



Public Safety and the Justice System Workgroup Meeting

April 14, 2025

Goal of Workgroup:

Effective responses to the opioid and fentanyl public health crisis are complicated by the complexity of jurisdiction on Tribal lands, providing appropriate services in carceral settings, and linking people to care at release.

In Attendance: Co Chairs: James Salazar, Quileute Tribal Council; Steve Kutz, Suquamish/Cowlitz; Bill Elliot, WA Dept. Military; Marco Brettmann, WRTC; Sam White, LEKT; Vicki Lowe, Executive Director, American Indian Health Commission; Nakia Demiero and Lucilla Mendoza, OTA/HCA; Kris Shera, HCA.

Met Friday, in preparation for Summit. Invite panelist, Chelsea Sayles will update on Tribal Warrants Workgroup accomplishments. Chief of Police for Spokane (Nassale)- will be asked outstanding questions from this workgroup. Lena Nachand from HCA will share about Medicaid Transformation 2.0 Re-Entry Program.

Councilman Salazar gave overview of the work this group has accomplished.

WG started with questions from Summit

Many questions were being answered by the Tribal Warrants workgroup or other workgroups.

In Washington “we know how to work with one another” and “we are responding whether or not we get along”. This is not a new idea.

Discussion on Tribal Warrants Workgroup, TLOA, certified and non-certified Tribes. Standards used by the Attorney General’s Office are the same as the federal standards. Suquamish and Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe

State “trailer” bill, has stipulations that are not Tribal friendly. There was an attempt to amend section 9. Hope this will expound Tribal Sovereignty of all Tribes.

Steve Kutz asked about U.S. Attorney prosecuting homicide by substance. The case has to meet certain criteria. The FBI and US Attorney have clear boundaries about where they can investigate and charge.



Asked Tribal Chiefs to share if they have Juvenile justice system in Tribal Code- Suquamish, both civil and criminal with Sheriff's office, exercise exclusively as a Tribe. Juveniles got to Kitsap County Juvenile Detention Facility, not a court specific to juvenile, just specific attorneys assigned to juveniles as victims and suspects. LEKT operate their own, similar to Suquamish. Quileute uses lo smaller, hard time getting attorneys and defer to state under PL-280. This has been an issue since the Tribe does not have a code for this.

Vicki shared two issues to pose to Governor

1. Can funds previously used for Regional and Local Drug Taskforce be used for cross training initiatives from Washington State Patrol and Tribes for high level investigations/operations. What is feasible with current standards/government affairs?
2. Can the Governor's Office provide clarification to public defenders and prosecutors on Public Law 280 and Juvenile Justice to ensure the same standards (interpretation) are applied across the State?

Councilman Salazar offered times for comments and concerns. Chief Williams shared about a home invasion on Tribal Land. The US Attorney declined prosecution. The criteria change and are extremely high, very limited. The case was prosecuted in State Court. The Tribe does the investigation.

Discussion on Resource Guide for this workgroup



Update on Workgroup priorities:

Completed:

- ✓ Addressing complexity of jurisdiction on Tribal lands: Tribal Warrant Workgroup has addressed. Issues with PL 280, local authorities have worked well together to address TWWG outlining procedure for working together. Will be addressed through new legislations
- ✓ Establishing Tribal warrant reciprocity -Tribal Warrant Workgroup has addressed, putting practice into policy. AG's office will do the verification for Tribe's meeting TOLA criteria. Has moved from AG to Governor's Office. Chelsea Sayles worked to develop checklist of criteria and worked with Workgroup to create forms, checklists, bench cards and other documents. Will be reviewed by AG's office and other related agencies. Once approved, they can share out sign off documents. Have not determined if there will be a formal license or certification, there will be a list on the AGO website. To make it easy for law enforcement to find an up-to-date list. The Workgroup will develop a "trailer bill" to make adjustments identified through the Workgroup process to improve implementation. This won't be until 2026.
- ✓ Create clear, consistent process for jurisdictional transfer between counties and Tribes (Already established through local MOU's, will be further defined within the Tribal Warrant Workgroup rollout)
- ✓ Enhancing collaboration between Tribal police and other law enforcement agencies. (Already established through local MOU's, will be further defined within the Tribal Warrant Workgroup rollout)

