



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY**

626 8th Avenue, SE • P.O. Box 45502 • Olympia, Washington 98504-5502

August 26, 2024

Dear delegate of the Washington State Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Response Task Force:

The Health Care Authority's (HCA) Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA) contracts with the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) of Washington State to coordinate the Washington State Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Response Task Force as directed by the legislature through the 2024 legislative session. You are on the distribution list regarding the task force, through which you will receive calendar appointments, up-to-date agendas, and various ad hoc materials.

Please send AIHC and/or the HCA the contact information of any support staff, you would like to receive this information on your behalf.

The upcoming task force meeting will occur on Tuesday, September 24th from 9:00am – 11:00am via zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82772535501>.

The agenda for the task force meeting, developed by the AICH in collaboration with task force leaders and OTA is:

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| 9:00am | Welcome/Introductions (co-chairs) |
| 9:10am | Review proviso and task force charter |
| 9:25am | Review current member appointments |
| 9:35am | Review draft Summit report |
| 9:45am | Review and determine schedule of the five workgroups |
| | - Continuum of Care Across the Life Course |
| | - Wellness and the Justice System |
| | - Housing Infrastructure that Wraps Around People |
| | - Family and Community Services |
| | - Community Preparedness: Supporting Community Response |
| 10:00am | Tribal/Urban Opioid Abatement Settlement Dollars Discussion |
| 10:50am | Propose agenda items for October 29 task force meeting and close |

The AIHC provides administrative support to coordinate the task force and task force subcommittees as outlined in the legislation, Senate Bill [5950-S.SL.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#). Please reach out to Vicki Lowe at vicki.lowe@aihc-wa.com and Lisa Rey-Thomas at lisarey51@gmail.com for any information, to nomination/update your delegate on the task force or related questions.

Additional Information and Resources

The key responsibilities of the task force members, as outlined in the proviso SB 5950 [*5950-S.SL.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#), include:

- **Meeting and Frequency:** Legislative members must convene the initial meeting of the task force by August 1, 2024. Subsequent meetings will be held at least quarterly.
- **Leadership:** The task force will be co-chaired by one legislative member and four tribal leader members chosen at the first meeting.
- **Summit:** In fiscal year 2025, the task force will convene a summit with state agencies, federally recognized Indian tribes in Washington and adjacent states, urban Indian organizations, and tribal organizations.
- **Tasks and Objectives:** Review laws and policies on opioid and fentanyl use, illicit sale, jurisdictional authority, tribal exclusionary authority, and impacts on American Indian and Alaska Native people. Develop recommendations for legislative and executive policy changes and budget initiatives to address priority areas from the May 2023 Washington state tribal opioid and fentanyl summit.
- **Reporting:** Submit a status report, including initial findings, recommendations, and progress updates, to the governor and legislative committees by June 30, 2025. The report should include recommendations for new statutes, amendments, executive actions, regulatory changes, and budget requests, with possible fiscal analysis of implementation costs.
- **Stipends:** Eligible task force members may receive a stipend of up to \$200 and other expenses per day for attending official meetings.

Below is a list of resources and past work related to the task force:

First Annual Tribal-State Opioid and Fentanyl Summit Report:

- [Washington State Tribal Opioid/Fentanyl Summit - report](#)

Second Annual Tribal-State Opioid and Fentanyl Summit site:

- [Washington State Second Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Summit – AIHC \(aihc-wa.com\)](#)

American Indian/Alaska Native Opioid Response Workgroup

- [Opioid Response Workgroup – AIHC \(aihc-wa.com\)](#)

Governor's Tribal Leaders Social Services Council

- [Governor and Tribal Leaders Social Services Council | DSHS \(wa.gov\)](#)

Please contact Aren Sparck, Tribal Affairs Administrator, aren.sparck@hca.wa.gov, if you have any tribal affairs related questions.

Sincerely,



Susan E. Birch, MBA, BSN, RN

Director