



Inclusion of Tribes in Notifiable Conditions Reporting: Proposed Legislation

PROBLEM

Washington is not prepared for the next pandemic without notification to Tribes regarding disease outbreaks within their jurisdictions.

- Current state regulations require health care providers, health care facilities, laboratories and other entities to report communicable diseases and other major health threats to state and local health officials. However, the regulations do not include such reporting to Tribal health officials.
- Lack of notification to all health governmental health officials results in slower response to disease outbreaks which does not stop at jurisdictional boundaries. (e.g. Tribes experienced this during COVID-19).

URGENT NEED

- ***Addressing this gap is urgent since measles and other diseases are on the rise.*** As of February 4th, there are 16 cases of measles in Washington state according to [DOH](#).¹ There have been 3 cases amongst ages 5 and under, 9 cases amongst ages 5-17 and 4 cases amongst ages 18+. Of the 16 cases, 9 were unvaccinated, 7 had an unknown vaccination status and none had either the first or second dose of a measles containing vaccine.
- One recent [report](#) estimates that each measles case cost nearly \$153,000 to address.²

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Enact legislation ensuring Tribal health officials receive reports of notifiable conditions of patients residing within their jurisdictions as well as patients who receive treatment at their Tribal health facilities.

BENEFITS

When Tribes have timely notice of communicable diseases and other major health threats, they can better fulfill their governmental duties to protect the health and welfare of their community. Tribes can better utilize their inherent public health powers including isolation and quarantine and case and contact investigations.

Notifying Tribes of communicable disease and other major health threats in their communities reduces the spread of disease within their communities, to neighboring jurisdictions, and to any other locations where individuals with notifiable conditions may travel.

No fiscal impact. The state avoids unnecessary financial expenditures when disease spread is reduced.

¹ Washington State Department of Health. (2026, September 24). [Measles cases in Washington State](#). Retrieved October 1, 2026.

² Van Beusekom, M. (2026, September 23). [Measles outbreak in Chicago shelter cost nearly \\$9 million, CDC estimates](#). CIDRAP