In Progress:



- Linking people to care at release/ re-entry program at the health care authority. Need to make sure Tribal correctional facilities are credentialed TPA and Tribal government, and Indian Health Care Providers are aware of and connected to program. IHCPs can be reimbursed for providing services. Incarcerated individuals can be signed up for Medicaid 30 days prior to release.
 - MOUD in jail settings for jail to provide medications for those in treatment-grant program only one of two Tribes participating right now.
 - [MOUD and MAUD in jails standard of care guidelines](#)
 - [HCA MOUD & MAUD in jails program expansion Q & A](#)
 - Asking for letters of interest, the program is not fully up implemented.
 - Medicaid Re-entry program begins rolling out in July:
- Increasing coordination with Tribal wellness courts. It is unique to each tribe:
 - What is the standard for a tribal wellness court? TLPI- Conduct a significant amount of tribal training, (IE: startup of a program, sample documentation). [Healing to Wellness Court Enhancement Training](#)- added to resource guide list.
 - Is funding from the state the best way for tribes to be supported within this initiative?
 - How else can the state support this?
- Strengthening and integrating traditional judicial systems and cultural practices by bringing awareness of cultural issues to the Courts system.
 - Utilize Tribal State Court Consortium to support this work. [Washington State Courts Washington Courts](#)
 - AOC and HCA need to be connected about healing to wellness courts. Work together to do some engagement to understand the needs.
- Strengthen collaboration between different sectors including law enforcement and providers (Medical/Behavior health)- Social Workers imbedded within Departments. Having a tribal DCR, Yakima has a family care individual that responds with Law Enforcement. Worked to a certain extent. State law allows law enforcement to use state benefits to determine if someone is
 - Social workers embedded with law enforcement (Yakama is doing this)
 - Law enforcement involvement with Mobile Crisis Teams.
 - Tribal Designated Crisis Responder – Involuntary commitment under Ricky’s Law.
 - Need to understand and educate Tribes on how these programs operate, how funding works.



- Assess local laws to determine where they need to be strengthened or revised (Clarifying question, is this in reference to tribal law or state? Also, is this something this workgroup has the authority to address? In my opinion, no). Ask this question at the summit.
- Create and review list of resources and resource documents for this priority to support development of WA Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Response Resource Guide (attached)

Issues to discuss with Governor Ferguson:

- Supporting Tribal drug task forces (State). State funded drug task force (State likes the idea). There used to be 22 local/regional drug taskforces. Funds went away, some were federal and some were state. Can the funds be routed for cross training initiatives from WSP to Tribes for high level investigations/operations. Further clarification of our request to the governor. What is feasible with current standards/government affairs? DOJ led taskforce in the past. Speak to AG Brown about what funding is available for Taskforces. BIA was trying to send more law enforcement officers to PWN. Asa will follow up and see if that will still happen.
- Juvenile Justice, where does this fit. (PL-280, who has the jurisdiction over the juveniles). For Tribes that don't have capacity, the state also doesn't help out. Pose this to Gov. Ferguson. Asa will bring to his attention. Asa had a discussed with Rep. Lekanoff re a retro session law. Castro V. Huertas is an issue. Councilman Salazar is interested in being involved in this conversation.

Items moved or deleted from list:

- Providing appropriate services in carceral settings, including detox and re-entry at both state and local levels. Move to Continuum of Care Workgroup. Will connect in Summit if needed.
- Including Tribal representatives on the Jails Standards Task Force (Is this an issue that this workgroup can adequately address?) – Established by legislator Assigned to the AG. Work is there but it is no longer active remove from priorities.