2026 Centennial Accord Agency Highlights

Governor's Office of Indian Affairs
October 2026

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

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September 24, 2026

In 1989, visionary leaders established the Centennial Accord, the beginning of a proactive continuous improvement process for Tribal-State relations. We are the beneficiaries of that vision. With the 37th annual Centennial Accord meeting, today's leaders continue to build upon this foundation.

On behalf of the State of Washington, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs presents the 2026 Centennial Accord Agency Highlights Report. This annual report is mandated under RCW 43.376 and summarizes the work state agencies have done this past year to partner with Tribal governments, serve Tribal communities, and follow through on commitments from previous Centennial Accord meetings. State agency contacts are listed in the report if you have any questions.

While this report showcases areas of valuable collaboration and engagement, more work is needed to fully implement the government-to-government relationship as envisioned by the Centennial Accord and Millennium Agreement. Together, we can build stronger relationships and create a safer, healthier, and thriving environment for our Tribal communities and all Washingtonians.

Respectfully,

Gordon James

Gordon James
(sqWu?qWu'b3sH – Skokomish Indian Tribe)
Acting Executive Director

Office of Administrative Hearings

Summary

The mission of the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) is to hear and independently resolve disputes between the public and state agencies, as well as local governments, with an impartial, quick, and accessible process. Some of those hearings involve Tribal members. During this reporting period, OAH took steps to strengthen its government-to-government work through relationship building, staff training, and developing a coordinated approach to Tribal engagement. This supports Executive Order 25-10 and reflects commitment to the principles of the Centennial Accord.

As a neutral hearings agency, OAH recognizes the importance of understanding how Tribal members access and participate in the administrative hearing process. Building relationships and learning from Tribal partners and referring agencies will help OAH continue to provide fair, impartial, accessible hearings for everyone it serves.

Highlights

- In December 2025, OAH's Chief Administrative Law Judge and Tribal liaison met with the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA). The meeting focused on building the working relationship between the agencies, discussing Executive Order 25-10, and learning how OAH can develop a Tribal engagement approach that fits its role as a neutral administrative hearings agency. The discussion helped shape OAH's plans to connect with Tribal liaisons at referring agencies and, over time, with Tribal governments.
- Members of OAH's Executive Management Team and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect Committee completed government-to-government training through GOIA. Afterward, the group that debriefed on the training will inform agency work going forward. The training strengthened OAH's understanding of Tribal sovereignty, the government-to-government relationship, and responsibilities of state agencies when working with Tribes.
- OAH's Tribal liaison is participating in GOIA workgroup meetings and providing feedback as statewide Tribal consultation guidance is developed. This participation helps OAH stay informed as guidance is developed and supports implementation across state government.
- OAH also began work to better understand how Tribal members interact with administrative hearings and referring agencies. As part of this effort, OAH is learning from referring agencies about their work with Tribes and identifying ways to improve coordination and support future Tribal engagement.
- For the 2026 legislative session, OAH amended its Agency Request Legislation bill, which was designed to modernize communication and lower costs by expanding the use of electronic communications, rather than relying only on U.S. mail. The amendment addressed concerns about access to hearings for populations that lack access to technology, including Tribal communities. The bill ran out of time to pass. Outreach is expanding for the 2027 session, including reaching out directly to Tribal governments and their lobbyists regarding plans to maintain and improve access to hearings for all.

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Department of Agriculture

Summary

As part of its primary interactions with Tribes, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) facilitates access to nutritious, local, culturally relevant foods; manages animal health, food safety, and pesticide regulatory programs; assists with trapping and eradicating invasive pests; and provides outreach and education to rural communities.

Highlights

- The WSDA Emergency Management Program conducted an extensive document review and engagement process of interested parties to develop products that accurately reflect the challenges faced by Washington's agricultural community in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from both natural and human-caused disasters. The resulting suite of resources was designed to support Tribal response agencies and agricultural producers across Washington.
- Ongoing incident management support was provided during the highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak, ongoing since May 2022. Tribes were contacted for awareness and coordination if suspected or infected animals were found on Tribal land, if a control area was on Tribal land, or if surveillance activities occurred on Tribal land. The Emergency Management Program coordinated with the State Emergency Operations Center to provide updates to Tribal partners throughout the incident.
- The WSDA Pesticide Programs provided pesticide registration information and compliance technical assistance and training to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. Waste pesticide collection and disposal services were provided for free to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.
- The WSDA Nutrient Management Technical Services program partners with Tribal communities on several water resource protection groups across the state, including the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Lummi Nation, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Samish Indian Nation, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, and the Tulalip Tribes.
- Last year the Spartina Eradication Program worked collaboratively with the Lummi Nation, Makah Tribe, Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, Suquamish Tribe, and the Tulalip Tribes. These partnerships protect valuable estuaries and restore sites for salmon and forage fish.
- The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation requested assistance with flowering rush control. Program staff provided a vessel to transport crews and assisted with survey activities. Flowering rush is an invasive species that provides cover for salmon predators that negatively impact juvenile salmon survival.
- Knotweed Program staff assisted the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and Quinault Indian Nation. Knotweed impacts salmon survival through loss of large, woody debris; decreased shade; increased water temperatures; disruption of the food web; and increased sedimentation.
- The Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences (NRAS) program continues to collaborate with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation to monitor surface waters for pesticides. NRAS also works with the Wapato Irrigation Project (WIP) to include WIP water management and agricultural production in WSDA's drought impacts studies.

- The Regional Markets Program:
    - Farm to School Purchasing Grants totaling $36,200 awarded to one Tribal school (Chief Leschi School) and two Tribal early care and education programs (Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe).
    - Local Food System Infrastructure Grants totaling $148,570 awarded to the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Chinook Run Salmon, and Otaapohkat Farm.
    - Provided technical assistance and support to multiple Tribally owned businesses to help them navigate license and permit requirements for producing and selling into local and regional marketplaces.
- The Food Assistance Program provided nearly $3.8 million in federal and state funds to support hunger-relief efforts in 32 Tribal communities.
    - Local Food Purchase Assistance increased access to local and culturally relevant foods.
    - Resiliency Grants provided funding for five Tribal food banks and Tribal organizations to purchase food, equipment/transportation, and support staffing and operational expenses
    - Emergency Food Assistance-Tribal empowered Tribes and Tribal organizations to make decisions that address the specific needs of the Tribe via food pantries and/or food vouchers.
    - Participating Tribes and Tribal organizations also received emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Response funding due to the federal hold placed on SNAP disbursements in Tribal communities.
- The International Marketing Program supported Quinault Pride Seafood and Makah Bay Seafoods through their participation in international trade missions. The program also provided export assistance and education to multiple Tribes and Tribally owned businesses, as well as organizations such as the Northwest Native Chamber.

Staff contact

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Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Summary

The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) is the state's sole agency with the mission to preserve and protect Washington state's cultural resources. The agency has project review authority under federal and state law and Executive Order 21-02. Responsibilities include conducting Tribal consultation during project planning. DAHP solicits comments from affected Tribes prior to making decisions on archaeological and Native American burial excavation permits and is responsible for the recovery of and repatriation of human remains.

Highlights

- 19,318 reviews were submitted to DAHP in 2025. In 2026 the number will be closer to 21,000.
- Sixty-one renewable energy projects are currently under review by staff for effects on cultural resources. DAHP has been conducting some facilitation on these projects.
- Archaeological surveys are being conducted on state lands for least-conflict energy facility siting locations using Climate Commitment Act funding. The focus is on go/no-go areas.
- Eighty new human skeletal remains cases were opened in 2025. As of July 2026, 42 new cases have been opened. The total number of cases opened and investigated since August 2008 is 1,121.
- DAHP is temporarily holding 161 cases for repatriation at the request of Tribes.
- 106 archaeological excavation permits were issued in 2025, and over 99% were completed within the 60-day time frame.
- The Legislature provided DAHP funding to develop a model cultural resource ordinance. The model ordinance is due to the Legislature by June 30, 2027.
- Staff continue to participate in a multiagency work group to address Washington state's unreinforced masonry historic structures. DAHP has implemented a FEMA grant to create a portal to track these structures and seismic upgrades.
- The director continues to participate in the larger Climate siting group.

Concerns

The Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is updating the federal regulations guiding the Section 106 process. This will have major implications on the review for cultural resources for federal undertakings. Concurrently, U.S. Senators Lee, Hickenlooper, and Heinrich are working on including changes to the National Historic Preservation Act in their proposed environmental streamlining bill.

The U.S. Supreme Court's Seven County Infrastructure decision on the National Environmental Policy Act is changing how federal agencies implement their compliance requirements. Most federal agencies are changing regulations to guidance, narrowing the scope of what should be analyzed, and minimizing public comment. Exemptions under the State Environmental Policy Act continue to reduce activities that require cultural resource review. Both these changes are continuing to have a major impact on the avoidance and/or protection of cultural resources.

Dramatic losses of federal, professional cultural resource staff have resulted in the loss of federal agency cultural resource competencies, professional oversight, and ability to meet expected timelines and project performance. This has dramatically impacted clean energy projects and has been the subject of congressional hearings.

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Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA)

Summary

ArtsWA promotes and documents the public value of the arts. ArtsWA's Tribal Cultural Affairs (TCA) Program works to support Washington Tribal communities, Native artists, and culture bearers as they preserve and carry forward their traditional practices, creating space for art and culture to thrive for generations to come. TCA recognizes the inherent authority of Tribes and maintains the highest respect for Tribal governance and sovereignty.

ArtsWA recognizes the critical role that cultural fluency plays in the vitality of Native youth and Tribal Nations, and the importance of place, culture, and the arts in Tribal economies. With additional funding from the Legislature, TCA can cocreate culturally relevant services for Tribal members, artists, museums, and businesses.

Highlights

- Legislators included baseline funding in fiscal year 2026 of $867,000 to support Tribal arts and culture.
- TCA determined that — with additional funding from the Legislature — it could provide programming and fund the Indigenous artists, Indigenous art organizations, Tribal governments, Indigenous entrepreneurs, Tribal museums, Tribal schools, and urban American Indian organizations.
- TCA grant program funded 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington state for the second year in a row.
- TCA, in collaboration with The Evergreen State College, provided professional development training for Native artists, Native nonprofits, and Native organizations led by leaders of the Native art community.
- Tribal Museum Roadmap, brochure, and Museum Trading Cards project launched, with the map being made available on ArtsWA's website.

Staff contact

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Washington State Attorney General's Office (AGO)

Summary

The AGO recognizes self-determination is core to Tribal sovereignty and must be integral in decision-making that affects Tribes, Tribal lands, and Tribal rights. The AGO also affirms that it is a priority to continue to strengthen the government-to-government relationship established between Tribes and the state and commits to a policy that requires the use of both consultation and consent as tools to further this engagement.

Highlights

Tribal Warrants Enforceable by State Law Enforcement

The Tribal Warrants law, passed in 2025, provides a legal framework for both state and Tribal law enforcement agencies to certify Tribal warrants as state warrants. Over the past year, the following Tribes have been certified by the AGO: Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Squaxin Island Tribe, the Tulalip Tribes, and the Suquamish Tribe.

Addressing the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP) Crisis

The state's MMIWP Task Force released an annual report to the governor and the Washington State Legislature in June highlighting the work to address, prevent, and resolve MMIWP cases and laying out a research plan for the coming year. The AGO also developed two supplemental reports, one with best practices on collecting indigenous demographic data and the second on the feasibility and effectiveness of an AGO commission on MMIWP.

MMIWP Cold Case Investigation Unit (CCU)

The CCU is currently assisting local, state, and federal agencies with 20 active homicide and missing persons investigations. In the past year, the CCU closed five homicide investigations and assisted in locating 11 people on the statewide active missing persons list. CCU maintains strong family relations through our dedicated victim and family advocate / case navigator assisting families in their interactions with police and navigating the justice system. Our advocate is currently working with 12 victim families, including 37 different family members.

U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Emmett Till Grant

The AGO has been receiving Emmett Till Grant funds from the DOJ since October 2023. This grant funds work "to investigate and prosecute unsolved cold case homicides suspected to have been racially motivated or otherwise associated with civil rights violations." The program allows the AGO to grant funds to participating Washington Tribes to support work to develop archival capacity and create an inventory of pre-1980 cold cases. AGO staff have conducted outreach to all 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington and has signed agreements with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, and Samish Indian Nation.

The Indian Boarding School Truth and Healing Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC)

With guidance and leadership from the TAC, the AGO held two Indian boarding school listening sessions this year, hosted by the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and the Quinault Indian Nation. These conversations with elders and Tribal community members created space to listen, learn, and document personal stories, helping to build a historical record of the lasting impact of boarding schools such as Fort Simcoe, Chemawa, and others. In June, the AGO released an interim TAC report highlighting the team's Tribal engagement, lessons learned, and next steps.

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Office of the State Auditor

Summary

The Office of the Washington State Auditor (SAO) affirms that it is a priority to establish strong government-to-government relationships with Tribes. SAO has continued to invest in training, solicited input from Tribes, and sought to integrate recognition of Tribes in the agency's workspace.

Highlights

Training

- SAO has complied with 43.376 RCW by having employees who interact with Tribes take the government-to-government training offered by the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA). To date, 39 of our employees have received the GOIA training, including Auditor Pat McCarthy.
- SAO developed an internal refresher training supplementary to the government-to-government training offered by GOIA. Twelve SAO staff have taken our refresher.

Performance Audits

- Although SAO does not audit Tribal governments, we offer recommendations for improved outcomes that could include money-saving methods or service-delivery improvements that can affect Tribal governments and their members. We held meetings in December with Tribal leaders to collect their input on the audit topics included in our performance audit workplan for the current biennium (2025–27).
- The Office also met with Tribal leaders to gather perspectives and ideas for performance audits that could benefit Tribes or might intersect with Tribes' priorities to include in our workplan for the coming biennium (2027–29).

Tribal Contracts

- SAO retained a Tribal consultant to advise on Tribal affairs and matters. The consultant principal is an enrolled member of a Washington state Tribe.

Tribal Art Installations

- The Office is working with the Washington State Art Commission to incorporate Tribal art pieces into the State Auditor's Office.

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Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Summary

DCYF is a cabinet-level agency focused on the well-being of children. Our vision is to ensure that all Washington's children and youth grow up safe and healthy, thriving physically, emotionally, and educationally, nurtured by family and community.

The following highlights provide a high-level overview of DCYF's child welfare, early learning, juvenile rehabilitation, licensing, prevention, and Tribal relations work during fiscal year (FY) 2025–26 to support improved physical, mental, emotional, and educational outcomes for Tribal children, families, and communities.

Highlights

Administrative Services

Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Legal

Launched in 2024, the ICW Legal unit prepares documents that accompany certified ICWA notices sent by the Attorney General's Office for 30-day shelter care hearings, termination of parental rights, and guardianship fact-finding proceedings when there is reason to know a child is or may be an American Indian child. Highlights from FY 2025–26 include:

- Processing 1,923 ICW legal referrals.
- Ensuring 12,557 ICWA legal notices were provided to federally recognized Tribes.
- Receiving and recording 10,324 Tribal responses to ICWA legal notices.
- Identifying 157 children as Tribal members or eligible for Tribal membership and 37 children as Tribal descendants.

Tribal Inquiry

Caseworkers are required to inquire about Tribal heritage or American Indian ancestry for both parents during the first contact for each screened-in intake. If either parent reports Tribal heritage, caseworkers must submit a Tribal inquiry referral within 10 days.

The Tribal Inquiry Unit sends inquiry letters to each identified federally recognized Tribe to help confirm the child's status with the Tribe and the level of their involvement. Inquiry letters are sent out on behalf of children and families involved in Child Protective Services (CPS) investigations, Family Assessment Response (FAR), and Family Voluntary Services (FVS). Highlights include:

- Processing 2,339 Inquiry referrals.
- Ensuring 12,566 inquiries were provided to federally recognized Tribes across the nation.
- Receiving and recording 8,256 Tribal responses.
- Identifying 235 children as Tribal members or eligible for Tribal membership and 55 children as Tribal descendants.

Child Welfare

Child Welfare (CW) is DCYF's largest division and works closely with the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) to support ICW practice, Tribal engagement, and culturally responsive casework. This partnership ensures that Tribal nations are included in policy updates, training, case practice improvements, and planning efforts that affect Tribal children, youth, and families. Highlights include:

- Presenting to Tribes on FAR service expansion, including a pilot to transfer FAR cases to voluntary services workers when families agree to keep their FAR case open for services. Tribal partners provided feedback on strengthening collaboration, especially when identifying community-based services available through Tribes for enrolled families.
- Sharing Youth and Family Meeting (YFM) model updates with Tribes through the Tribal Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC). CW communicated what families and Tribal partners can expect during YFMs and affirmed that Tribal participation remains valued and requested.
- Continuing quarterly updates with OTR and Tribes on the Procedure Manual Transformation project, including discussion of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 110-30-0030, which defines abuse or neglect of children and youth.
- Continuing collaboration with OTR and The Alliance for Professional Development, Training, and Caregiver Excellence to update Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) training for staff and providers. The updated ICWA training has rolled out statewide, and additional ICWA-related mini trainings are being developed for CW staff.
- Partnering with OTR following the ICW case review to identify practice areas to address in future trainings.
- Presenting to Tribes about work related to High Potency Synthetic Opioids and requested feedback about concerns or questions.
- Advancing implementation of the updated workload model, which is intended to incorporate additional case weighting for ICW cases to better reflect the time needed for Tribal engagement, active efforts, and culturally responsive case practice. Through the 2026 supplemental budget, the agency received funding for the first two years of a planned 10-year staffing phase-in to support more realistic caseload expectations and stronger services for Tribal children and families.

Early Learning

Early Learning continues to collaborate with Tribal partners and OTR to strengthen early care and education services for Tribal children, families, providers, and programs. This work includes Tribal-specific outreach, funding, technical assistance, early care and education facility needs, Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) expansion, and Tribal workforce representation. Highlights include:

- Prioritizing Child Care Complex Needs Funds (CNF) and Early Childhood Equity Grants for Tribal early learning providers, as directed by the Legislature. Tribal programs that meet baseline eligibility move directly to the final review panel, an approach informed by the Tribal Early Learning Fund (TELF) Ad-Hoc Committee.
- Continuing Tribal-only technical assistance for Child Care CNF and Early Childhood Equity Grants, including Tribal Frequently Asked Questions and Tribal Crosswalk resources to support Tribal providers applying for funds.
- Awarding the Child Care CNF to five early learning programs with Tribal affiliation in FY 2026, totaling $188,421.

