state and Tribes and Urban Indian Programs for response on state initiatives
- Disseminate health information to Tribal and Urban Indian leaders and health programs
- Advance culturally grounded best practices to promote health equity and eliminate American Indian and Alaska Native health disparities
- Coordinate health systems changes and impacts to ensure AI/ANs receive quality care and services



## American Indian Health Commission of Washington State

- Promote the government-to-government relationships between tribes and state health agencies

The AIHC host bi-monthly delegates meetings to carry out the business of the AIHC and also to share information with AIHC Delegates. The AIHC also sponsors a biennial health summit to bring Tribal leaders and State partners to collaboratively work toward improving the health status of Washington's AI/AN population. The audience includes tribal leaders, federal representatives, state officials, health and human service providers, and others from across the state that work to create an action plan for the subsequent two years.

AIHC Delegates commitments of due diligence, loyalty and care related to fiduciary and governance responsibilities including:

- Attendance of AIHC Delegates meetings, currently held the second Thursday of every third month of the year beginning in February.
- Work to support the AIHC between meetings including financial and membership development of the organization
- Participate as member of at least one committee/workgroup; and keep AIHC delegates informed of committee/workgroup milestones or findings of assigned committee/workgroup.
- Keep leadership and staff of Tribe/Urban Program(s) they represent informed of information shared at meetings and through other forms of communication from the AIHC.
- Work with the AIHC to further its mission and strategic plan

AIHC Delegate time commitment:

Meetings- 4 – 6.5 hour delegate meetings per year, plus travel

Help acquire necessary funding for AIHC operations – 2 hours per year

Committee/Workgroup membership- See Committees List

Information sharing-1-2 hours 6X per year

Strategic planning—TLHS every other year 2 days