



Tribal Housing and Wrap Around Services

Workgroup Minutes

American Indian Health Commission
6/24/2025 3:00 PMPDT

I. Attendance

Attendees: Zekkethal Val Vargas-Thomas, Project Coordinator, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation; Tracy Gillett, TOR Coordinator, Hoh Indian Tribe; Maureen Kinley, Councilmember, Lummi Nation; Elizabeth DeGross, Tribal Housing Department, Nisqually Indian Tribe; Jordan Keating, Housing Division, Nisqually Indian Tribe; Mona Miller, Director of Reentry and Community Family Services, Puyallup Tribe of Indians; Daylen Gonzales, Behavior Health Manager, Skokomish Indian Tribe; Peyton Titus, Housing Coordinator, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe; Monica Tonasket, Secretary, Spokane Tribe of Indians; Shayla Driskell, SUDP, Upper Skagit; Vicki Lowe, Executive Director, American Indian Health Commission (AIHC); Heather Holzer, Public Relations and Communications, AIHC; Laura Kluever, Enhanced Tribal Assister, AIHC; Scott Pinkham, Equity Program Director, United Indians of All Tribes Foundation; Alden Andy, Tribal Relations Director, Department of Commerce; Colleen Cawston, Tribal Relations Director, Department of Corrections; Lisa Yanagida, Chief of Staff, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS); Tim Collins, Senior Director, Office of Indian Policy (OIP), DSHS; Sher Stecher, Tribal Relations Manager, OIP, DSHS; Brenda Francis-Thomas, Regional Manager, OIP, DSHS; Lisa Pemberton, Tribal Liaison Manager, DSHS Home and Community Living Administration; Theresa Slusher, Housing Stability Manager, DSHS Economic Services Administration; Marcy Jordan, Local Planning Areas Program Manager, DSHS Community Services Division; Charlene Abrahamson, Tribal Liaison, Health Benefit Exchange; Raina Peone, Medical Assistance Program Specialist, Health Care Authority (HCA); Mo Bailey, Section Manager, HCA; Kris Shera, State Opioid Administrator, HCA; Nakia DeMiero, Tribal Opioid Response Coordinator, HCA; Heather Maxwell-Rychart, Recovery Residence Program Manager, HCA; Maureen Bailey, Section Manager, HCA; Candice Wilson, Agency Tribal Relations Director, Department of Health (DOH); Kathy Pierre, ESJ Strategist for Tribal Relations, DOH; Tavares Terry, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director, WaTech; Rebecca Purser

II. Welcome, Blessing

Co-Chairs: *Monica Tonasket, Secretary, Spokane Tribe of Indians; Michelle Gladstone-Wade, Department of Commerce; Lori Pfingst, Department of Social and Health Services*
Blessing - Colleen Cawston

III. Opening Remarks

Vicki Lowe shared this workgroup began meeting in February and the purpose is to look at priorities that have come out of the Tribal Opioid Summits and work through them.

IV. 2025 Tribal Opioid Summit Housing and Wrap Around Services Report Out

Presenter: *Secretary Tonasket, Spokane tribe of Indians; Alden Andy, Department of Commerce*
Alden said the Summit had breakout sessions, findings, and there is a Tribal set aside from the Commerce Housing Trust Fund (HTF). Commerce is working on MOUs with Tribes to enter into contracts

with them. There are currently seven Tribes with MOUs. Vicki said this helps with the capital funding set aside for behavioral health services with Tribes.

Three priorities were identified at the Summit:

- Coordinate with re-entry from justice system or treatment
- Improve access to supportive housing services including education, food service, employment, healthcare, counseling and SUD treatment
- Create and review a list of resources to support the development of the WA Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Response Library.

Legislative recommendations were:

- Codify trauma informed policy design
- Pass eviction mitigation legislation
- Increase eviction prevention funding
- Sustain and expand funding caps on rent increases. There was legislation last year on this.
- Create digital equity to fund technology access and training specifically for underserved Tribal areas, tied to housing and recovery access.

Policy recommendations were:

- Establish state-level policies or funding that address drug contamination testing and remediation for Tribal housing
- Create a statewide digital navigator network embedded with Tribal communities to help families and individuals access digital housing and recovery resources. This was done before with the Affordable Care Act and there was a person at each Tribe who was trained. There are several agencies that can help with this.
- Require inter-agency coordination between Commerce, HCA, DOC and DCYF to develop a universal intake system for housing-related services.

Maureen asked about the DOC funding and how that fits in with the disbursement. Alden said Commerce is still building that and to expect communications from their office regarding the HTF as they want to know the best approach to spread the funds amongst the Tribes over the next two years.