- Including Tribal representation in the House Bill (HB) 1648 Staff Qualifications Workgroup. Of the 10 workforce representatives, three are from Tribal nations, including the Quileute Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the Tulalip Tribes.
- Engaging Tribal partners through the Indian Policy Early Learning (IPEL) Committee on early care and education workforce data, including how Tribal roles and programs should be represented. Current state workforce data does not capture all Tribal early learning programs or staff.
- Continuing funding for the Help Me Grow Tribal initiative through year two of the Preschool Development Grant and applied for year three funding.
- Engaging Tribal partners on early care and education facility needs through the Early Care and Education Facilities Exploration Project. Feedback is included in the final recommendations report that was due in June 2026.
- Fifteen Tribal programs, representing 76 classrooms, are using The LOVIT Way Program Evaluation Process to strengthen cultural and language integration in early learning programs.
- Providing scholarships to five Tribal scholars enrolled in the University of Washington Barnard Center Advanced Clinical Training Program to build long-term clinical capacity for Tribal Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation.
- Continuing engagement through the Tribal ECEAP Workgroup on ECEAP expansion, WAC updates, performance standards, implementation challenges, and supports for programs operated by sovereign Tribal nations directly or through subcontracting.
- Updating WAC 110-425-0090, which allows mental health professionals recognized by a Tribe (and submitted to DCYF) to serve ECEAP sites operated by sovereign Tribal nations.
- Releasing the 2026–27 ECEAP Performance Standards, including meal requirement revisions that allow contractors more flexible options to meet community needs.
- For the 2026–27 school year, one Tribal ECEAP contractor expanded services by 20 school-day slots, one Tribal ECEAP contractor exchanged working-day slots for school-day slots, and two Tribal ECEAP contractors received ECEAP CNF awards.

Juvenile Rehabilitation

Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) continues to develop government-to-government 10.03 plans with Tribal partners, serving young people who are convicted of crimes. Over the past year, regional community offices and residential facilities have engaged with Tribal partners and look forward to further partnerships and collaborations. Communication has been ongoing, sharing regional and statewide updates, job postings, and training announcements. Highlights include:

- Residential Service Custody Agreements (RSCA):
    - These agreements provide residential custody services to youth sentenced by Tribal courts, where both the Tribe and JR determine appropriate placement in a JR residential facility, in accordance with Chapter 72.05 RCW.
    - Tribes and JR agree that rehabilitation will be one of the primary goals for all services provided under the agreement.
    - Cultural services in JR residential facilities are essential to this agreement. There are currently 13 agreements in place.

- Community Justice Accountability Act (CJAA):
    - As outlined in RCW 13.40.500, CJAA provides Tribes and Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIOs) with a small grant to support youth and families to avoid incarceration.
    - There are 17 CJAA Tribal contracts in place through fiscal year 2026.
- DCYF leadership attending the Cedar Creek Corrections Center Totem Awakening on March 2, 2026. The totem was crafted from wood and donated to the Department of Corrections (DOC) by Echo Glen.
- Collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation on identifying a future location for a sweat lodge for youth at a community facility, along with discussions regarding detention supports for Tribal youth.
- Establishment of a substance use disorder aftercare contract with the Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations.
- Participation by the JR Tribal Liaison in three release Family/Foster Permanency Meetings for Tribal youth.
- Green Hill School Native American Youth Annual Powwow was held on November 29, 2025.
- Native American Cultural Group and Sweat Lodge Ceremonies continue to be supports available to young people at Green Hill School.
- Echo Glen and Green Hill School contract with Unkitawa. As part of this partnership, Unkitawa has agreed to build a new Sweat Lodge for Echo Glen, with a ceremony planned to mark its completion.
- JR staff participating in the 8th Annual Trauma-Informed Care Conference held at the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.
- DCYF launching a new health care discharge planning process at Echo Glen and Green Hill as part of a national Medicaid Transformation Project (MTP) using funding from the Medicaid 1115 demonstration waiver.
    - This initiative activates limited coverage 90 days prior to release from secure facilities, including participating Tribal jails.
    - JR is working closely with Health Care Authority, Managed Care Organizations (MCO) for MCO members, and can work with Tribal health care liaisons for young people releasing from JR facilities with Medicaid coverage who opt into fee-for-service coverage through their Tribal affiliation.

Licensing

Licensing programs continued government-to-government collaboration with Tribal nations and Tribal partners. Licensing worked closely with the OTR on rule development, implementation, technical assistance, Tribal engagement, and training related to foster care, group care, kinship, Tribal child placing agencies, and child care licensing. Highlights include:

- Foster Care and Group Care Negotiated Rulemaking (NRM) teams maintaining ongoing coordination with OTR through monthly meetings, project updates, and engagement on rule development and implementation.
- Tribal engagement sessions in January 2026 introducing training requirements related to the D.S. settlement agreement and highlighting a culturally relevant training option, Positive Indian Parenting (PIP), for Tribal foster homes.
- Additional engagement sessions in April 2026 focusing on Foster Care WAC revisions affecting Tribal children and youth and incorporating feedback into proposed revisions where appropriate.

- For Group Care, Licensing working with OTR and the Policies and Rules Office to present proposed rule changes to the ICW Subcommittee. The revised Group Care WACs became effective May 1, 2026.
- Regional Licensing and OTR sustaining quarterly Placement and Liaison Specialists meetings and ongoing collaboration with Tribal child placing agencies, including support for applications, renewals, amended licenses, and general technical assistance.
- Child Care Licensing and Pre-Licensing partnering with Tribal nations through IPEL meetings, consultations, certification support, legislative and policy implementation efforts, and relicensing assistance for Tribal early learning facilities. This work also included training and programs on Tribal lands.
- OTR Tribal Licensing Consultants and Licensing developing a supervisor workshop centered on racial equity and social justice and honoring Tribal sovereignty to strengthen agency practice and partnership.

Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability

The Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA) supported ICW data, evaluation, and practice improvement through case review support, Qualified Expert Witness (QEW) reporting, and data-informed work with Tribal and Native-serving programs. Highlights include:

- Assisting with ongoing culturally informed pilot programs for Native service providers.
- Providing technical assistance with ICW case reviews, including pulling relevant cases, creating a sampling plan, and supporting quantitative reporting.
- Continuing to generate monthly QEW request reports and an annual QEW summary.
- Presenting a prototype tool to the ICW Subcommittee and using feedback received to improve its utility. The tool is designed to support external efforts to reduce child welfare involvement while maintaining child safety and family stability.
- Providing state and regional data to support Child Welfare Early Learning Navigator (CWELN) programming and expansion.

Partnership, Prevention, and Services

Partnership, Prevention, and Services (PPS) continued to support culturally responsive prevention and family support programs for Tribal and Indigenous families. This included fatherhood programming, concrete supports, home visiting, caregiver support services, and PIP.

- DCYF funded three Tribal Fatherhood programs with United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, and Lummi Nation. These programs ended in September 2025 at the conclusion of the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention American Rescue Plan Act grant project period.
- Partnered with the American Indian Community Center and the Spokane Tribal Network to provide concrete goods and resources to support family stability.
- Supported United Indians of All Tribes Foundation in hosting a Fatherhood Café in September 2025. Fathers shared their stories, and fathers, providers, and state agency staff identified barriers and opportunities to build more father-friendly services.
- Contracted with First Step Family Support Center to support American Indian families living on or accessing services through the Hoh Indian Tribe and Quileute Tribe through pop-up Family Resource Center events that provided concrete supports and connection.
- Contracted with First Step and Perinatal Support Washington to offer a one-day training specific to working with Tribal families during the perinatal period.

- DCYF funds four Tribes and two Tribal organizations to implement evidence-based home visiting models through the Home Visiting Services Account (HVSA). HVSA serves 117 families from Tribal and Indigenous communities.
    - Parents as Teachers includes 62 family slots and supports parents and positive child development for families with children from birth to age 5.
    - United Indians of All Tribes Foundation is the oldest Tribal-specific program in HVSA. The program serves 24 Urban Indian families in King and South King County and Native Hawaiian families using federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting funds and State General Funds. This program also receives direct Tribal MIECHV funds from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services outside of DCYF.
    - Suquamish Tribe can serve up to 18 Suquamish families.
    - Cowlitz Indian Tribe can serve up to 20 Cowlitz and other Native families.
    - Family Spirit includes 55 family slots and supports Indigenous caregivers during pregnancy and early childhood.
    - Lummi Nation can serve up to 11 Lummi families.
    - The Tulalip Tribes can serve up to 16 Tulalip families.
    - Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services can serve up to 28 “relatives” from Urban Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.
    - Five non-Tribal programs conduct specific outreach to Tribal communities using HVSA funding and serve up to 109 Tribal families. These include programs supporting Lummi families, Yakama families on the Yakama Reservation, families prioritized from the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and Tribal families from the Olympic Peninsula.
- Caregiver Support Services help caregivers navigate systems, identify resources, and meet the unique needs of children in out-of-home care. DCYF collaborated with Tribes to create Caregiver Support Services agreements for Tribes.
    - The agreement provides payment for placement support services Tribes offer to Tribal dependent youth and caregivers.
    - The agreement allows Tribes to determine how to provide Caregiver Support Services to Tribal dependent children and caregivers in a way that aligns with Tribal codes and customs. All Tribes recognized in Washington state are eligible to enter into this agreement
    - DCYF has entered into agreements with the Tulalip Tribes, Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.
- DCYF expanded PIP as a statewide, culturally specific prevention service designed to strengthen Native families and reduce the disproportionality of American Indian and Alaska Native children in the CW system. Initial expansion efforts included partnerships with Tribal nations and Tribal-serving organizations to deliver PIP in Tribal communities, Urban Indigenous communities, and rural Indigenous communities.
    - Tulalip Tribes offered x̌əc̓usadad ʔə ti yəl̓yəlab, a culturally adapted model of PIP delivered individually to families and in the home.
    - Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation delivered PIP groups to all four districts of their Tribal community.
    - Samish Indian Nation delivered groups in Skagit County.
    - Lummi Nation delivered groups in Whatcom County.

- The Patrick Group and Totem Family Services provided group and individual delivery to Urban Indigenous communities in Pierce, King, Snohomish, Kitsap, and Thurston counties.
- Volunteers of America Western Washington delivered virtual groups to support rural Indigenous communities.
- American Indian Community Center provided groups in Spokane County.
- Offered three PIP Train-the-Trainer sessions to support Tribes and Tribal-serving organizations in expanding culturally specific, prevention-focused services and honoring Tribal sovereignty.

Tribal Relations

DCYF has a dedicated Tribal Relations division to support the agency's government-to-government relationships with Tribal nations and helps the agency uphold its commitments under the Centennial Accord and DCYF Administrative Policy 10.03.

In 2026, OTR welcomed a new director and continued work across the agency to strengthen consultation, improve coordination with Tribal nations, and build DCYF's capacity to understand and honor Tribal sovereignty in policy, practice, programs, and services. OTR focused on both direct program support and broader agencywide capacity building. OTR worked directly with DCYF staff to support stronger Tribal engagement, culturally responsive practice, and more consistent implementation of Centennial Accord commitments across the agency.

Child Welfare Supports

OTR supported CW practice and systems through standing Tribal engagement forums, policy review, 10.03 coordination, contract support, consultation-related guidance, and formal communications with Tribal nations. This work helps strengthen DCYF's implementation of ICWA, Administrative Policy 10.03, and Centennial Accord commitments in child welfare programs and services.

- Supported ongoing engagement with Tribes through the ICW Subcommittee and monthly Tribal Caucus CW meetings, creating consistent opportunities to discuss child welfare policy, practice, implementation concerns, and Tribal priorities.
- Continued regional 10.03 meetings with Tribes throughout the year to support government-to-government coordination and identify areas for follow-up.
- Supported consultation and engagement processes related to CW policy, rule, program, and systems changes that may affect Tribal children, families, governments, and communities.
- Supported Dear Tribal Leader letters and other formal communications to Tribal nations to request input, provide updates, and strengthen timely communication on CW-related issues.
- Finalized the Tribal Payment Only Guide for CW staff, with significant involvement and collaboration from OTR and Tribes.
- Worked with the Contracts department to streamline ICW and FamLink contracts with Tribes.
- Collaborated with Government Affairs to begin scheduling meetings with Tribes to discuss possible bills of interest for the 2026 legislative session.
- Reviewed and updated ICW policies and procedures, as needed.
- Continued outreach to update and enter into new memoranda of agreement with interested Tribes.
- Continued discussions with Tribes on DCYF's regional realignment proposal with Tribes.

Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance team completed the 2025 ICW Case Record Review process in December 2025. The review was completed with significant Tribal and DCYF support and collaboration. The final statewide report provides a baseline of current ICW practice at DCYF and is supporting ongoing discussion, follow-up, and action planning to strengthen practice.

Qualified Expert Witness

OTR manages the QEW program to support access to culturally informed expert witness services for ICW proceedings. As OTR nears its second year managing the program, it has filled more than 1,300 QEW requests statewide and onboarded nine additional contractors.

- Onboarded nine additional QEW contractors, prioritizing recruitment from Tribal nations and RAIOs to strengthen cultural representation and expertise.
- Continued expansion of the QEW program to increase statewide capacity and improve access to culturally informed expert witness services.
- Collaborated and formally consulted with Tribal nations to revise QEW policy and procedures in response to recent Washington State Supreme Court rulings.
- Expanded outreach to Tribal nations, RAIOs, and ICW conferences to support recruitment and the ongoing availability of QEW services throughout Washington state.

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Department of Commerce

Summary

The Department of Commerce's (Commerce) Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) works closely with the agency's 12 other divisions to support and strengthen Tribal communities. OTR regularly holds engagement meetings for agency staff, focusing on Tribal history, sovereignty, and best practices for managing funding agreements with Tribes. Since 2024, Commerce has established Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with Tribes, demonstrating respect for Tribal sovereignty, simplifying contracting terms, and empowering Tribal nations to set guidelines for data protection and consultation at every level. Each fall, Commerce convenes its annual Commerce Tribal Advisory Committee meeting, establishing an official forum for communication with Tribes to strengthen government-to-government relations.

Highlights

Community Engagement and Outreach Division

- This team partners with the Office of Tribal Relations to build relationships with Tribal nations to deepen Commerce's understanding of each Tribe's specific needs.
- Staff gathered input and offered consultation on Capital Project Capacity Grants for Local Governments and Tribal Organizations. Funding availability opened in summer 2026.
- Staff attended the 2026 Wildfire Summit hosted by the Spokane Tribe of Indians in collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

Community Services Division (CSD)

- Received $5 million for state fiscal year 2027 to expand the State Home Energy Assistance Program (SHEAP) to 19 Tribes and Tribal organizations who already operate federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) programs. This is the first time Tribes have received state funding for energy assistance programs.
- Worked directly with Tribes to update federal allocations for LIHEAP. Participating Tribes saw a total $1 million dollar increase to their LIHEAP awards.
- The Community Reinvestment Program implemented a Tribal set-aside of about 5% of total funding for the 2025–27 biennium. Twenty-one Tribes chose to participate, receiving awards of $120,000 each to support economic development, housing, legal assistance, reentry services, and agricultural support services.
- The Office of Crime Victim's Advocacy Tribal Government Initiative awarded more than $3 million to Tribes in the state fiscal year. Additional funding to Tribes is distributed through the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy via the STOP, Domestic Violence Legal Advocacy, Trafficking, and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention programs.
- Tribes have received funding for other CSD programs including the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative and Diaper Bank Program.

Energy Division

- Nine Tribes and Organizations were awarded $11.48 million through the Tribal Clean Energy Grant program to support Tribally determined clean energy priorities.
- Eleven Tribes and Enterprises were awarded $8 million through the Washington Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Program across 20 projects to purchase and install EV chargers.
- Five Tribes were awarded $4.75 million to support the electrification of Tribal fishing vessels, including research and patrol boats and marine charging equipment through the Tribal Electric Boat Program.
- Five Tribes were awarded $3.94 million through the state Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates Program for rebates and incentives to buy and install high-efficiency electric equipment and appliances.
- Two Tribes were awarded $585,000 through the Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Grant program to support renewable energy development on Tribal lands.
- Commerce hosted four quarterly Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act Tribal briefings.
- Commerce visited and met with nine Tribes across the state to review funded projects and discuss future energy plans.

Housing Division

- The Housing Division invited all federally recognized Tribes within Washington to consult regarding the Housing Trust Fund Tribal Set-Aside, ultimately meeting with 23 Tribes. Discussions included program guidelines, housing needs, and current housing strategies.
- Based on this feedback, the Multifamily Housing Unit and the Homeownership Unit each drafted a Notice of Funding Availability and submitted it to Tribes for additional feedback.
- The multifamily Notice of Funding Availability opened for applications in 2026.
- The homeownership Notice of Funding Availability opened for applications in 2026.

Local Government Division

- The Community Economic Revitalization Board invested $260,000 in four Tribal planning projects in support of business growth or expansion.
- The Emergency Rapid Response program awarded nearly $800,000 to four Tribes.
- The Washington State Broadband Office awarded $16.6 million to 11 projects on Tribal lands to expand high-speed internet access to more than 2,600 homes.
- The Small Communities Initiative provided direct technical assistance to the Lummi Nation Water and Sewer District in support of the Tribe's community infrastructure needs.
- The Early Learning Facilities program awarded approximately $7 million to three Tribes to sustain and expand high-quality childcare opportunities.
- The Behavioral Health Facilities Program awarded approximately $28.5 million to three Tribes for projects focused on inpatient and outpatient treatment in response to the opioid and synthetic drug crisis.
- The Tribal Climate Resilience Grant Program awarded approximately $52 million in funding for 40 Tribal projects across Washington.
- The Tribal Planning Coordination Program hosted quarterly Tribal Planner's Forums and an in-person Tribal Planners' Gathering on renewable energy, water resources, salmon recovery, zoning, and comprehensive plan coordination.

- The Planning and Predesign Capital Equity Program awarded $327,000 for two Tribes to advance planning and preconstruction for future capital projects.

Office of Economic Development and Competitiveness (OEDC)

- Engaged and consulted with Tribes to design and administer the Opportunity Zones 2.0 designation.
- Announced capital for Tribal nations through the 2025 Equitable Access to Credit program.
- The Green Jobs Program awarded $608,000 to the Kalispel Tribe of Indians to support implementation of the Kalispel Lands Resilience Program, a comprehensive maintenance and climate resilience program to enhance infrastructure sustainability and mitigate climate-related hazards, while developing sustainable workforce opportunities.
- The Composite Recycling Technology Center is working on an Industrial Symbiosis grant in partnership with the Makah Tribe on repurposing sawmill waste.
- Intercept Carbon is partnering with the Tulalip Tribes on an Industrial Symbiosis Grant.
- OEDC established the Tribal Economic Work Group in partnership with OTR.

Staff contact

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Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

Summary

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) — led by a nine-member, governor-appointed board — advocates, coordinates, and directs Washington state's system of 34 public community and technical colleges (CTC). Each year, more than 300,000 students train for the workforce, prepare to transfer to a university, and gain basic math and English skills. Our students, graduates, and community partners increase the state's quality of life and economic vitality as entrepreneurs, employees, consumers, and taxpayers.

SBCTC's Director of Tribal Government Affairs serves as the primary contact for Tribal government relations and leads efforts across the CTC system to improve the recruitment, retention, and completion rates of American Indian and Alaska Native students. This year, CTCs have mobilized and are requesting technical assistance to engage regional and local Tribes and Indigenize curricula.

Highlights

- Participated in the creation and introduction of the Culturally Responsive Smudging and Ceremonial Policy Resolution (#2026-001), passed by the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.
- Co-hosted the Intertribal Natural Resources Curriculum Development Summit with five higher education institutions, in partnership with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and Spokane Tribe of Indians. The purpose of the summit was to Indigenize natural resources curricula and align Tribal workforce pathways.
- Co-hosted a Government-to-Government Summit with Seattle Colleges, in partnership with the Suquamish Tribe, to strengthen relationships and support the success of Tribal students across Seattle's three colleges.
- Hosted two Tribal Co-Management and Climate Adaptation Curriculum Workshops for faculty and staff across the CTC system.
- Supported the ongoing development of a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Business Operations at South Puget Sound Community College with the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Skokomish Indian Tribe, and the Squaxin Island Tribe.
- Participated in Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Conventions, GOIA Tribal Liaison meetings, Tribal Leaders Congress meetings, and the Muckleshoot Effective Teaching Institute.
- Led professional development on Tribal sovereignty, Smudging, and Tribal Student Success with SBCTC staff, CTC presidents and chancellors, and Bellevue College, Lake Washington Institute of Technology, and Ferndale High School.
- Organized GOIA government-to-government training for the SBCTC Executive Leadership Team, required under RCW 43.376.040 and in ordinance with Executive Order 25-10.

Staff contact

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Washington State Conservation Commission

Summary

The mission of the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is to conserve natural resources on all lands in Washington state through voluntary and incentive-based programs in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners. SCC is the coordinating agency for Washington's 45 conservation districts. Tribes are essential partners for achieving our natural resources goals.

Highlights

- After hearing Tribal nations elevate the importance of state agency Tribal liaisons during the 2025 Centennial Accord meeting, SCC secured funding for a full-time Tribal liaison. On July 1, 2026, SCC welcomed Michael Lopez as the agency's first Director of Tribal Affairs. Lopez brings more than 20 years of experience serving Tribal nations as both an attorney and a natural resource professional. He spent over 17 years as in-house counsel for the Nez Perce Tribe, specializing in Indian law, Treaty Rights, natural resource management, environmental law, and government-to-government relations.
- North Yakima Conservation District partners with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation through the Mid-Columbia Steelhead Partnership, funded by the Regional Conservation Partnership Program. The district worked with 26 water right holders to remove a fish passage barrier, provide compliant fish screens, and replace the open canal system with four miles of pipeline. This project created creek flow where none had existed for 100 years, protected critical fish species, and enhanced irrigation delivery to 852 acres.
- Skagit Conservation District is coordinating a Samish River knotweed treatment effort that is growing through landowner outreach and word of mouth. The work builds on earlier treatments started by the Samish Indian Nation, who are partnering with the Skagit County Noxious Weed Control Board. One producer recruited eight additional landowners, and the district's door-to-door outreach brought in another 10. This effort treated 3.8 miles of river in the first season.
- Mason Conservation District and the Squaxin Island Tribe partner on projects that support natural resource stewardship, food sovereignty, habitat restoration, and community resilience. A key area of collaboration is Indigenous agroforestry, where Tribal Traditional Ecological Knowledge is combined with conservation planning to establish culturally significant trees, shrubs, and understory plants used for traditional foods, medicines, and basketry. This effort is helping to restore native plant communities, improve wildlife habitat, increase climate resilience, and strengthen connections to cultural landscapes.

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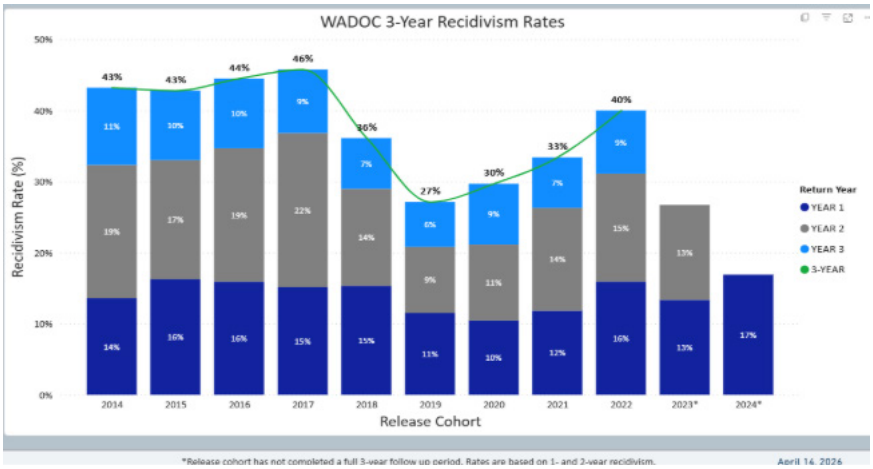
Department of Corrections (DOC)

Summary

DOC's mission is to improve public safety by positively changing lives. As of March 31, 2026, the DOC has 14,028 incarcerated individuals and 13,633 individuals under court ordered community supervision and under the department's jurisdiction. Seven percent of those in prison and 6% of those under community supervision identify as American Indian / Alaskan Native (AI/AN). That's a 1% increase since June 2025. There is currently a 39% recidivism rate among the AI/AN population, which is 4% higher than last year, and above the overall DOC recidivism rate of 27%. The percentage of DOC staff that have provided voluntary ethnic origin and self-identified as AI/AN is 2.28%, which has increased from previous years.

This table shows recidivism rates for AI/AN incarcerated men and women at WA DOC from 2014–24.

The percentage is based on a three-year recidivism period.



Highlights

Meetings, Summits, Conferences

Secretary Tim Lang is working hard to continue the positive government-to-government relationships with Tribal leaders. He followed Tribal leaders' suggestions and made the Office of Tribal Relations report directly to the Secretary.

The department established the Corrections Indian Policy Advisory Committee (CIPAC) to recognize Washington's unique relationship with Tribal governments and honor Tribal sovereignty. Secretary Lang and co-chair Vice Chair Greninger host meetings bi-annually in March and September. Additionally, DOC leadership will be visiting Tribes and meeting with Tribal leaders for more one-on-one interactions and in-person communications. Secretary Lang has also assigned all DOC leadership to take government-to-government training. DOC's Office of Tribal Relations also provides programmatic government-to-government training to internal DOC departments to train staff and educate them on Tribal history, laws, and updates on Tribal policies. DOC and Tribal leaders completed 80% of the identified objectives in the Strategic Plan they developed in 2023. An updated Strategic Plan will be developed in the fall of 2026.

With the implementation of the Medicaid 1115 Waiver, there are staff assigned to assist with re-entry for AI/AN individuals and the connection to Tribal Health Services. DOC's Office of Tribal Relations has hired a Corrections Specialist 4 to work with our reentry services to assist AI/AN individuals reentering back to society. Cultural transitioning is provided; DOC provides smudge kits upon release and offers more culturally inclusive clothing. DOC is interested in learning how to strengthen the re-entry for AI/AN individuals into Tribal and urban communities.

DOC supported incarcerated individuals in presenting at this year's Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians winter conference. The incarcerated presenters were enrolled Tribal members who shared positive feedback about Indigenous Incarceration and Spiritual Rehabilitation. DOC's Office of Tribal Relations assisted in filming documentaries at DOC facilities which captured stories and history directly from Tribal incarcerated individuals and elders in DOC's care, as well as filming interviews of Tribal chairmen and DOC leadership. These films help give positive insight to the significance of having access to Tribal religious activities and the impact they have on incarcerated individuals as they prepare to return to their communities.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Memorandums of Agreement (MOA)

DOC has multiple MOUs and MOAs with Tribal governments:

- Implementation of Senate Bill 5694 allows Washington Tribes with federal sentencing authority to house their incarcerated individuals at DOC facilities, where individuals can access health care, programming, religious, and cultural services. Tulalip Tribes continues to exercise this agreement, and other Tribes are welcome. Tulalip Tribes presented and shared updates at DOC's 2025 CIPAC meeting.
- DOC continues to welcome Tribal Probation Officers and Administrators to attend and have access to DOC's Community Corrections Officer's Academy.
- DOC and the Nisqually Indian Tribe have a contract in place to house short-term sentenced individuals at the Nisqually jail. This is an invaluable partnership that DOC looks forward to continuing.

Contract for Services Specific to AI/AN Incarcerated Individuals

DOC contracts with Unkitawa to facilitate religious and cultural events such as Powwows, Sweat Lodges, regalia making, and drumming for AI/AN individuals housed in DOC prisons. A Request for Proposal will be sent out to renew DOC's Religious Services Contract, as it is due to expire at the end of 2026. Expect announcements for contractual updates in early 2027.

The Religious Programs Policy (560.200) is being updated, and a new Cultural Events and Activities Policy (560.250) is being developed. Pursuant to the department's consultation policy, a Dear Tribal Leader Letter was sent out for roundtable meetings and consultation to review these updates and changes.

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Office of the Corrections Ombuds (OCO)

Summary

The OCO has embarked on an effort to create meaningful government-to-government relations with all the federally recognized Tribes of Washington. The OCO has done this by appointing a Tribal Liaison, conducting outreach to all Tribes to start relationship building, and starting the creation of official procedures and policies with Tribal input. The OCO has already met with or spoken with various Tribes since the recent appointment of the Tribal Liaison, including the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

Highlights

- Appointment of a Tribal Liaison.
- Meetings with various Tribes.
- Active development of Tribal Relations policy and consultation guidelines.

Staff contact

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Department of Ecology

Summary

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) works in partnership with Tribal governments to protect Washington's air, land, water, and climate while honoring Tribal sovereignty and strengthening government-to-government relationships. Ecology recognizes that Tribal Nations bring generations of knowledge, stewardship, and leadership that make environmental decisions stronger and lead to better outcomes for all Washingtonians.

Highlights

Building Strong Government-to-Government Partnerships

Throughout the past year, Ecology continued to strengthen government-to-government partnerships through meaningful consultation and collaboration.

- **The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan:** Ecology supported the creation of the Tribal Issues Subcommittee of the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee, chaired by the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. Together, partners adopted a Tribal Fishing Coordination standard of care that bolsters communication between Tribal fisheries and maritime operators while helping protect treaty-reserved fishing activities.
- **Hanford Nuclear Waste:** Ecology continued government-to-government consultation with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and Nez Perce Tribe on cleanup milestones while working together to develop a long-term Tribal Engagement Plan for the Nuclear Waste Program.
- **Expanded Collaborative Efforts:** Ecology has expanded its partnership opportunities with Tribal governments through high-resolution air quality monitoring, data-sharing agreements, ocean acidification research, and monitoring for emerging contaminants such as 6PPD-quinone — increasing Tribal capacity while advancing shared environmental science.

Investing in Tribal Priorities

Working alongside Tribal governments, Ecology invested more than $39 million to advance Tribal priorities related to climate resilience, water quality, salmon recovery, and habitat restoration.

- **Capacity Grants:** $21 million of Climate Commitment Act funds to Tribal capacity grants, climate resilience, and carbon offset projects.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** $10 million in wastewater improvements, water quality protection, and habitat restoration benefiting Tribal communities. In 2026, Lummi Nation received the national PISCES Award recognizing upgrades to its water and sewer system.
- **Additional Investments:** Continued Tribal leadership in watershed restoration, including Bateman Island fish passage restoration, Chehalis Basin salmon recovery and flood resilience planning, riparian restoration, and Chinook salmon research.

Protecting and Restoring Natural Resources Together

Ecology and Tribal governments continued to partner on large-scale restoration and cleanup efforts that improve water quality, restore habitat, and protect culturally significant resources.

- **Deschutes Restoration:** Ecology and the Squaxin Island Tribe are leading restoration of the Deschutes Estuary, reconnecting a historic estuary, improving water quality, and restoring critical salmon habitat.

- **Seattle City Light Agreement:** Ecology helped reach a landmark agreement supporting relicensing of the Skagit Hydroelectric Project. The agreement will guide investments in fish passage, habitat restoration, water quality, flood risk reduction, and protection of cultural resources over the next 50 years.
- **Ocean Research:** Research continues with coastal Tribes through the Olympic Coast Ocean Acidification Sentinel Sites (OASeS) to better understand how changing ocean conditions affect culturally important marine species.
- **Goldendale Cleanup Projects:** Ecology also worked closely with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation to strengthen groundwater cleanup standards for the former Goldendale aluminum smelter while expanding Tribal engagement plans for cleanup sites across Washington.
- **Tribal Restoration Projects:** The Washington Conservation Corps supported Tribal restoration projects by providing nearly 200 weeks of no-cost field crew assistance for projects led by Tribal governments across the state.

Responding Together

Ecology has expanded Tribal participation in drills and planning for worst-case discharge exercises and major oil spill responses, reinforcing Tribal leadership roles in Unified Command and Tribal On-Scene Coordination.

- **Emergency Spill Responses:** Significant Tribal government partnerships and collaboration throughout responses to fuel and hazardous material spills proved invaluable. During responses impacting Indian Creek, Padden Creek, Bremerton Marina, and the Columbia River near Longview, Ecology and Tribal governments worked side by side to protect communities, treaty resources, salmon habitat, culturally significant areas, and other sensitive natural resources while conducting environmental monitoring and Natural Resource Damage Assessments.

These coordinated efforts demonstrate the value of strong government-to-government relationships — not only during emergencies, but every day through the trust, communication, and shared stewardship that make effective response possible.

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Washington State Board of Education

Summary

The Washington State Board of Education is a 16-member policy board of elected and appointed officials supported by 12 professional staff. Our mission is to cultivate an equitable and inclusive K-12 education system that empowers every student with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in a changing world. We do this through collaboration with partners, innovative policy development, and advocacy.

The Board recognizes that strong government-to-government relationships with Tribal nations are essential to our mission and statutory responsibilities. In 2024, the Board established a Tribal Liaison and Community Engagement Coordinator position to strengthen consultation, build relationships with Tribal nations, and ensure Tribal perspective informs Board policy and decision-making.

Highlights

- The Board adopted its Tribal Consultation Framework in June 2026, strengthening its government-to-government consultation process with federally recognized Tribes.
- Supported the FutureReady initiative by consulting with Tribes, Tribal education leaders, students, educators, and community members on proposed graduation requirement updates.
- Sent Dear Tribal Leader Letters to all 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington and to Tribes with reserved rights within Washington state, inviting consultation on FutureReady, Basic Education Compliance survey data, and our Draft Tribal Consultation Framework.
- Facilitated Tribal consultation on school district self-reported Basic Education Compliance data related to John McCoy (lulilaš) Since Time Immemorial Curriculum and Tribal Collaboration.
- Launched the Board's Tribal Relations webpage to improve access to consultation resources, Tribal communication, and Board information.
- Presented the FutureReady initiative at the Washington Indian Education Association Annual Conference and participated in the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Winter Convention and OSPI's Office of Native Education April 2026 Tribal Education Leaders Summit (TELS).

Staff contact

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Employment Security Department

Summary

The Washington State Employment Security Department (Employment Security) manages the Unemployment Insurance program, analyzes and disseminates labor market and employment information, manages the Paid Family and Medical Leave program, and co-manages WA Cares, the state's long-term care program. Employment Security is also an active partner in WorkSource, the statewide employment and training service-delivery system. Employment Security engages Tribes on a government-to-government basis and serves Native people across these programs.

Highlights

- Developed an agency Tribal consultation policy and accompanying procedures with input from Tribes, providing a framework for government-to-government consultation and agency expectation of early, meaningful, and frequent Tribal engagement.
- Improved government-to-government communications, sending 18 Dear Tribal Leader Letters informing Tribes of agency activities and inviting collaboration.
- Developed an agency implementation proposal for Executive Order 25-10 – *A New Foundation for Washington State's Governmental Relations with Sovereign Tribal Nations* and held a series of listening sessions to invite Tribal collaboration and input.
- Invited Tribes to collaborate on 2026 agency request legislation to align 2025 session law concerning mass layoffs with federal law. The Legislature passed and the governor signed Engrossed Senate Bill 6106.
- Held a series of Paid Family and Medical Leave (Paid Leave) program webinars as part of a collaborative effort to partner with Tribes to implement Paid Leave elective coverage for Tribes.
- Invited Tribal partnership in Washington Service Corps, Washington's oldest and largest AmeriCorps program, and entered the first contract with a Tribe to serve as an AmeriCorps member host site.
- Regularly attended Tribal events and participated in Governor's Office of Indian Affairs meetings and workgroups, including those related to the Centennial Accord and Tribal consultation guidelines.
- Invited collaboration from Tribes affected by the December 2025 major flood event and provided information about the agency's emergency response and resources available to impacted workers.
- Continued partnership with local workforce development boards through the Economic Security for All initiative and Department of Commerce Community Reinvestment Program funding to support workforce development opportunities statewide, including in Tribal communities.
- Participated in job and resource fairs serving job seekers and employers, at times partnering with Tribes to co-host the events.

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Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC)

Summary

EFSEC serves as a "one-stop" shop for permitting major energy facilities in Washington. EFSEC seeks to balance the need for new energy facilities with the broad interests of the public in its decision-making. In its work, EFSEC recognizes the need for meaningful participation from federally recognized Tribal governments and seeks to notify, engage, coordinate, and consult with Tribes about planned actions that may impact Tribes. This work can include contracts with Tribes to support their engagement. The Council uses Tribal perspectives during review of energy facility applications to establish conditions for construction, operation, and decommissioning that avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to Tribal resources, rights, and interests.

Highlights

In the last year, EFSEC continued to deepen its engagement with Tribal nations and establish the infrastructure and processes necessary to support those relationships. In addition to several formal government-to-government consultations, numerous staff-level engagements, and Tribal notifications regarding planned actions, other highlights of EFSEC's Tribal relations work in fiscal year 2026 included:

- During the 2026 legislative session, EFSEC's chair and staff worked with legislative sponsors, Tribes, and the business community to help shape and pass HB 2496, concerning Tribal consultation conducted by EFSEC. In brief, the law provides an exemption from the Open Public Meetings Act for meetings between a Tribal Council and a quorum of the EFSEC Council and also provides assurance that a Tribal Council can review and request corrections to EFSEC's written summary of government-to-government consultations before it is shared with the governor. EFSEC expects the law to create avenues for enhanced understanding of Tribal concerns and to advance constructive relationships with Tribes.
- In June, EFSEC adopted a new policy statement on Tribal consultation and coordination. Developed after six months of review and input from Tribes, the policy statement explains how EFSEC will achieve its commitment — in terms of principles and processes — to consult with Tribes during site review, compliance monitoring, and other EFSEC actions that may impact Tribal rights, resources, and interests.
- In recognition of Tribes as sovereign nations, EFSEC began the practice of holding coordination and information meetings with Tribes that are separate from "public comment" meetings. In a January Tribal-only meeting, EFSEC explained its planned rule-making work, answered questions, and took feedback about those plans. EFSEC also convened a May Tribal-only workshop to explain its determination of significance and scoping memo for the Cascade Renewable Transmission project. This meeting was also an opportunity for Tribes to ask questions about the overall process expected going forward. Both meetings are part of EFSEC's effort to be transparent and open about its actions that may impact Tribes.