Programmatic recommendations were:

- Funding for a Native Hub to build some infrastructure and operationalize a Tribally governed care coordination network under Medicaid Transformation Project 2.0, with payment pathways for Tribal services and reentry coordination. This began in June.
- Launch community-based housing hubs to serve as walk-in centers for housing assistance
- Sustain Tribal-led recovery housing and invest in Native-operated recovery homes, particularly transitional or Oxford-style models that allow group housing with cultural support. Also, Suquamish is setting up some treatment related housing and folks must be in treatment to access them.
- Develop and distribute print-based resource directories, especially for families or individuals without digit access, covering housing, reentry, Medicaid and peer services.
- Create centralized communication systems to streamline awareness and updates on resource availability, program status, and referrals across agencies. It's hard for folks to find what's available and what would work best for them.

Theresa wondered if there would still be a [Housing Trust Fund pre-application workshop for Tribes](#) on July 1? Her email address is theresa.slusher@dshs.wa.gov. Alden said he believed there is and will verify.

Funding and budget requests and Fiscal Analysis were:

- Is there a tribal set aside in the program to increase eviction prevention funding and dedicate state resources to rental arrears, court-related eviction forgiveness and application fee coverage?

Tracy said they utilized Trueblood dollars and it has been helpful for Tribal members for these things. She believes they just apply and use the regional contact for it. Mo said Tracy Gillespie is the Trueblood Supervisor and can provide information on the Tribal Trueblood Housing Vouchers.

@tracy.gillespie@hca.wa.gov. Tim said Sher will check with DSHS Behavioral Health folks and come back with a response.

- Digital Equity Project: Have a trained navigator/Tribal assister who is knowledgeable on programs and could be anywhere. Having printed resource items is also helpful. Is there a place where the funding could come from? Could we get Medicaid 2.0 funds for this? These folks could help with more than housing.

Vicki said we have until August 21 to finish this report up to get it into the legislative cycle and do a budget request. Tim said we will follow up with DSHS assistant secretaries, the DVR Director and sister agencies to get this information. Please submit any questions to him so we can move this forward, at tim.collins@dshs.wa.gov. Vicki said folks aren't aware of all the programs available. They are trying to fill in gaps we identify when we realize resources are still missing.

- Establish state-level policies or funding that address drug contamination testing and remediation for Tribal housing.

V. Recovery Residences Registry Presentation/Discussion

Presenter: Heather Maxwell-Rychart and Maureen Bailey, HCA

Maureen and Heather shared a presentation on Recovery Housing in WA State that will be sent to all following the meeting. Recovery Houses are safe, healthy, family-like, substance-free living environments that support folks in recovery. All recovery residences are centered on peer support and a connection to services that promote long-term recovery.

Recovery housing benefits individuals in recovery by:

- Reinforcing a substance-free lifestyle
- Providing direct connections to other folks in recovery, support groups and services.
- Not prohibiting MOUD or MAT or medications for co-occurring disorders.

HCA implemented a [registry](#) of approved recovery residences and technical assistance is available to recovery residence operations through the Washington Alliance of Quality Recovery Residences (WAQRR). WAQRR provides accreditation to recovery residences, ensuring they meet specific criteria. HCA also created and managed an operating revolving loan fund to support.

There are several types of recovery homes:

- Recovery residences, that promotes recovery from substance use, with multiple levels ranging from Level 1 (peer which includes Oxford Houses) to Level 4 (integrated such as a residential treatment facility).
- Recovery houses, which are DOH licensed residential treatment facilities offering specific services.
- Recovery Homes, which is a generic term used to describe recovery residences, Oxford Houses, licensed Recovery Houses and Tribal recovery homes.

There are currently 368 Oxford Houses, with 3,264 beds, and there are 233 recovery residences with 1,700 beds statewide. There is always a need for more. The Legislature appropriated \$10,200,000 for the upcoming biennium for Commerce to create a competitive grant program to acquire, construct or rehabilitate recovery residences. Grant funds can be used for rent or mortgage payments associated with acquisition, personnel cost, utilities and deposits, food for residences, equipment, maintenance, landscaping and more.

For questions, please reach out to Maureen Bailey at Maureen.bailey@hca.wa.gov or Heather Maxwell-Rychart at heather.maxwell-rychart@hca.wa.gov.

 [Recovery Housing 6.24.2025.pptx](#)

VI. Roundtable Discussion on Next Steps

Tribal Representatives

Vicki said next steps will be to move forward with recommendations in the report from the Summit and asked if there were other presentations folks would like to see, which were:

- The implementation of Native Hub (August meeting)
- Poverty data from Tribal and AI/AN population from the DSHS Economic Justice Team and the poverty reduction plan (August meeting)
- DOH sharing what is already in place for contamination cleansing and invite Jeff Riggins from the Suquamish Housing Program to share what they are doing (September meeting)

VII. Meeting Wrap-Up/Next Agenda

Presenters: Secretary Tonasket, Spokane Tribe of Indians; Lori Pfingst, DSHS

Secretary Tonasket said one of the key terms at the Summit was “trauma-informed” and we must keep that piece in everything we do, including housing. When we have this collaboration, there is opportunities to open our minds and learn something we didn’t know before.
Blessing by Secretary Tonasket.

VIII. Adjourn