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Department of Enterprise Services (DES)

Summary

We strengthen the business of government by providing business and operational support services that Tribes and other government entities can use so that they can focus on their core missions. DES brings together policy, planning, and oversight for central services.

We are committed to the Centennial Accord principles and to achieving the following goals:

1. Recognize and respect each Tribe as a sovereign government with a distinct culture and governmental structure that serves their Tribal members and greater community.
2. Constantly improve the value and effectiveness of the services we provide to Tribal governments.
3. Continuously improve our understanding of Tribal government needs so that we can find and remove barriers to accessing our services.
4. Find shared concerns to offer early discussion, collaboration, and consultation, if needed.

Highlights

Tribal affairs and policy

In 2026, DES established a formal Tribal Affairs Program to provide government-to-government coordination and consultation, ensuring Tribal perspectives help inform agency strategies. This program is developing a program plan and will help DES approach all policies and processes with an understanding of Tribal impact, preferences, and needs.

DES also expanded its Policy Program to increase capacity and support for our Tribal liaison. The Policy Program is partnering closely with DES Tribal Affairs to strengthen Tribal engagement and representation throughout DES' policy development process.

Supplier diversity

The Business Diversity Program works with state agencies to improve their procurement practices and create inclusive opportunities for small and diverse businesses to compete for state contracts. This supports a sustainable increase in the procurement of goods and services from those businesses.

The Tribal Affairs Program works with Tribes and Tribal-member-owned businesses and organizations to find businesses that are willing and able to contract with the state.

To support Tribal-member-owned businesses and increase their ability to contract with the state, in fiscal year 2026, DES:

- Attended Tribal events, including the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, the National Center for American Indian Enterprise economic development session in Seattle, and the Entrepreneur Program at the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency.
- Presented on several Tribal economic development panels.
- Partnered with organizations such as Native PTAC, Native Chamber of Commerce, Native Action Network, and Sister Sky.

Statewide contracts

Tribal governments in Washington can buy goods and services through statewide contracts. These competitively awarded contracts can save Tribes time and money. More than 185 statewide contracts are available for products and services, including IT Professional services, motor vehicles, communications and marketing, portable sanitation services, and medical protective equipment.

Participating Tribes and Tribal organizations include:

- Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Hoh Indian Tribe
- Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
- Kalispel Tribe of Indians
- Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
- Lummi Nation
- Makah Tribe
- Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- Northwest Indian College
- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Northwest Intertribal Court System
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Nooksack Indian Tribe
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Quil Ceda Creek Counseling Company
- Quileute Tribe
- Quinault Indian Nation
- Samish Indian Nation
- Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe
- Seattle Indian Health Board
- Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe
- Skokomish Indian Tribe
- Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Spokane Tribe of Indians
- Squaxin Island Tribe
- Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
- Suquamish Tribe
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
- Tulalip Tribes
- United Indian of All Tribes Foundation
- Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
- WA He Lut Indian School

Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS)

Tribes that conduct their own procurement activities can use the WEBS platform for free to reach potential bidders. Tribes and Tribal organizations can post solicitations to the state's bid notification system to reach over 25,000 goods and services vendors registered in WEBS. They can also search the platform to find potential vendors.

The following Tribes and Tribal organizations are registered to post to WEBS:

- American Indian Chamber Education Fund PTAC
- The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
- Confederate Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation Planning Department
- Confederate Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Kalispel Tribe of Indians
- Makah Tribe
- Nooksack Indian Tribe
- Quileute Tribe
- Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe
- Skokomish Indian Tribe
- Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Standing Rock Public Transit
- Tulalip Tribes
- Quinault Housing Authority

Employee Equity and Development

On June 26, 2026, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) Acting Executive Director Gordon James confirmed with DES' Equity and Employee Development Division that outreach to state agency Tribal liaisons is underway. This marks an important step in our joint effort to expand government-to-government training for state employees. GOIA is currently identifying Tribal members who can collaborate with us to ensure a government-to-government eLearning course reflects the priorities, perspectives, and knowledge most important to Tribes.

Equity and Employee Development continues to build the project team, which includes GOIA, DES, the Office of Financial Management (OFM), and Tribal liaisons. This team will help set up a coordinated structure before starting curriculum design.

Although we have held early conversations about potential timelines and content, we need Tribal input before drafting a course outline, curriculum, or development schedule. Our next phase will focus on gathering feedback directly from Tribes to guide the training content and direction.

We look forward to working closely with Tribal partners and GOIA to create an accessible and meaningful resource that supports state employees in strengthening their government-to-government relationships.

Energy performance contracting

Our Energy Program completed two construction projects for Chief Leschi Schools, a Tribal compact school with the Puyallup Tribe. The projects are now in the measurement and verification phase to confirm the energy savings realized. The work included updating heating, ventilation, and cooling systems and upgrading lighting systems to improve the learning environment for the students. The project also installed a solar photovoltaic system, which converts sunlight directly into electricity for the building.

Deschutes Estuary Restoration

In 2025, DES partnered with the Department of Ecology (ECY) to successfully transition project leadership to ECY. This transition has strengthened the partnership between DES and ECY and helped keep the project on schedule, including completing 60% design by the end of calendar year 2025.

DES continues to support ECY as a design partner and helps coordinate and manage public works contracts so ECY can successfully lead the project.

Staff contact

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Washington State Governor's Office of Equity

Summary

The Washington State Governor's Office of Equity (EQUITY) works to transform how state government builds relationships with Tribal nations and communities. Our role is not to speak on behalf of Tribes, but to listen, support, and create pathways that adhere to sovereignty, self-determination, and self-governance. We guide agencies in understanding how state work intersects with Tribal rights, histories, and protocols.

Highlights

Growth of the Tribal Relations Bench

- Expanded the Tribal Relations Bench to strengthen capacity for government-to-government relationships, consultation, and Tribal engagement across Washington.
- Since its creation, the Tribal Relations Bench has remained within EQUITY's executive leadership structure, reporting directly to the Director of Equity in alignment with the Centennial Accord and Executive Order 25-10.
- Established a goal of 100% GOIA government-to-government training for EQUITY staff.

Supporting Tribal Sovereignty

Developed FAQs defining EQUITY's role in supporting Tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and self-governance while respecting the inherent authority of Tribal nations.

Tribal Data Concerns Regarding Artificial Intelligence Policy

Partnered with the Attorney General's Office to develop the adopted recommendation for the *Washington State Artificial Intelligence Task Force Final Report (2026)*.

Continued Community Engagement and Outreach

Participated in community gatherings and forums to strengthen relationships and build trust with Tribal communities.

Update of the WA for All website

Continued enhancing waforall.wa.gov to improve resources for Tribal nations, communities, and all Washingtonians.

Executive Support of SOVEREIGN Business Resource Group

Supporting Our Voices, Empowering Rights, and Indigenous Governance

- Continued executive support of SOVEREIGN to advance American Indian, Alaska Native, and Indigenous representation, belonging, and leadership across Washington state.

Future Goals

- Continue expanding the Tribal Relations Bench to meet evolving Tribal and community needs.
- Strengthen partnerships with Tribal governments through consistent consultation and collaboration.

Staff contacts

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Department of Financial Institutions (Financial Education and Outreach)

Summary

An important part of our mission is to work with Washington Tribal communities to expand information and education related to financial products and services. This work is accomplished through financial education grants, outreach and community listening sessions, and partnership development meetings.

Highlights

- Participated in the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation's 2026 Financial Freedom Fair.
- Participated in the Nisqually Indian Tribe's resource event for Tribal Community and employees.
- Partnered with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians to provide financial education to youth and adult Tribal members.
- Partnered with the Quinault Indian Nation to provide a financial education series to youth enrolled in the Boys and Girls Club of Quinault Indian Nation.
- Partnered with the South Puget Sound Intertribal Planning Agency to facilitate a financial education boot camp for onsite managers servicing Tribal communities.
- A financial education grant with Heritage University enhanced financial education outreach (in person and virtual) for adults throughout the Yakima Valley. This includes some members of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.
- A financial education grant with Money Savvy Generation brought financial education curriculum to 759 students in 35 classrooms in 12 Tribal Communities.
- A financial education grant with United Indians of All Tribes Foundation integrated financial coaching into existing programs and supports, reaching more than 250 people. Partner programs included the Native Workforce Program, Elders Program, Foster Care Program, Labateyah Youth Home, and Unci Makha Home Visiting Program.
    - By braiding financial literacy services into these programs, community members gain not only education and cultural connection, but also the financial stability that empowers them to pursue the goals most realistic for their circumstances.
    - The core aim of the project was to increase asset building to address intergenerational poverty. Training on navigating financial institutions also was integral to this work, since homeownership and small business ownership can appear out of reach for a community in which the majority reside in lower income brackets. The project's approach was to work with clients on improving basic financial skills, with the goal of developing short-, medium-, and long-term goals that move participants from barely surviving to longer-term stability.

Staff contact

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Office of Financial Management

Summary

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) empowers Washingtonians by helping state agencies and the Legislature connect people, budgets, policies, data, and systems. OFM supports and recognizes the importance of working government-to-government with the 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington state. OFM is committed to consultation with federally recognized Tribes in the work and planning of program development, projects, and policies impacting American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Highlights

- Centennial Accord 2025: OFM Director K.D. Chapman-See, OFM Budget Division Director Robyn Williams, and Tribal Affairs Liaison Mary Anderson attended the 2025 Centennial Accord hosted by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. During the Accord, OFM committed to meeting with Tribes on a regular basis to increase awareness and transparency of the work OFM does and discuss impacts with Tribal leaders.
- OFM and Tribal Leaders Quarterly Meetings: Following the Centennial Accord, OFM hosted three OFM and Tribal Leaders Quarterly Meetings. The topics discussed included:
    - December 2025: Budget Process and Overview
    - March 2026: Legislative Budget — updates and impacts
    - July 2026: Climate Commitment Act
- Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) Conventions: OFM Tribal Affairs Liaison attended the ATNI's Annual Convention, Mid-Year Convention, and Winter Convention.
- OFM continues its work to establish an OFM Tribal policy in alignment with the Centennial Accord, Millenium Agreement, Executive Order 25-10, and 43.376 RCW. This policy will involve feedback and collaboration with the federally recognized Tribes in Washington state.
- Tribal Cultural Competency Training: OFM is committed to educating staff on how to work government-to-government with Tribes. OFM held a two-part training with Turquoise Devereaux to provide instruction and guidance on how to leverage foundational knowledge and skills to create sustainable partnerships with federally recognized Tribes and Tribal communities.

Staff contact

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Department of Fish and Wildlife

Summary

The mission of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife-related recreational and commercial opportunities.

Through a cooperative government-to-government relationship with the northwest Tribes, we implement this mission by conserving species and habitats and providing fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreation activities. Federal case law (*U.S. v. Washington* and *U.S. v. Oregon*) and executive orders provide the foundation for this relationship. We also work closely with the Tribes to restore and protect habitat needed to support healthy fish and wildlife populations in Washington.

Director Kelly Susewind holds the primary responsibility to sustain WDFW's partnerships with Tribes and upholds this agency's role in successful state-Tribal government-to-government relationships. The director delegates authority to senior staff to represent him in many state-Tribal management forums. WDFW Director of Tribal Affairs, Jim Woods, is the senior Tribal liaison within the Director's Office.

Highlights

Director's efforts

Director Kelly Susewind prioritizes and continues to focus on conservation, support responsible resource management decisions, and promote the importance of intergovernmental relations. The director strives to align and coordinate resource management with Tribal partners. He works to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with Tribes and advocates policies that support self-determination and Tribal sovereignty.

Implementing Policy 5007

The agency continues to implement and train staff on Tribal policy (Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments Policy 5007) led by Jim Woods, Director of Tribal Affairs. The policy facilitates and helps staff communicate and coordinate with federally recognized Tribes. Policy 5007 provides a refined uniform approach to consultation, promotes transparency, enhances communication and coordination, promotes early engagement, and helps us improve state-Tribal relations. It also serves as a curriculum to train WDFW staff on how to work with Tribal governments effectively, understand Treaty Rights, Tribal sovereignty and self-governance.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The DEI manager is continuing conversations with The Nature Conservancy, the Whitener Group, and Jim Woods to use "Indian Country: 101" as a training requirement for WDFW staff. Twenty-seven additional staff members have completed training featuring the Fish Wars documentary within the last year. WDFW is exploring opportunities to host showings of the documentaries *Covenant of the Salmon People* about the Nez Perce Tribe, and *These Sacred Hills* for agency staff. Other internal training efforts include educating staff about Tribal sovereignty, self-governance, Treaty Rights, co-management, and cultural identity.

Cultural Resources Division

During the current fiscal year, the Cultural Resources Division has consulted with Tribes statewide on more than 300 project reviews. To support this, the Division has expanded the use of a project management tool that improves coordination across agency programs, streamlines cultural resources compliance processes, and enhances recordkeeping for mutually agreed-upon consultation procedures related to agency actions that may

affect Tribal traditional cultural places, cultural resources, or traditional practices. The agency advanced several initiatives to improve transparency, consistency, and coordination in cultural resource management, including an internal project mapping tool. In addition, WDFW's Cultural Resources Policy Workgroup has developed general implementation procedures for the Cultural Resources Policy and is working on staff training to support consistent policy application, and compliance with state and federal law.

Recreational impacts on Tribal Treaty Rights and lifeways

Ensuring collective protection of natural and cultural resources while providing compatible recreation is essential to WDFW's mission. WDFW participates alongside the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Washington State Parks, and the Recreation and Conservation Office working with Tribes in Washington on the State Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative (STRII). STRII operates under a charter adopted at a STRII Leadership Assembly meeting on June 23, 2025. An interim STRII Integrated Plan is in development, and two pilot projects are testing an impacts assessment framework, which the STRII Technical Working Group developed.

WDFW representatives serve on the STRII Steering Committee, as well as the Legislative, Information Sharing, and Technical (sub)-Work Groups. Over the past year, WDFW contributed to a contract securing professional facilitation services provided by Bob Whitener from the Whitener Group.

WDFW continues to administer the $1 million federal America the Beautiful Challenge grant awarded and co-developed with Tribes to support Tribal work group engagement and technical expertise.

Capital Asset Management Program

We are actively managing more than 220 facility and infrastructure improvement projects with a 2025–27 capital budget of $82.8 million.

Hatchery improvements continue to be most significant infrastructure construction with next phases and continuation of major renovations at Beaver Creek, Wallace River, Minter Creek, Naselle, and Spokane hatcheries, as well as the Toutle River Fish Collection Facility. Design is underway for a new intake at Samish Hatchery and a new weir at Nemah Hatchery. Engineering design is also nearly complete for eight culvert court case fish passage improvement projects in the Chehalis and Snoqualmie basins, slated for construction in 2027. In 2026, design was completed, and a major estuary restoration project is now under construction at the Island Unit of the Skagit Wildlife Area restoring 270 acres of tidal estuary.

Pinniped management and coordination

We continue to cooperate extensively with Columbia River Treaty Tribes on pinniped removal at Bonneville Dam to implement the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) permit. In addition, WDFW continues to talk with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) and individual Treaty Tribes about pinniped predation impacts and how best to navigate the MMPA.

State/Tribal hunting coordination

There are 24 Tribes with off-reservation hunting rights in Washington. We regularly meet with Tribal wildlife staff to coordinate wildlife research, conduct population surveys, and establish population management objectives. In the 2025–26 hunting season, seven of the 24 Tribes shared their hunting regulations with WDFW. The NWIFC compiles a report of the 20 Western Washington Treaty Tribes' harvest data, which they then share with us. We have negotiated or maintained numerous hunting agreements with Tribes.

At the request of Treaty Tribes, we updated our draft procedural guidelines for evaluating a Treaty Tribe's asserted traditional hunting area in spring 2019. Many Tribes provided comments, and a common theme was that

we should develop the guidelines collaboratively with the Tribes. We hosted summits on the traditional hunting area guidelines in fall 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2023.

State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)

WDFW hosted SWAP revision Tribal briefings (January 2024, June 2024, April 2025, September 2025), participated in the First Annual Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Natural Resources Summit (November 2024), and worked with the NWIFC's Wildlife Subcommittee June through September 2025 to develop an Indigenous First Foods Sustainability section for the SWAP. WDFW received and incorporated Tribes' comments and interests through November 2025. The SWAP was reviewed by US Fish and Wildlife Service from mid-December 2025 through March 2026 and they provided plan approval in April 2026. The final 10-year SWAP and all supporting tables are posted online.

Hunter Education

WDFW continues to collaborate with Tribal governments to offer hunter education classes, as many Tribes have chosen to implement the state's hunter education curriculum to strengthen their own programs and safety practices. Some classes are taught by Tribal instructors certified by WDFW, while others are taught by Tribal and non-Tribal certified instructors and supplemented with WDFW staff when needed.

Since 2013, WDFW has partnered with nearly 20 Tribes to offer hunter education classes across the state, primarily in the Coastal and North Puget Sound regions. During the past year, WDFW has worked with the Quileute Tribe to implement WDFW's hunter education program.

Yakima Basin Integrated Plan – Springwood Ranch

The 3,600-acre Springwood Ranch property is jointly managed by the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, WDFW, Kittitas County, and the Kittitas Reclamation District. A portion of the ranch is undergoing a feasibility study for the construction of an off-channel reservoir. Stored water will support juvenile salmon and steelhead migrating to the ocean. WDFW and Yakama Nation jointly own and manage 1,100 acres of the ranch; a first of its kind partnership for the state and Yakama Nation. A multi-year effort to define shared goals and objectives concluded with adoption this June of an interim Management Plan for the 1,100 acres.

Fish Management and Science

North of Falcon

In April, WDFW and the U.S. v. Washington Tribes completed their annual salmon fishery planning process (North of Falcon) using the objectives outlined in the 10-year management plan submitted in 2022. The Puget Sound co-managers received a one-year Endangered Species Act (ESA) authorization in May from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for Puget Sound marine and freshwater salmon fisheries planned in 2026 and early 2027. The main salmon topics during planning discussions focused on adjustments to fisheries needed to meet Puget Sound Chinook management objectives. The co-managers are hoping to receive NMFS approval for their 10-year management plan by May of 2027.

Coastal steelhead

Over the past year, WDFW and the U.S. v. Washington Coastal Tribes have been working collaboratively and with our federal partners to evaluate and respond to the recent petitions to list Washington Coast Chinook and Olympic Peninsula steelhead under the Endangered species Act. Both stocks have since been determined to not meet criteria for listing. Since 2019, WDFW and the U.S. v. Washington Coastal Tribes have reduced fisheries and implemented other regulations that reduced impacts on coastal steelhead and Chinook population from fisheries to respond to downturns in stock status. Early in 2026, WDFW completed a regulatory process intended to better align expected annual seasons for steelhead, trout, and gamefish fisheries to current stock status.

Hatcheries

Record Chinook returns at Whatcom Creek

More than 7,000 Chinook are expected to return to Whatcom Creek this year, the highest forecast on record. This success reflects a decade-long, co-managed program involving Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, WDFW, NWIFC, and Bellingham Technical College. WDFW's Samish Hatchery provides broodstock, while Tribes support marking, release, and youth fisheries.

Dungeness River summer run chum

WDFW, in collaboration with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, is reintroducing Dungeness summer-run chum to supplement and restore populations in the Hood Canal and Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) completed its evaluation and recommendation for the program. NOAA concluded that the program does not appreciably reduce the likelihood of survival or recovery for ESA-listed Hood Canal summer chum, Puget Sound Chinook, or steelhead.

This determination is a major regulatory milestone for the basin. The program now has a clear federal pathway to continue operating under updated biological and management standards.

Nooksack/Samish ESA authorizations

NOAA Fisheries issued ESA approvals in 2025 that provide full authorization for the co-managed salmon and steelhead hatchery programs in the Nooksack and Samish basins. A single, Section 7 Biological Opinion, now the largest hatchery consultation bundle completed in Puget Sound, concluded that the jointly operated hatchery actions are not likely to jeopardize listed species in the basins. This work included 12 hatchery and genetic management plans, jointly submitted by Lummi Nation, the Nooksack Indian Tribe, and WDFW.

Hatchery infrastructure upgrades through Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding

Tribal IRA funding will support critical infrastructure upgrades through non-competitive and competitive allocations. The Tribally directed investments will fund the replacement of aging wells and pipelines, repair water intakes, rebuild adult holding and rearing structures, and improve fish handling and transport systems at several WDFW-operated hatchery facilities. These will strengthen operational reliability, reduce risk to culturally important salmon programs, and advance shared Tribal and state commitments under long-standing co-management frameworks.

Coordinated Mass Marking and coded wire tagging

WDFW, NWIFC, and Tribes collaborated on mass marking and coded wire tagging for millions of juvenile salmon across Puget Sound and coastal hatcheries.

This joint effort supports selective fisheries, survival studies, and ESA compliance. It is one of the largest annual operational collaborations between Tribal and state hatchery programs.

European Green Crab emergency management

In September 2024, WDFW, with more than 50 co-managers, Tribes, and other partners, finalized the European green crab Management Plan (2025–31), establishing a coordinated long-term strategy to prevent widespread establishment and reduce impacts to Washington's marine waters. Governor Inslee's emergency proclamation 22-02, first issued in 2022, remains in effect under Governor Ferguson and continues to support coordinated state, Tribal, federal, and international response efforts. State agencies, Tribes, and other partners have removed more than three million European green crabs from Washington waters, including more than one million during the 2025 season alone. WDFW also provides equipment, training, planning support, and coordination through the

statewide Incident Command System and Multi-Agency Coordination Group. WDFW has worked closely with Tribal governments and Washington's Congressional delegation to secure additional federal support for green crab management, monitoring, and research. Recent successes include congressional authorization of $2 million in dedicated green crab funding through the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs for Tribal projects in the Pacific Northwest.

Quagga and zebra mussel prevention and readiness

Invasive freshwater mussels including quagga, zebra, and golden mussels have not been detected in Washington, but the threat continues to grow. WDFW expanded statewide prevention, monitoring, and response readiness activities in partnership with Tribal governments, federal agencies, public utilities, and regional partners. Tribal partners, including the Spokane Tribe of Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and Nez Perce Tribe, have helped advance monitoring and detection capabilities throughout the Columbia River basin.

WDFW continues to lead a Tribal policy coordinating group and work with Tribal, state, federal, and regional partners to strengthen readiness. State legislative investments and federal cost-share funding through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are expending prevention, early detection, rapid response planning, and protection of culturally, economically, and ecologically important waters across Washington.

Wildlife Management

Game Management Planning

WDFW completed the Game Management Plan (GMP), and the plan was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. WDFW is thankful for the Tribal comments that we received to help improve the final document.

Game Division and the regions are currently working on the three-year season setting process and have engaged the Tribes in the initial idea gathering process through our regions. WDFW hopes to garner more insight as that process continues through the summer and fall.

Wildlife Diversity Conservation (non-game wildlife)

Wildlife Diversity Division collaborates with Tribes and partners on projects that implement conservation actions for Species of Greatest Conservation Need and help us understand species status. Some projects underway over the past year include assessing reintroduction options for northern leopard frog, conservation translocations to augment populations of Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, and disease management of northwestern pond turtles. Foundational surveys and research are also underway for sage grouse, northern spotted owl, Cascade red fox, western gray squirrel, golden eagles, white-tailed and black-tailed jackrabbits, and fisher. In addition, the Wildlife Diversity Grant program awarded eight projects totaling nearly $1 million to conserve Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Tribes, public organizations, and nongovernmental organizations are all eligible applicants for WDFW's Wildlife Diversity Grant program.

Land acquisition

WDFW's Lands 20/20 is the formal process used to approve potential land acquisitions for funding by the WDFW. In 2025, that process included a Tribal briefing held virtually on October 9, along with an invitation to consult sent on November 5 to engage Tribes early in the process of acquisition. Twenty-one Lands 20/20 proposals were considered and approved.

WDFW also consulted with the requirements of Executive Order 2102 on 14 successful land transactions between July 2025 and June 2026. WDFW engages in these consultations prior to seeking Fish and Wildlife Commission approval to proceed with closing on each property.

One project went through the expedited Lands 20/20 process that incorporated a four-week comment opportunity for Tribes to provide comments. This comment period ended in March 2026.

Recreation on WDFW-managed lands

WDFW continues implementation of the 10-year Recreation Strategy for WDFW-managed lands, which was adopted in 2022. In the past year, WDFW has engaged with Tribes in several related actions, including water access area planning in North Puget Sound (Region 4), pilot closures in the Methow Wildlife Area to protect wintering mule deer, and planning and rulemaking to discourage motorized recreation where it is incompatible with conservation of natural and cultural resource goals.

Water Access planning in North Puget Sound

WDFW has initiated a management planning effort for water access areas in North Puget Sound (Region 4), which includes 125 water access areas and 16 hatcheries, including nearly 100 boat launches and 70 miles of public fishing easements. Millions of visitors enjoy these sites each year, accessing rivers, lakes, and marine areas for a variety of water-based recreation opportunities. The planning process is expected to extend through 2027.

Methow Wildlife Area closures

WDFW consulted with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation on a pilot seasonal closure of several units of the Methow Wildlife Area. This pilot closure was implemented during the 2023–24 and 2024–25 winter recreation seasons and will conclude following a similar closure this 2025–26 winter season. Early results indicate that mule deer use did increase and expand spatially as a result, and we are in the process of analyzing our camera and collar data to inform long-term management to recreation access on the wildlife area. A full analysis will be completed following the third pilot season before considering implementation of a permanent seasonal closure at this site.

Road and trail inventory and assessment

WDFW continues to inventory all existing roads and trails on department-managed wildlife areas. The inventory will inform which roads and trails should be designated and remain open to the public (and for which uses), and which routes should be restricted to administrative use or decommissioned. WDFW is reaching out to affected Tribes to request input on the future use and management of these routes. The agency is currently working with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation on travel management planning for the Methow Wildlife Area as part of an update to the Methow Wildlife Area Management Plan.

Considering impacts of motorized recreation on WDFW-managed lands

Recreational motorized vehicle activity has occurred on some WDFW-managed lands for many decades. When motorized use occurs off routes designated for those uses, and especially when it occurs off roads altogether, it can harm cultural sites, sensitive soils, plants, water sources, and wildlife species and their habitat. WDFW is considering a rulemaking effort intended to restrict motorized recreation to routes designated for particular uses (highway vehicles and/or offroad recreational vehicles) and corresponding policy changes that will give land management and Enforcement staff more effective tools to address the potential impacts of these activities. WDFW hosted a Tribal roundtable that introduced potential rule language and solicited feedback from Tribal representatives with public engagement opportunities.

Kiosks and Tribal coordination

WDFW continues efforts to collaborate with participating Tribes to develop Tribal narratives on new three-panel kiosks on WDFW-managed lands. Several federally recognized Tribes with interests in Washington have offered to participate and provide information for kiosks across the state. WDFW is currently finalizing several examples and expects to continue installation of kiosks at WDFW-managed wildlife areas and water access areas throughout the state.

Habitat

Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WSRRI)

WSRRI's primary objective is to conserve and restore Washington's shrubsteppe wildlife and habitat with an emphasis on addressing the escalating extent, frequency, and severity of wildland fires. WSRRI also addresses the needs of people that live and work in Washington's shrubsteppe ecosystems and benefit from healthy and resilient landscapes, habitat, and wildlife populations. WSRRI is a collaborative effort led by WDFW, Washington State Conservation Commission, and Washington Department of Natural Resources and supported by Tribes and partners. WSRRI's 30-year long-term strategy was closely informed and guided by an advisory group comprised of Tribal nations and diverse parties with a vested interest in Washington's shrubsteppe landscape, including various public and private partners. Over the past year, WSRRI has invested nearly $3 million to restore habitat, implement wildlife friendly fences, and expand equipment, infrastructure, and availability of native plants with the aim to enhance the scope and scale of habitat restoration on the landscape. Tribes and partners have been invited to participate in a WSRRI implementation advisory group that will begin meeting in fall 2026.

Beaver Habitat Best Management Practices

WDFW met with Tribal natural resource representatives on three occasions from 2024 to 2026 to review and provide input on the development of Beaver Habitat Best Management Practices. Tribal representatives provided considerable input and helped frame that document, published in May 2026.

Fish Barrier Removal Board

WDFW continued to chair the Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB), collaborating with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation to help restore healthy, harvestable levels of salmon and steelhead statewide through the coordinated, strategic removal of barriers to fish passage. For the 2025–27 biennium, the board sought $80 million for 50 fish-passage projects but received $32 million, which will fund the top 13 of the board's 50 projects.

Fish passage

WDFW has developed a Statewide Barrier Prioritization Strategy that uses an optimization model to rank fish passage barriers statewide. The hurdles to overcome are the mapped inaccuracies within the federally supplied National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), specifically the mapped stream layer of the state. Due to these inaccuracies in the NHD, we currently cannot run a statewide optimization model nor a watershed-by-watershed optimization model. This is because at least 30% of the known accurately plotted barriers in the state's Fish Passage Diversion and Screening Database (FPDSI) do not lie on the inaccurate NHD stream layer. With funding provided by the Legislature for 2025–27, WDFW is working on a year-long project to correct the stream layer, watershed by watershed, starting with Watershed Resource Inventory Areas 1–23. Once completed, optimization model runs will produce prioritized lists of fish passage barriers. The FBRB plans to encourage entities to sponsor these barriers and seek funding from the Legislature for their removal.

Reconnection of Chamna: Bateman Island causeway removal

On April 24, 2026, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation hosted "The Reconnection of Chamna" celebration in Richland, marking the completion of the Bateman Island Causeway removal. Built 85

years ago, the 550-foot earthen causeway and adjacent private marina blocked natural river flows, creating a warm, stagnant delta that bred predatory fish, and formed a deadly thermal barrier for migrating salmon and steelhead. A collaborative group of interested parties — including Yakama Nation, WDFW, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries, Department of Ecology, Mid-Columbia Fish Enhancement Group, Trout Unlimited, Plauche and Carr LLP, Resources Legacy Fund, and Roza Irrigation District — successfully funded and executed the project. The marina was decommissioned in August 2025, and the causeway was fully removed in February 2026, restoring free-flowing waters, completing the reconnection of Chamna.

Fishways, flows, and screening

WDFW continued the rulemaking process, started in 2021, to develop a new rule section under title 220 Washington Administrative Code (WAC) as necessary to implement 77.57 RCW Fishways, Flow, and Screening. The main goal of the rulemaking effort is to establish standards for what constitutes a human-made obstruction to fish passage and an improperly screened diversion intake and to address those noncompliant structures. Climate-adaptive water-crossing structure rules have already been moved to a separate update to the Hydraulic Code, WAC 220-660. WDFW is revising the 2025 draft language to incorporate feedback from Tribes, as well as governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

WDFW anticipates filing a new Proposed Rulemaking form (CR-102) in the fall of 2026, and the public comment period will begin once the draft language and accompanying documentation are complete. WDFW will conduct a new policy outreach presentation with the Tribes at that time.

Forest practices

WDFW continues to collaborate with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe through participation in the Pinchot Partners Forest Collaborative on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. In addition, WDFW has been working with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe on ungulate forage and producing first foods, primarily huckleberries, on the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

WDFW collaborates closely with Washington's Tribal nations through the NWIFC and Upper Columbia United Tribes, as well as several individual Tribal nations, on water typing issues through the Forest Practices Adaptive Management Program's Instream Scientific Advisory Group (ISAG). Additional engagement occurs through participation in project teams for three water typing-related research projects, the Potential Habitat Breaks (PHBs), Default Physical Criteria (DPC), and Anadromous Fish Floor (AFF) studies, and on rule and board manual development, such as the Board Manual Section 23 workgroup.

Grants

The Habitat Strategic Initiative Lead (WDFW-DNR) continued early communications and ongoing engagement with Puget Sound area Tribes on strategic planning activities, including the Puget Sound Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy and updates to the Land Development and Cover Implementation Strategy and the Floodplains and Estuaries Implementation Strategy. Eight HSIL grants are active and awarded to Tribes or Tribal consortia, with additional grants having Tribes or Tribal consortia as active partners.

WDFW continues to collaborate with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation through the South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative. The Collaborative recently received a National Forest Foundation grant for the "Collaborative Capacity Program for Forests and Communities." This grant has supported Tribal engagement with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation through shared learning events, a group survey, and planning meetings for an upcoming field trip to Yakama Nation Tribal lands. Additional work includes developing a Tribal Engagement Plan and opportunities for Tribal youth engagement.

Hydraulic Project Approval rulemaking

WDFW is pursuing the integration of climate change considerations into the rules (WAC 220-660) governing Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) permitting. The HPA permitting program ensures protection of fish and their habitat during construction projects. WDFW filed the rulemaking announcement for the multi-year project in March 2025. Since then, groundwork has been initiated. The Habitat Science team is preparing a synthesis of scientific literature to identify the current state of knowledge on relevant topics. For example, how sea-level rise will affect fish populations and how these impacts will intersect with shoreline HPA projects. As that picture comes into focus, the Habitat Engineering team will begin updating the Marine Shoreline Design Guidelines publication. The science synthesis and design guidelines will inform the development of rule amendments to WAC 220-660. WDFW is also about to complete a round of housekeeping changes to make minor corrections and improve the clarity of the rules. This will help reduce confusion when drafting amendments to the climate change rule.

Marine shoreline

WDFW continues to engage Tribes in the Aquatic Habitat Design Guidelines update process through Tribal coordination meetings, technical work groups, and early and extended review periods. Updates focused on topics in the Water Crossing Design Guidelines and the Marine Shoreline Design Guidelines.

Outreach

WDFW engages with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation on the Methow Community Outreach event hosted by the North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative.

WDFW engages with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, which teaches youth about traditional plants, first foods, and the legacy and history of the land at the Beebe Classroom event, hosted by the Chelan Wildlife Area (WLA), and the Sagebrush Camp, hosted by Foster Creek with support from North Central (Region 2) Habitat Program.

Priority Habitat and Species (PHS)

The Priority Habitats and Species section met with Tribal representatives in November 2025 to seek feedback on the draft PHS Shrubsteppe Management Recommendations and in March 2026 for the PHS Eelgrass Bed Management Recommendations. In both cases, attendees offered input on priorities for the management recommendations, including improved spatial data for bed delineation and consideration of aquaculture operations. In both cases, an additional engagement workshop and a one-month review period for Tribes and Tribal representatives will follow the completion of the draft.

WDFW planning staff participated in developing a feasibility study to pinpoint potential crossing locations over Highway 12, as well as conceptual designs for crossing structures at each location. This work is supported by U.S. DOT Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program funding obtained by the Puyallup Tribe of Indians in partnership with WSDOT, and by support from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Medicine Creek Treaty Tribes.

Puget Sound

WDFW continues to work with the Tulalip Tribes and the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians on restoration projects with NOAA Transformational Chinook Recovery Grants in the South Whidbey Basin. Additionally, WDFW's Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program has invested in the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians' Zis-a-ba II Restoration Project and in the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community's participation in the Shore Friendly Program.

Yakama Nation

WDFW engages with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation through the Naches Forest Partnership (a collaborative on the Naches Ranger district of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest).

WDFW continues to engage with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation through the North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative and the project work group (a sub-group of the collaborative). In addition, WDFW engages with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation to reinvigorate the Tapash Forest Collaborative on the Cle Elum Ranger District of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

Enforcement

We continue to implement an agreement with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation for enforcement and cooperative patrols of recreational fisheries within the Rufus Woods Reservoir of the upper Columbia River. As a part of that agreement, we provided $3 million in pass-through funding to create fishing access sites on the reservoir. This benefits state residents and Tribal members, and funds two Colville Tribal fish and wildlife officer positions.

WDFW Enforcement works with Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation law enforcement partners in areas of joint enforcement concern. It also coordinates response as needed to calls for service on WDFW-managed lands bordering the reservation boundaries. WDFW worked with Yakama Nation natural resources and law enforcement to establish new management rules for the Klickitat Falls Fishway, including lands cleanup, enhanced signage, and cooperative enforcement.

Additional Enforcement work with Tribes include:

- WDFW is working with the Columbia River Tribes, through the U.S. v. Oregon Management Agreement, on a long-term prosecution referral agreement process that would encompass most violations encountered during patrols.
- WDFW entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Cowlitz Indian Tribe in which enrolled Tribal members are allowed to hunt and fish under state rules in certain areas. Any violations encountered in these areas by WDFW Police involving Cowlitz Indian Tribe members will be referred to the Cowlitz Tribal Prosecutor for charging.
- WDFW meets monthly with the Lummi Indian Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribe co-managers to discuss hot topics relating to natural resource concerns.
- WDFW Enforcement works with the coastal Tribes to address special management areas (SMAs) to ensure state harvesters are not fishing within designated SMAs. WDFW police respond to reports of gear conflict between Tribal and non-Tribal fishers.
- WDFW Enforcement meets in partnership on the Stillaguamish Integrated Conservation and Rebuilding Project to build and maintain a stronger co-management relationship with the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians.
- WDFW Enforcement officers continue to work jointly on patrols with Tribal enforcement officers to address Puget Sound fisheries.
- WDFW Enforcement organized a natural resource law enforcement meeting consisting of all Point Elliott Treaty Tribes, DNR, USFS, and WDFW. A commitment was made to gather yearly with Tribes alternately hosting.
- WDFW Enforcement participates in the review/rewrite of the Point Elliott Treaty Tribes Hunting Co-Management Agreement.
- WDFW Enforcement has also attended Washington State Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP) Task Force Meetings. These are held to discuss the responsibility of state, local, and federal governments to protect and uplift Indigenous people.

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Washington State Gambling Commission

Summary

Our mission is to protect the public by ensuring that gambling is legal and honest and to foster full cooperation between Tribes and the state, based upon equality and a shared concern for the welfare of all the residents of the state and Tribes.

Of the 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington, 29 have compacts for Class III gaming and 22 of the Tribes operate 28 casinos.

Highlights

We mutually agreed with seven Tribes on amendments to each respective compact with two of those being a complete compact restatement.

In May, we partnered with the Snoqualmie Gaming Commission for a four-day training course that was attended by over 40 students from 13 Tribes. The training covered Tribal and gaming history and class III gaming activity regulation in Washington.

We facilitated our annual Tribal-state regulator licensing meeting in September with the Muckleshoot Tribal Gaming Agency. 35 attendees representing 18 Tribes attended the event. The group discussed interview techniques, criminal history information, new licensing staff training, and our modernized portal called MyAccount. MyAccount is a more transparent way to complete licensing processes, share information, and provide secure document exchange. We provided training, and staff met with five Tribes to discuss any barriers that could prevent them from successfully using the new system.

Our Tribal relations policy had not been updated since 2018. In July, after receiving feedback from Tribes, we issued our updated policy. When the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs develops the Tribal Consultation Guidelines, we will review and incorporate the suggestions as appropriate.

Electronic table games were a new activity first implemented in late 2023, and we worked with three Tribal regulatory agencies to implement electronic table games in their respective gaming facilities. Sports wagering was a new activity first implemented in late 2021. We worked with a Tribal regulatory agency to implement sports wagering at their gaming facility.

As part of our co-regulatory relationship with the Tribes, and to improve operational efficiency and technology use, we jointly agreed to 22 clarifications of compact appendices and concurred with 239 internal control and game rule submissions. Our electronic gambling lab provided monthly newsletters to share the status of equipment or software submissions and provided information on open equipment issues or malfunctions. Our intelligence unit sent about 50 bulletins to our Tribal regulatory partners to share information on various crimes and suspicious activity, provide awareness on various regulatory situations, or request assistance with criminal investigations, which sometimes resulted in successful identification of subjects.

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Department of Health

Summary

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is committed to honoring our government-to-government relationship with Tribes in all of our work. Our work is grounded in our value of Seven Generations, inspired by Native American cultures. We seek wisdom from those who came before us to ensure our current work protects those who will come after us. We invite collaboration with American Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations as we develop policies, agreements, and program implementation that directly affect Tribes and Tribal people.

Highlights

Executive Office of Government and Community Affairs (OGCA)

Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations

The Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations (OTPHR) leads and coordinates activities across DOH while also focusing its attention on policy, partnerships, communications, and data.

- Executive Order 25-10 Implementation: During the Centennial Accord, the governor signed Executive Order 25-10: *A New Foundation for Washington State's Governmental Relations with Sovereign Tribal Nations.* Included in the Executive Order (EO) was a requirement for all cabinet agencies to submit a compliance report to the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) by January 31, 2026. We held a series of two Tribal government-to-government Listening Sessions, both (1) to review our draft report and seek Tribal input before submitting, and (2) to seek additional Tribal input before drafting an implementation plan to get into full compliance with the EO. Listening Sessions were held on January 22, 2026, and February 3, 2026.
- OTPHR has overseen DOH's implementation of the EO, including the creation and establishment of several internal workgroups focused on consolidated contracting development, grant risk assessment improvement, and updating our collaboration and consultation procedure.

Key areas of DOH's implementation include improving contracting processes and updating our collaboration and consultation procedure.

- Government-to-Government Training**:** OTPHR has a contract with GOIA to provide quarterly, DOH-specific government-to-government trainings for DOH staff. These trainings were held on November 3, 2025; April 15, 2026; April 21, 2026; and May 13, 2026. One to two additional trainings are scheduled for later this year. In addition, on April 7, 2026, the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) held a four-hour Tribal sovereignty training with OTPHR and DOH leadership.
- Legislative Cycle: Throughout the 2026 legislative session, OTPHR supported DOH coordination and Tribal engagement, guiding DOH's government-to-government procedure for our Opioid Treatment Program Accreditation Agency Request Legislation, SB5988. See the latest Dear Tribal Leader Letter.
- Tribal Grants and Funding Process: OTPHR developed a draft Tribal Grants and Funding Agreement Best Practices resource and worked closely with internal offices to refine and implement it. OTPHR has also created procedures for internal coordination with grant managers.
- Public Records Process: OTPHR worked with our public records office to develop a procedure for reviewing public records requests for Tribal impact. DOH already has a process for formally notifying a Tribe or Tribal organization whether they may have an appropriate exemption to seek an injunction.

When an injunction may not be possible, OTPHR notes that there may be sensitive information a Tribe or Tribal partner may still want to be aware of and provides a courtesy notification for awareness.

- Tribal Data Sovereignty: OTPHR works closely with our Tribal Data Team in the Office of the State Health Officer. Since our last report and the launch of our Tribal Data Sharing Agreement and Tribal Data Sharing Principles, we have developed a Tribal Data Policy, internal trainings and resources, and met with other agencies in Washington and out of state to share our work, which was done in collaboration with the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council.
- Tribal Attestation: Based on 2025 legislation and Tribal government-to-government consultation, residential treatment facility and behavioral health hospital licensure has been added to the Tribal Attestation licensure path. Washington Indian health care providers can seek licensure via attestation for facilities providing inpatient and residential mental health and substance use disorder services. Tribes applying for licensure and certification as a behavioral health agency, residential treatment facility, or behavioral health hospital may attest to meeting applicable licensing requirements. DOH does not assert regulatory jurisdiction over facility licenses issued under a Tribal attestation. Once the department accepts the Tribal attestation, the requested licenses will be issued to the undersigned Tribe and added to the publicly available facility credential search.
- DOH Monthly Tribal Meeting: Starting in January 2026, DOH launched our own dedicated Monthly Tribal Meeting (DOH MTM). In previous years, DOH participated in the Health Care Authority's MTM, which became increasingly difficult due to the volume of information each agency needed to share and discuss with Tribes and Tribal Partners.
- Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS): In 2025, DOH held a Tribal consultation in preparation for the new state fiscal year 2025–27 biennium Tribal allocation of FPHS funds. Notably, while reductions occurred in other FPHS sectors this biennium, the Tribal FPHS allocation was maintained. This decision reflects a deliberate commitment to advancing the *minimum* recommended 10% Tribal investment level identified by the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), and it underscores a shared recognition of the importance of sustained investment in Tribal public health infrastructure. To date, 27 of the 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington have initiated Foundational Public Health Services agreements for this biennium. All five Indian Health Organizations have executed FPHS agreements for the current biennium.

Executive Office of the State Health Officer (OSHO)

The executive office has three main areas: the Center for Epidemiology, Practice, Equity, and Assessment; the Center for Public Health Informatics; and the Center for Public Health Medical Sciences.

- DOH's Tribal Epidemiologist supports OTPHR on Tribal data sovereignty issues, bringing subject-matter expertise in data sharing and epidemiology. The Tribal Data Team continues to implement the Tribal data sharing agreement with the Tulalip Tribes by providing them access to data, building a process for the Tribe to consent to the use of their data, including Tribal Data Sovereignty Principles in each of our external data sharing agreements, hosting Tribal data sovereignty trainings for staff, and drafting a Tribal Data Policy for DOH.
- The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System team strengthens data on Tribal health by oversampling the American Indian/Alaska Native population. The Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) team collaborates with multiple agencies to improve Tribal youth participation in the HYS survey through the HYS Tribal Workgroup. In the most recent fall 2025 data collection, three State-Tribal Education Compact Schools participated.

- The State Health Officer and the State Medical Epidemiologist regularly attend and provide briefings at the monthly AIHC Current Issues in Public Health and Emergency Response call.
- OSHO also collaborates with the Northwest Tribal Epidemiology Center on data sharing and improvement and supports their efforts to receive Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funding to advance data modernization. The office also provides technical assistance and support to Tribal nations on implementing new data exchange standards, such as FHIR, and engages Tribes in the development and implementation of the Washington Alliance for Health Data Exchange.

Executive Office of Health and Science (OHS)

The three main divisions of this executive office include the Division of Disease Control & Health Statistics, Environmental Public Health, and the Chief Deputy's office.

- Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) Public Health (PH) Interns Meeting: Public Health Laboratories (PHL) hosted UIHI PH Interns for two days on July 21–22, 2025. The interns had the opportunity to tour each office within the PHL, including Microbiology, Environmental Laboratory Sciences, and Newborn Screening. This experience provided the interns, who are exploring their own pathways in public health careers, with an extremely unique and valuable view of the Public Health Laboratory in action and spotlighted the various pathways that could lead to laboratory careers in the public health system. The UIHI PH Interns also had the opportunity to meet with other DOH subject-matter experts in Epidemiology, the Office of Infectious Disease, and Public Health Nursing to learn more about different career pathways.
- The Office of Infectious Disease provides safer sex supplies (condoms and lubricant) to 24 Tribal health agencies at no charge. These agencies combined generally receive 10,000–25,000 safer sex supplies annually.
- DOH's Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution (OEND) program, within the Office of Infectious Disease, provided 49,651 naloxone kits to 53 unique Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian Health Organizations from July 1, 2025, to May 26, 2026 (the date of the most recent naloxone request). In addition, the OEND's naloxone by mail service, in partnership with the People's Harm Reduction Alliance, has been actively accessed by American Indian/Alaska Native individuals, who have the highest rate of mail order naloxone service utilization and who experience the highest rate of fatal opioid overdose among any racial or ethnic group in Washington state.

Executive Office of Prevention, Safety, and Health (PCH)

Divisions include the Center for Access for Whole Person Care, Prevention and Community Health, and Health Systems Quality Assurance.

- DOH Rural Health Transformation Advisory Committee: There are 13 advisory committee members, plus five state agency committee members. There are two formal Tribal seats: one representing the Tribes on the east side of the mountains and one representing the Tribes on the west side. Those representatives are the Honorable Tribal Councilmember Dayna Seymour of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and Sarah Sullivan, Swinomish Tribe Policy and Self Governance Director and Treasurer of the American Indian Health Commission. The Tribal representatives are working with the other Washington Tribes through the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council and Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.

- Care-a-Van (CAV) Mobile Health Program completed 120 Tribal-specific mobile health events during the reporting period. Care-a-Van's recent services provided to Tribal populations reflect CAV's shift from a vaccination service to a health screening and personalized health education service. CAV also increased its partnerships to bring pharmacists, dental care, and social services to each event.
- The Maternal Mortality Review Panel (MMRP) expanded membership in fall 2025 and now has 16 Tribal representatives participating, almost twice the representation on the previous panel.
- The American Indian Health Commission published the Tribal and Urban Indian Leadership Recommendations as a new addendum to the Washington State Maternal Mortality Review Panel report to the Legislature, December 2025. This addendum was the result of the Community Conversations About the Health of Native Pregnant, Birthing and Postpartum Women and People project.
- DOH continued to partner with Tribes in the Dear Leader Letter process to access records for the MMRP review of indigenous deaths in Washington.
- Perinatal unit Tribal engagement funding in 2025
- Funding for 11 Tribes or Tribal organizations to provide doula services, host listening sessions, and provide birth worker trainings. Funded organizations include: NW Indian Health Board, Center for Indigenous Midwifery, Spokane Tribal Network, SIHB, Native American Women's Discussion on Infant Mortality, Ttawaxt Birth Justice, Makah Birth House, Puyallup Tribe, Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services, Quileute Tribe, Colville Indigenous Birth Justice, and AIHC.
- Youth Cannabis and Commercial Tobacco Prevention Program (YCCTPP): YCCTPP funds the American Indian Health Center to protect youth from commercial tobacco through community-based activities, including a collaborative Zine with the Boys and Girls Club and a four-day youth summit on resiliency and prevention. YCCTPP partners with RVO Health to operate the WA Quitline, which offers an American Indian and Alaska Native-specific Quitline, with coaches who have specialized training for this population, and provides a 12-week combination of Nicotine Replacement Therapy.
- Comprehensive Cancer Control and Prevention (CCCP) Program: CCCP is collaborating with the South Puget InterTribal Planning Agency (SPIPA) on their Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month campaign. As part of the SPIPA Comprehensive Cancer Program Advisory Committee, SPIPA is a member of the HPV Task Force Leadership Team. Additionally, SPIPA and the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board are members of the state coalition.
- 988 Crisis Systems: Native & Strong Lifeline expanded text and chat services to go live in August 2025, with text and chat services steadily increasing amongst youth ages 13–24. 988 contact hub contracts require the use of Tribal Crisis Coordination Protocols and the "Navigating a Crisis When There Is no Tribal Crisis Protocols" document when an AI/AN help-seeker contacts 988.
- Suicide Prevention: Native and Strong Tribal Suicide Prevention Media Campaign completed six years of working with Native populations, both on reservations and with urban-based Tribal citizens in Washington, to develop and implement a culturally informed and collaborative effort that involved a diverse set of platforms and strategies. Total advertising views for the campaign exceeded 112 million throughout the last year.
- Approximately $733,096 was allocated to Tribal contracts for immunization work and split evenly among 26 Tribes and Urban Indian Health Organizations that opted to participate in the contract. We expect 25 contracts for 2026–27.
- Approximately $1,107,050 was allocated to Tribes to support Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) services. WIC has agreements with 15 Tribes, one Tribal organization (SPIPA), and one Urban Indian organization (Seattle Indian Health Board), serving 21 Tribes in total. Seven Tribal grocery stores are WIC-approved. In 2026, we began contracting with the Hoh Indian Tribe to provide WIC services.

Executive Office of Resilience and Health Security (ORHS)

Includes administrative preparedness, readiness and response, health care analytics, and emergency medical logistics.

- ORHS supported Tribal preparedness and community resilience by fulfilling 20 resource requests serving 13 Tribal Nations and 18 Tribal organizations. Resources distributed included 146 portable air cleaners and replacement filters, 144 HVAC filters, 100 N95 respirators, 360 COVID-19 test kits, 50 human remains bags, 26,000 doses of naloxone (Narcan), and Be Well Washington educational materials to strengthen emergency preparedness and protect community health.
- ORHS partnered with Tribal representatives to co-develop and deliver a Tribal Mass Fatality & Reunification (MF&R) Training as part of the Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference pre-conference activities. The training brought together 76 participants representing Tribal communities from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Nevada, along with public health, health care, public safety, emergency management, and federal partners. Co-developed with Tribal partners and informed by Tribal perspectives and lessons learned, the curriculum strengthened culturally responsive planning, improved cross-jurisdictional coordination, and enhanced preparedness for mass fatality and family reunification incidents.

Executive Office of the Chief of Staff

This executive office includes People Services; Financial Services; Technology Innovation; Customer Experience; the Center for Inclusion, Belonging, and Wellbeing; and more.

- Public Records Office works closely with OTPHR on Tribal and Tribal partner formal and courtesy notifications. We presented to the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council's Tribal Data Sovereignty Workgroup. Over this reporting period, OTPHR reviewed 10 public records requests and of those, sent five courtesy notifications. *See OTPHR updates above for more.*
- Including amendments, renewed, and new agreements, 12 Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs) were signed with Tribes or TECs since our last report. *See above for Tribal Data Team updates on the Tribal DSA.*
- The Office of Financial Services (OFS) oversees and tracks funding agreements and contracts across the agency. We have at least 17 unique funding sources, totaling $20.3 million, supporting Tribes and other partners; 10 of which are in Prevention and Community Health (PCH), five in Environmental Public Health (EPH), one in Office of Resilience and Health Security (ORHS), and one in Office of Government and Community Affairs (OGCA). Government-to-government collaboration on new funding opportunities and new funding periods is in our collaboration and consultation procedure, and grant managers work with OTPHR on Tribal engagement. OFS has been working closely with OTPHR on Tribal funding and contract best practices, improving our risk assessment and contracting processes, and developing consolidated contracting (*See OTPHR section above*).

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Washington State Board of Health

Summary

In 1889, the Washington State Board of Health (Board) was established by the state constitution. Since then, the Board has served the people of Washington by providing leadership and advancing public health practices that protect and improve the public's health. The Board's work focuses on analyzing policies, developing rules, promoting partnerships, and encouraging engagement in the public health system.

The Board is not an executive cabinet or small cabinet agency. At the 2025 Centennial Accord, Board leadership heard requests from Tribal leaders for accountability and adherence to best practices for boards and commissions as defined by the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA). As a result, the Board began to align its internal guidance and processes to reflect the statewide Tribal work happening at a state level, through GOIA.

Highlights

- Monthly meetings with the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) and the Executive Director, Deputy Director and Tribal Liaison. The Tribal Liaison collaborates with the Department of Health on joint and delegated rulemaking.
- Regular participation in GOIA workgroups for, but not limited to, consultation, collaboration, and Centennial Accord workgroups. As a result of these workgroups, the Board is updating practices and guidance to reflect the voices of Tribal leaders and align closely with GOIA best practices.
- Creation of a map showing local health jurisdictions and Tribal and Trust lands. This interactive map allowed staff and others to understand the relationship between Tribal lands and local health jurisdictions.
- The Board has adopted rules in response to Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1946 (2025), which clarifies Tribal representation on a local board of health. Local boards of health (LBOH) now have 90 days to add a Tribal representative to an LBOH and modify their membership to maintain a balance of elected and non-elected individuals.
- AIHC provided training to Board members and staff focused on Public Health Tribal sovereignty and Tribal data. This training is in addition to the government-to-government training led by GOIA. All current staff have received government-to-government training as have several Board members.
- Foundational Public Health Services dollars have allowed the Board to provide additional administrative support for government-to-government and Tribal engagement work. This increases responsiveness, improves capacity, and enhances support for Tribal relations.

Staff contact

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Washington Health Benefit Exchange

Summary

The Washington Health Benefit Exchange (Exchange) works with Tribal governments, the American Indian Health Commission, Urban Indian Health Programs, and Tribal Assisters to improve access to health coverage through Washington Healthplanfinder. This work supports the Centennial Accord by honoring government-to-government relationships, strengthening consultation and communication, and helping Tribes and the people they serve receive accurate, culturally responsive support. From June 2025 through June 2026, the Exchange continued to center Tribal sovereignty, improve internal processes, and respond to Tribal priorities related to affordability, enrollment, sponsorship, federal policy changes, and access to care.

Highlights

Key highlights from the reporting period include:

- Strengthening the Tribal Lead Organization partnership and Tribal Assister support model. The Exchange worked closely with the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC), the Navigator team, and internal partners to support Tribal Assisters, process reports and invoices, and coordinate training. Tribal Assister in-service days were held in May 2026 at the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, with broad participation and presentations focused on enrollment, sponsorship, issuer requirements, and customer support.
- Advancing Tribal sponsorship and affordability work. The Exchange continued regular sponsorship check-ins, developed and refined Tribal sponsorship materials, supported Tribes with sponsorship questions, and encouraged additional Tribes to consider becoming sponsors. This work included direct support to Tribes, coordination with carriers and the Sponsorship team, and presentations at Tribal Assister and sponsorship meetings.
- Improving consultation, communication, and government-to-government practices. The Exchange participated in Governor's Office of Indian Affairs Tribal Liaison meetings, Centennial Accord planning and follow-up, consultation workgroups, state-Tribal contracting discussions, and efforts to develop shared norms for Tribal liaisons. The Exchange also contributed to alignment with Executive Order 25-10 and ongoing state efforts to strengthen Tribal consultation, transparency, and accountability.
- Supporting Tribal youth and community engagement at Tribal conferences and events. Tribal Liaison Charlene Abrahamson served in an auntie support role at the Native Youth Generational Leadership Summit, hosted by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe in Port Angeles, where the Spokane Tribe of Indians also served as a sponsor. She also supported other Tribal and community events, including the Opioid and Fentanyl Summit.
- Responding to Tribal priorities in health coverage systems and policy. The Exchange worked with Tribal partners, the Washington State Health Care Authority, the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, carriers, and internal teams on issues including restricted plan views for Tribal Assisters, billing and managed care concerns, electronic health record implementation, Jay Treaty processes, and communication with Tribal Assisters about system and policy changes. The Exchange received a consultation request; through roundtables and follow-up discussions, the issues were resolved and Tribes did not identify a need to proceed to full consultation.
- Supporting Tribal engagement on federal and state policy changes. The Exchange tracked and shared information on federal changes affecting Medicaid, SNAP, work requirements, redeterminations, and American Indian and Alaska Native exemptions. The Exchange also participated in Tribal-state health meetings, the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council (GIHAC), the Governor and Tribal Leaders Social

Services Council, AIHC Delegates meetings, HCA listening sessions, and related workgroups to identify Tribal implications and support clear communication.

- Maintaining active participation in Tribal health and behavioral health forums. The Exchange continued involvement in the Opioid Response Workgroup, Tribal 988 and Tribal Centric Behavioral Health meetings, Rapid Response Tribal/MCO/HCA meetings, the Washington Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Taskforce Summit, and related health and social service forums that support coordinated response and relationship building.
- Interim CEO Heather Moss engaged early with Tribal partners. Within her first month, she attended GIHAC and AIHC meetings and met with several Tribal leaders from across the state to build relationships and gather input on future enhancements.

Staff contact

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Washington State Health Care Authority

Summary

The Health Care Authority (HCA) provides health care and support services to Washington residents through a variety of innovative policies, programs, and purchasing strategies. These strategies involve the Apple Health (Medicaid) program, various behavioral health block grants and state provisos, and the Public Employees Benefits Board and School Employees Benefits Board programs.

Through the Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA), HCA seeks to ensure that American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals can access equitable health care. To achieve this goal, we partner with Tribes and Indian Health Care Programs to address existing health disparities and increase access to quality care and services, following 34.376 RCW and our Tribal Consultation Policy.

Highlights

Apple Health coverage and payments

In calendar year 2025, Apple Health provided health care coverage to more than 80,877 AI/AN citizens statewide. Tribes received over $691 million for health care, transportation, and administration services, a 29% increase from 2024. The Claims Team at OTA render a comprehensive Claims Analysis for all Indian Health Care Providers at least annually and, in 2025, supported many technical assistant requests from Tribes.

Apple Health innovations for Indian Health

- **Health Case Management and Coordination System** was funded during the 2026 legislative session to continue the implementation of a statewide and state-owned instance of the electronic medical record (EMR) system Epic. This is a joint project between HCA, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Social and Health Services. HCA's focus is on providing this resource to Indian Health Care Providers and behavioral health providers, for whom the cost of a new EMR is a barrier to care delivery and care coordination. So far, two Tribes have signed up for the first wave of implementation.
- **Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Project** is a five-year cooperative agreement with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to fund innovations that help rural communities take important steps forward in accessible, safe, and sustainable health care. HCA and the Tribes, through government-to-government engagement, agreed to a 10% set aside of Washington's total awarded amount. Washington's total award for the first year of the grant is approximately $181 million, with the final amount for the Tribal set aside set at $19.4 million. These funds are intended to support Tribal workforce development, relationship building and contract negotiation with hospitals, and technology investments, all in support of culturally attuned care coordination and more seamless access to care for Tribal members.
- The **Native Hub** is a long-term project intended to be a Tribally owned and operated organization that supports Tribes and Native people getting better access to care coordination, funding and resources, and culturally attuned behavioral health services. The funding to establish the Native Hub comes from the Medicaid Transformation Project 2.0 and is the same funding that Accountable Communities of Health used to establish themselves as community care hubs. A contract with the Association of Washington Tribes is the first step in launching this new program.

Executive Order 25-10, Improving Contracting Process with Tribes

- Successfully launched new Sovereign Nation Agreement (SNA) structure and updated risk assessment tool through Tribal Consultation for fiscal year (FY) 2026.
- Updated SNA contracts to accept federally negotiated indirect rates (NICRA) from Tribes.
- Successfully completed After the Fact pilot, significantly improving FY 2027 contracting process, with almost all Service Level Agreements out before July 1, 2026, more than four months earlier than FY 2026.
- Launched first Tribal convenience pool focused on Tribal Health Care Consulting, Strategic Planning, Coordination, and Native Media and Native Artists.
- Increase in government-to-government training for staff, contractors, and subcontractors throughout the year, including all senior leadership attending GOIA training and American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) training.

Behavioral health funding and innovations for Indian Health

- Tribal State Opioid/Fentanyl Task Force
    - Taskforce Legislative Report: Priorities, funding requests, and policy changes from the WA Tribal Opioid Fentanyl Summit submitted in 2025, with an update at the end of 2026.
    - WA State Tribal Opioid Fentanyl Summit Summits: The 2025 summit took place in May at the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. The 2026 summit will take place September 15th at Squaxin Island Tribe.
- For Our Lives Campaign: Expansion of the website, comprehensive campaign evaluation, mix of treatment focused tactics to increase access to medications for opioid use disorder and patient-centered culturally responsive care, and prevention media buy including radio, television, and movie theater print ads.
- Washington State Tribal Prevention System
    - Convened quarterly Tribal prevention systems gatherings to strengthen Tribal state and partner relationships, encourage peer learning and share culturally grounded prevention strategies.
    - Facilitated bi-monthly Tribal prevention coalition meetings that strengthened collaboration aligned prevention priorities and supported shared learning across Tribes.
    - Strengthened Tribal prevention infrastructure by providing monthly ongoing technical assistance to Tribal nations and prevention partners to strengthen coalition development and support long-term sustainability.
    - Executed and expanded contracts with Planet Youth to provide direct technical assistance.
    - Tribal data prevention summit to strengthen Tribal data capacity support data informed decision-making.
- Improving the Washington state behavioral health system for better coordination and recognition with the Indian behavioral health system (SB 1877 implementation)
    - Hosted Consultation with Tribes on the Guidelines for Culturally Appropriate designated crisis responder investigations to be published fall 2026.
    - Successfully published guidance documents to provide crisis entities educational and procedural support in assisting American Indians and Alaska Natives in crisis:
        - Navigating a Crisis without a Tribal Crisis Coordination Protocol in place
        - Implementation of House Bill 1877 in facilities
        - House Bill 1877 Patient Privacy Document

    - Working with two Tribes on providing reimbursement for the costs of holding Tribal Involuntary Treatment Act court orders.
- Other Crisis Response
    - Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery and OTA negotiated a RHT Mobile Crisis Set-aside.
    - Working with two Tribes on Tribal Mobile Crisis Response Endorsement start-up and non-Medicaid endorsement rates.
    - Completed first Tribal Crisis Policy Academy with AIHC with a total of 10 teams developing crisis strategic plans.
    - Working with two Tribes on inpatient treatment facility cost-based rates for Tribal Evaluation and Treatment and Tribal Secure Withdrawal Management and Stabilization Services.
- Completed listening session with Tribes on Washington Thriving Strategic Plan focused on improving behavioral health services for youth from prenatal to 25 years of age.
- Supported three Tribal Certified Peer Support Services trainings and one TA presentation in partnership with Washington Tribes.

Staff contact

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Washington State Historical Society

Summary

The Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) is committed to honoring Indigenous Knowledge systems, stories, and Tribal sovereignty as foundational in all that we do. We are grateful for the trust that many Tribal nations have extended to our agency, and we do not take that trust lightly. We are committed to continuing to work together, strengthening our relationships, and ensuring the WSHS remains a respectful partner for generations to come.

Highlights

- The Tribal liaison position was increased to a 100% full-time equivalent position.
- Established the first permanent Native American Advisory Board.
- In the summer of 2025, the Washington State History Museum hosted the 20th annual *In the Spirit Contemporary Native Art* exhibition, which ran from July–September with the *In the Spirit Festival* taking place in August featuring numerous Native American artists and musicians.
- In October 2025, we completed the renovation of the Great Hall, the core of the Washington State History Museum's permanent exhibition space and opened the new gallery *This Is Native Land.* This new gallery centers Tribal history as the starting point for all state history in the museum and is the largest single gallery in the museum.
- Diversity in Local History (DLH) is a grant to fund paid internships that support inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility projects. This year, the Suquamish Tribal Cultural Center was awarded the DLH grant, which will fund a paid intern to collaborate with Suquamish Museum staff and community members to curate a temporary exhibit for public display. Over four to five months, the intern will select a theme, conduct research, write exhibit text, and assist with layout and coordination — creating a dynamic, year-long exhibit to engage and educate diverse audiences.
- We continue to make progress on the "Dialogue in Place" initiative, a statewide project. As part of our Statement of Commitment, we are reviewing 42 monuments placed by the WSHS for historical accuracy, structural integrity, language, and interpretive sensitivity. We have begun the Tribal consultation and community engagement process to determine the future of these monuments. Eight Tribes are currently participating in discussions regarding 10 monument sites.
- We continue to provide the "Treaty Trail: U.S.-Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest" curriculum, free to educators across the state, available at washingtonhistory.org under the Education tab.
- Repatriation efforts are being made to return several artifacts to Tribes. We are currently working with the Makah Tribe, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Puyallup Tribe, Skokomish Indian Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe, and Suquamish Tribe.
- The WSHS continues to offer support and programming for museums and cultural centers across the state through our Common Concerns series and other free training. We welcome Tribal museums and cultural center partners to attend and participate, as well as suggest topics for future programming based on any concerns or initiatives they may have.

Staff contact

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Washington State Office of Independent Investigations

Summary

The Washington State Office of Independent Investigations (OII) is committed to respecting Tribal sovereignty and the needs of individual Tribal members when an OII use-of-force investigation involves Tribal law enforcement, a Tribal member, or Tribal land. OII created a Tribal Relations Program to ensure meaningful communication, consultation, and collaboration with all American Indian Tribes located in, or with rights in, Washington state.

Highlights

- Jane Nesbitt was appointed Interim Director of OII on March 03, 2026.
- Director Nesbitt has made the commitment to investigate a use-of-force incident occurring on Tribal lands only when requested by Tribal leadership/police. To support this, the agency is pursuing memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and interlocal agreements with individual Tribes to clarify the scope of OII investigations and formally document each Tribe's preferences regarding OII's investigative role.
- OII is fully operational in its Regions 1 and 2 areas, which includes the lands of 15 Tribes. Operating statewide is the goal. See OII regions.
- Director Nesbitt and Tribal Relations Director Angie Smith presented to all Tribal leaders in attendance at the 2026 Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians convention.
- From June 2025 – June 2026, OII responded to seven use-of-deadly-force incidents. Tribal impact was identified in three. One involved the death of a Tribal member, one involved Tribal police officers as witnesses, and one involved the death of someone whose family included Tribal member(s). See OII completed reports.
- The OII Tribal Relations Program continues to travel to Tribes to meet individually with Tribal leaders and Tribal legal staff.
- OII continues to work closely with Tribal police departments, including meeting with them individually, attending their annual conference and Indian County meetings at the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) conference.
- OII remains committed to attending Tribal events. From June 2025 – June 2026, OII staff attended several events, including Tribal Canoe Journeys and powwows.
- Tribal-related training remains a priority. OII held an all-staff screening of the "Fish War" documentary. OII extends gratitude to Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Executive Director Justin Parker (Makah Tribe) and Chair of the Commission Ed Johnstone (Quinault Indian Nation), who came to share with staff after the film showing.
- Remembrance and raising awareness of issues that impact Native Americans has been a priority this past year. OII staff have discussions around and participate in events like "Orange Shirt Day" in remembrance of those affected by the boarding school era.

Staff contact

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Office of the Insurance Commissioner

Summary

The Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) is the agency responsible for regulating insurance in Washington state and is led by an independently elected statewide official, the Insurance Commissioner. The mission of the OIC is to protect the public through fair, transparent, and consistent oversight of the insurance industry. We strive to be Washingtonians' primary, trusted resource for insurance advocacy, and for Washington state to be recognized as a national leader in consumer protection, innovation, and fair oversight of the insurance industry.

In 2026, the Office of the Insurance Commissioner deepened its commitment to Tribal engagement, responding proactively to emerging challenges and strengthening partnerships across Washington's Tribal communities. We support Tribal communities by facilitating access to insurance services and benefits that reduce disparities and uphold sovereignty.

Highlights

- Staff worked closely with Tribal leaders to provide insurance resources to Tribal communities impacted by the recent wildfires including the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kalispel Tribe, and Spokane Tribe of Indians.
- Participated in outreach meetings and community listening sessions with Tribal governments across Washington to strengthen our relationships.
- Attended and presented information about our services at key events, including the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Mid-Year Conference, American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) Opioid & Fentanyl Summit, Canoe Journey, and Tribal Assister Training for the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.
- Collaborated with the AIHC to address Tribal concerns regarding Medicaid managed care, Medicare Advantage plans, and behavioral health access.
- Delivered policy updates and insurance guidance during quarterly AIHC delegate meetings and regional Tribal forums.
- Met with American Indian health center providers about billing issues and sent guidance to health insurance companies outlining their obligations to American Indian health care providers under federal and state legal protections.
- Engaged in Tribal-focused events such as the Washington State Indian Education Association Conference and Tribal Employment Rights Organization Conference to expand insurance literacy and support.
- Conducted outreach events and one-on-one Medicare counseling sessions for Tribal members in their communities.
- Currently recruiting for Tribal liaison position.

Staff contacts

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Washington State Department of Labor & Industries

Summary

The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) collaborates with Tribal governments, medical providers, employers, and workers to keep Washington safe and working. L&I acknowledges and respects Tribal nations' authority and their way of governing.

L&I helps workers injured on the job; promotes workplace safety and health; ensures fair pay; and oversee licenses, inspections, and apprenticeships in various industries. The agency is dedicated to working closely with Tribal governments to ensure everyone understands their rights. To fulfill this commitment, L&I established a Tribal Advisory Committee. This committee includes representatives from the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, Apprenticeship, Employer Services, Office of Human Resources, the agency's Tribal liaison, and regional offices. These representatives help make decisions about agency policies and guidelines.

Highlights

Activities from June 2025 to June 2026:

- Fifty-two L&I employees completed three L&I-scheduled government-to-government training courses to ensure respectful and appropriate collaboration. Several other staff completed this training provided by the Department of Social and Health Services.
- Five total Tribal-related customer interactions occurred at L&I service locations from May 1, 2025, to June 23, 2026.
- Currently, Tribes have 220 active electrical permits from June 1, 2025, to June 1, 2026.
- L&I supported Tribal members who joined registered apprenticeship programs as apprentices and benefited from participation.
- L&I works closely with the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council (WSATC) and reports quarterly.
- L&I participates in the Tribal apprentice subcommittee, which is part of the WSATC.
- The subcommittee is open to all federally recognized Tribes and currently includes participants from Tribes. Twenty-nine Tribes are invited. Usual attendance is approximately eight to ten Tribes, with increased participation at the last two quarterly subcommittee meetings by business partners and apprenticeship programs.
- L&I staff participated in various Tribal events.
    - Staff attended the Centennial Accord and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Convention.
    - Staff participated in the State Agency-Tribal Liaison meetings and additional Governor's Office of Indian Affairs meetings.
    - Apprentice Program staff attended four Tribal subcommittee meetings, four IT Tribal steering committee meetings, four Native American Assistance Program steering committee meetings, and three Tulalip TERO Vocational Training Center (preparatory program) graduations.

RCW 70A.02.100 directs covered agencies to offer consultation services to Tribes. L&I had interactions with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Lummi Nation, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Spokane Tribe of Indians, Squaxin Island Tribe, and the Tulalip Tribes to discuss services and ways to collaborate. During those

interactions, L&I worked closely with the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Washington State Office of the Attorney General for guidance.

Staff contact

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Department of Licensing

Summary

Department of Licensing's (DOL) mission: Helping every Washington resident live, work, drive, and thrive. DOL serves Washington residents by licensing drivers, vehicles, vessels, and over 40 different professions.

Highlights

Fuel Tax Compacts

DOL is party to 24 fuel tax compacts with Tribal governments. For calendar year 2025, DOL provided $48.4 million in fuel tax refunds to Tribes pursuant to fuel tax compacts. This last year, DOL renegotiated a change in the fuel tax sharing percentage in three existing agreements from 75% to 90% to Tribes.

Tribal License Plate Compacts

DOL has compacts with federally recognized Washington Tribes to create Tribal license plates for Tribal-member-owned vehicles and Tribal government vehicles. Currently, DOL has license plate compacts with three Tribes:

- 228 – Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- 377 – Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- 128 – Puyallup Tribe (new for 2025)

Reporting Vessel Information

DOL operates under a 1994 Consent Decree, which requires 21 Tribes to issue vessel decals supplied by DOL to their members for use in registering their vessels and submit the vessel information to DOL. For 2025, DOL provided 3,000 decals to the Tribal Fisheries Commission and received 802 Tribal vessel registrations returned to DOL.

Combative Sports Regulation

DOL functions as the State Boxing Commission and regulates combative sports throughout Washington. In 2025, DOL received one invitation from a Tribe to regulate an event in Indian Country.

Tribal Traffic Safety Education Program

The Tribal Traffic Safety Education (TTSE) Program is a newly established program under RCW 46.82.490, Young Driver Education and Training in Tribal Communities. Beginning July 1, 2026, DOL is directed to implement the TTSE Program by inviting Tribal governments to partnership opportunities that expand access to driver education for Native youth.

Tribes have been invited to consultation, and DOL has held government-to-government consultations with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. DOL has also conducted listening sessions with Education and Workforce department leaders from the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe and the Puyallup Tribe, participated in Yakama Nation Tribal Transportation Committee meetings, and presented at the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) conferences in 2025 and 2026.

DOL is actively seeking additional consultation with Tribal councils and ongoing engagement with Tribal department leaders to ensure this initiative reflects the unique needs and priorities of Tribal communities across Washington. DOL has developed a survey and outreach materials to identify barriers to driver education and licensure in Tribal communities. DOL can provide technical assistance to Tribes interested in licensing driver training schools, training instructors, or expanding local driver education opportunities.

DOL is partnering with the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) to develop funding opportunities and Tribal driver education partnership models. DOL will support Native youth in accessing driver education vouchers when the statewide voucher program launches in January 2027. DOL is also inviting Tribal councils, historians, youth, and educators to partner in developing a supplemental Native traffic safety education curriculum that centers Indigenous Knowledge as the foundation for safe driving practices.

Staff contacts

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Liquor and Cannabis Board

Summary

The Liquor and Cannabis Board's (LCB) Centennial Accord mission includes promoting public health and safety across the state and in Indian Country with respect to liquor, cannabis, tobacco, and vapor product production, distribution, sale, and use. We work to support Tribal government revenues and Tribal economic development through partnerships and collaboration. These collaborative efforts with Tribes focus on agreements that determine how Tribes operate their businesses that involve alcohol and cannabis sales.

Highlights

This past year's focus with the Tribes included adding new and updating existing cannabis compacts and liquor Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) to adjust to the changes that Tribes experienced. Both remain significant sources of tax revenue for Tribes and the state. Tribal liquor and cannabis revenue supports Tribal community services and programs. The governor has designated the LCB to negotiate compacts with Tribes that are interested in establishing cannabis programs. The LCB also works with Tribes incorporating liquor privileges into their new or existing establishments that meet state requirements.

LCB works with Tribes adopting cannabis compacts. The agency has completed 23 Tribal cannabis compacts to date. Another Tribe, previously in the negotiation process during the last reporting period, is now ready to bring their compact to the Board for approval. We anticipate the compact approval to be completed by mid-September 2026.

- Through June 2026, two additional Tribal cannabis compacts are currently in negotiation, and one Tribe removed medical marijuana from their compact.
- LCB assisted Tribes, at their request, to create a modified transportation manifest for transporting products.
- To date, we have updated MOAs with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe, Spokane Tribe of Indians, Squaxin Island Tribe, Stillaguamish Tribe, and Swinomish Indian Tribal Community.
- LCB held two different government-to-government trainings for staff in the past year. Both trainings had full attendance, with 50 participants attending who had not received formal training. Two more are planned for fall 2026.

Staff contact

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Washington's Lottery

Summary

Washington's Lottery (WSL) is a state agency mandated to generate funds for the support of state programs. WSL sells tickets for games of chance to the public. Revenue from those sales pays for the costs of running the lottery business, including producing, marketing, and selling lottery products.

The Legislature decides how the government spends revenue generated by WSL. Recipients of WSL's proceeds include the Washington Opportunity Pathways Account, Economic Development Account, Problem Gambling Account, and the General Fund Account. WSL has contributed more than $5.7 billion to various state programs since its inception.

WSL is proud to have Tribal retailers as partners.

Highlights

Fiscal Year 2026 Tribal Sales

- Fifty-four licensed Tribal retail locations sold tickets totaling $22,394,297.
- Ticket sales at Tribal locations generated $1,119,715 in sales commissions and $1,150 in selling bonuses for those retailers.

Other Highlights

- WSL hosted Tribal consultations in July and August 2025 to share and discuss potential agency requested legislation. Tribal consultations were hosted in April 2026 to discuss a proposed increase in scratch ticket prices.
- Director and Tribal Liaison Brian Bennett met with the Washington Indian Gaming Association (WIGA) Executive Director Rebecca George and Deputy Director Rosina DePoe in December 2025. Director Bennett also met with the WIGA Board at its February 2026 virtual meeting and attended WIGA's flag ceremony in April 2026.

Staff contacts

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Washington Military Department (WMD)

Summary

The WMD Tribal program is coordinated through the Office of Inter-Governmental Affairs, providing direct access to the Adjutant General. The WMD works with Tribes through three full-time employees: a Tribal Liaison Officer (TLNO) for the Emergency Management Division (EMD), a TLNO for the Military Department, and a natural and cultural resources specialist within the Construction and Facilities Maintenance Office. The WMD Tribal outreach efforts are guided by the overarching principles of engagement, responsiveness, collaboration, and follow-up. The following is a short overview of each program.

Highlights

Washington Emergency Management Division

EMD hosted the 2025 Tribal Emergency Managers Forum at House of Welcome on The Evergreen State College campus in Olympia, attended by 22 Tribes from around the state. The event provided a unique opportunity for Tribal Emergency Managers to network and discuss a variety of emergency management topics, including an interactive cyber workshop, intrastate mutual aid, and panel discussions led by Tribal Emergency Managers that highlighted lessons learned from the 2025 Tribal Canoe Journey tsunami warnings, 2024 wildfire events, and food security planning.

Preparedness Grants Program: $168,943 in Emergency Management Performance Grant funding was awarded to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Makah Tribe, and Nooksack Indian Tribe to support all-hazards emergency preparedness efforts. $234,000 in Operation Stonegarden awards were provided to the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Makah Tribe, and the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community to assist with increasing border security and situational awareness.

$211,136 in State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program funding was awarded to the Lummi Nation for a cyber maturity assessment and penetration test of related systems and to the Puyallup Tribe for participation in a Cyber Attack Tabletop Exercise, role-based cybersecurity training for staff, and implementation of a Data Loss Prevention solution.

Response and Logistics: EMD completed rulemaking to revise Washington Administrative Code 118-04 to allow federally recognized Tribes to participate in the state's Emergency Worker Program. Two information sessions were conducted on the Emergency Worker Program for Tribes.

EMD supported affected Tribal Nations during the December 2025 winter storms by coordinating lifesaving response resources.

The statewide credentialing program worked with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Makah Tribe, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Quileute Tribe, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, and Swinomish Indian Tribal Community to complete annual National Incident Management System reporting surveys and related reporting requirements.

Hazards and Outreach: EMD's tsunami program assisted in the state-level response to the July 2025 Kamchatka tsunami, which impacted Tribal Nations participating in the annual Tribal Canoe Journey. The program also supported Tribal participation in the 2026 national-level PACIFEX tsunami communications exercise and hosted the 2026 Washington tsunami seminar and workshop to enhance tsunami preparedness, coordination, and resilience among Tribal partners.

Recovery and Human Services: EMD's Recovery Section provided support to Tribal Nations affected by the December 2025 winter storms federal disaster declaration by providing technical assistance for damage assessments and assisting with FEMA Public Assistance program delivery. EMD worked collaboratively with affected Tribes throughout the Preliminary Damage Assessment process, recovery planning, and project development to support long-term recovery efforts.

Emergency Management Council (EMC): Tribes representing Eastern and Western Washington serve on the state's Emergency Management Council. The Council advises the governor and the director of the Washington Military Department on state and local emergency management matters by promoting, assessing, and reporting on statewide emergency readiness. Current Tribal members include representatives from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and Suquamish Tribe.

Washington National Guard

The Military TLNO helps coordinate National Guard assets to include civil engineering companies, vehicle recovery specialists, and traffic management teams as part of the Innovative Readiness Training program with support being given to several Tribal nations.

Convened the first Tribal Police Counterdrug Leadership conference that brought together more than 25 Tribal Chiefs of Police to discuss WMD support for Tribal drug enforcement efforts. Additionally, the Washington Counterdrug Program supported Tribal, federal, and state law enforcement in joint investigations supporting numerous Tribal nations, in addition to providing training through the Washington Regional Counterdrug Training Center (WRCTC). The WRCTC has trained students from various Washington Tribes in tactical medicine, fentanyl safety, investigative support, and leadership, with some courses hosted by American Indian nations.

Washington Youth Challenge Academy

The Washington Youth Challenge Academy (WYCA) provides a highly disciplined, safe, and professional learning environment that empowers at-risk youth to improve their educational level and employment potential and become responsible and productive Washingtonians. In 2026, the WYCA enrolled cadets from Washington Tribes and Tribal nations from across the United States.

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Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE)

Summary

OMWBE works to increase equity and participation in public contracting and procurement for small businesses owned by minorities, women, and socially and/or economically disadvantaged people, which may include Native Americans and Tribal members. We manage state and federal certification programs that certify these businesses to contract with the government. We maintain an online directory of certified businesses so agencies, educational institutions, local governments, and prime contractors can find certified businesses in the industries they need; and assist agencies and educational institutions with best practices to increase spending with our certified businesses. We also lead the Governor's Subcabinet on Business Diversity (GSBD), which is a cross-agency effort for equity in public contracting and procurement.

Highlights

- **October 20–23, 2025:** OMWBE Director and Tribal Liaison attended the Centennial Accord with Washington state and Tribal Leaders. Executive Order 25-10, A New Foundation For Washington State's Governmental Relations With Sovereign Tribal Nations, was signed during this event.
- **February 10, 2026**: OMWBE attended an Elk Soup event in Spokane to share our agency's services with Native American and Tribal communities.
- **April 9, 2026**: OMWBE had a Certification 101 training at an Elk Soup event in Spokane to help Native American business owners get OMWBE certified, which may help them get government contracts.
- **April 15, 2026**: OMWBE had a Certification 201 training at the Makah Tribe Reservation in Clallam County (Neah Bay) to help Makah Tribe business owners get OMWBE certified, which may lead to them getting government contracts.
- **May 1, 2026**: OMWBE attended a Thurston County Community Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Summit in Lacey. OMWBE representatives met with Tribal and state community leaders to share our agency's services, such as supplier diversity, certification, and our Linked Deposit Program, which is an access-to-capital program.
- **May 2, 2026**: OMWBE attended Elk Soup's Native Arts Gallery Grand Opening event in Spokane to support Native American artwork.
- **June 1, 2026**: OMWBE conducted a Community Certification Workshop at the Makah Tribe Reservation in Clallam county to share OMWBE certification opportunities.
- **Ongoing (throughout the year)**: The Governor's Office of Indian Affairs was invited to all GSBD meetings and remains an active voting member.
- **Fiscal Year 2025 OMWBE Annual Report**: Tracks the total number of certified Native American businesses and state spending with Native-owned businesses.

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Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Summary

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), led by Commissioner Dave Upthegrove, works alongside Tribal sovereigns to protect Washington's lands and waters. The Tribal Relations team continuously advocates for Tribes and ensures meaningful consultation through appropriate channels. Together, we work to improve salmon conditions, protect cultural and natural resources, mitigate climate change impacts, support sustainable economies, and manage impacts on state lands.

Highlights

Tribal Summit

Commissioner Dave Upthegrove and Tribal nation representatives convened at the DNR Tribal Wildfire Summit on May 26, 2026, hosted by the Spokane Tribe of Indians in collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. The focus was on how DNR and Tribal nations can work together to address the ongoing wildfire crisis and on strengthening co-stewardship relationships between DNR and Tribal leadership. Nearly 300 people attended the hybrid in-person/virtual event including members from 16 Tribes. Presentations explored workforce development, funding and capacity needs, environmental justice, climate impacts, and traditional ecological practices.

Trust Land Transfer Program

DNR manages state trust lands to produce revenue for essential public services. Some lands have limited income potential but high ecological and recreational values. The Trust Land Transfer Program enables DNR to preserve these areas while improving financial performance.

Trust Land Transfers funded in the 2025–27 capital budget:

- South Lake Ozette transfer in Clallam County will provide the Quileute Tribe with a 372-acre parcel to use for fish and wildlife habitat conservation and cultural resource access and use. ($8.9 million)
- Beckler 6 transfer in King County will provide Tulalip Tribes with a 676-acre parcel to use for conservation and traditional cultural practices. ($4 million)
- Okanogan G transfer near Twisp in Okanogan County will provide the Confederated Tribes of the Coleville Reservation with a 42-acre parcel to use for fish and wildlife habitat restoration and conservation. ($450,000)
- Tract C North transfer in Yakima County to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation for fish and wildlife habitat protection, forest health management, and hunting and gathering. (Partially funded at $3.3 million)
- Transfer of 53 acres in Clallam County to the Quileute Tribe that includes the Bear Springs fish-rearing facility.

Tribal Wildland Firefighting Training Initiative

This biennium, the Legislature gave DNR $400,000 to improve access to wildland fire training programs for Washington state Tribes and Tribal nation employees. Three Tribes participated: Quinault Indian Nation, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians. DNR partnered with Washington State University Extension Service to provide workshops and training focused on fire suppression and prescribed fire. DNR has $283,500 left for Tribal training through June 2027.

Forest Health And Wildfire Resilience Funding

We secured a major victory this last legislative session by restoring $60 million to Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Funding for the current biennium; following statewide outreach, testimony, and sustained advocacy across partisan lines, and culminating in a coalition of broad support for forests, Tribes, and Tribal nations. The funding enables essential forest health work — prescribed burns, treatments, thinning, and fuels reduction — and ensures equipment and resources can reach local and Tribal fire districts. Looking ahead, we will continue to support Tribes in meeting the rising wildfire threat, building resilience as the climate crisis accelerates, and honoring the coalition that made this success possible.

Direct Sale of Logs and Cedar Bark Harvesting

Following a request from the Skokomish Indian Tribe, DNR is formalizing a process for pre-harvest Tribal access to cedar bark as well as harvesting cedar trees for cultural practices on DNR timber sales. Additionally, DNR staff are setting up a direct sale of logs to the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe for a habitat restoration project using our new authority to sell timber sales up to $250,000 directly to entities doing stream restoration projects. This is the first sale of this type.

State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative

- DNR continues to actively participate in the State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative (STRII) with dedicated staff and $60,000 in facilitation support for fiscal year 2026.
- Despite a more than 20% budget cut affecting operations, DNR remains committed to Tribal engagement on recreation management.
- DNR is co-leading with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Watershed Pilot, identifying valued ecological and cultural components potentially affected by recreation activity.
- Tribes and agency staff developed a STRII Draft Integrated Plan and Agreement.

Aquatics

The Aquatic Resources Division has continued to work closely with Tribes on several projects:

- Still Harbor Shoreline Restoration Project on McNeil Island with the Nisqually Indian Tribe, Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and Squaxin Island Tribes.
- The Squaxin Island Kelp Protection Zone, established via Commissioner's Order in July 2025, follows a 2024 commitment to support the conservation and recovery of the Squaxin Island kelp bed. DNR worked directly with the Squaxin Island Tribe to determine the boundaries of the protection zone.
- The Elwha Kelp and Eelgrass Priority Area Action Plan, developed in partnership with Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe.
- Boosting resilience to sea-level rise on state-owned aquatic lands by working with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe as a close partner and collaborator in developing the Elwha Kelp and Eelgrass Priority Area Action Plan, and collaborating with the Tulalip Tribes, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, the Nisqually Indian Tribe, and other organizations.
- Partnered with the Quinault Indian Nation on the Upper Quinault River, Gilbertson jYlas Reach Project that was completed in July 2025. Encompassing nearly 6,000 acres of the Upper Quinault River valley, the project included installation of ~162 engineered log jam structures, continued treatment of invasive species, and planting of native species.

Staff contact

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Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Summary

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) engages Tribes to achieve mutual goals that support public recreational and educational experiences, as well as protect cultural and historic sites and natural habitats. With population growth and development, land designated for protection is becoming scarcer. As a result, parks have become more valuable for protection and interpretation of these resources. Indigenous Knowledge held by Tribes will assist State Parks in caring for the state's most treasured lands, waters and historic places. State Parks has committed to honoring the responsibility of government-to-government relationships by identifying them as an agency priority since 2022. The agency expanded the Tribal Liaison role to a full-time Tribal Relations Director in 2022, established a two-person Office of Tribal Relations Office in 2023, and added Tribal Relations to its commission's legislative subcommittee in 2026.

Highlights

Institutionalizing Centennial Accord and Millenium Agreement

- Relocated the Office of Tribal Relations within the Agency Director's office as part of the External and Governmental Relations team to better position the agency for developing and implementing government-to-government policy and processes.
- Hired a Director of Tribal Relations, who will serve as a member of the Executive Leadership Team and provide executive-level direction for consultation and relations with Tribes.
- Received input from 27 Tribes on which parks they want to consult on for cultural resources as part of developing implementation procedures.
- Improved transparency with Tribes by updating our procedures for notifying Tribes when a public records request includes Tribal information.

Fostering Meaningful Relationships

- Agency Director met in person with elected Tribal leadership from four Tribes to strengthen relationships and identify goals that meet the needs of all visitors to our parks.
- Identified and fostered opportunities to support Tribal artists in the development of Nisqually State Park, a new park in the state, that includes Nisqually design elements and Lushootseed language.
- Continued to work with Tribes hosting annual Canoe Journey stopover landings in parks, including educating the public about how to appropriately observe. Also increased the agency's understanding of Tribes' political and legal status as governments.
- Worked to inspire understanding and respect for Tribal concerns over a green energy project by partnering with a Tribe to host a screening of "These Sacred Hills" with a panel speaker session and cultural sharing.
- Collaborated with a Tribe to equally represent the Tribe's history in new interpretive panels adjacent to a state monument.
- Educated future leaders about Tribal history, culture, Treaty Rights and Tribal governments by supporting the Washington Trails Association's Emerging Leadership Program with eight hours of Tribal training.
- Worked with a federal agency, and the Tribes they consult with, to install new interpretive panels at a highly significant cultural site.

Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into Agency Work

- Participated in the State-Tribal Recreation Impact Initiative, including co-leading the technical workgroup and leading one of two pilots of the methodology that will recognize and incorporate Indigenous Knowledge. This has contributed to partnership and progress between agencies on collaborative land management and improved relationships with Tribal partners.
- Piloted new Tribal Relations section for park management plans (guiding stewardship, development, and future uses of the parks) and completed two plans with input from Tribes.
- Engaged Tribal technical staff early in working to address six fish passage barriers, as well as other projects anticipated to improve fish habitat.
- Coordinated over 190 cultural resource reviews with Tribal technical staff; provided inadvertent discovery training to new agency staff; completed boundary verification for more than 1,300 archaeological sites; and continued work with federal landowners and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and its database to reconcile discrepancies and ensure accurate boundaries are reflected.
- Issued 14 State Environmental Protection Act Determinations of Non-Significance with no concerns from Tribes requiring the agency to consider a project change.
- Increased our understanding of impacts on Tribes when implementing the Scenic Bikeways program through meetings with Tribal technical staff and with Tribal representation on the program's advisory board.

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Washington State Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)

Summary

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), established under RCW 28A.410.200, is a Washington state agency composed of two governing boards and professional staff. Appointed by the governor, its board members — primarily practicing educators — set policy for educator preparation, certification, and professional standards, while the Paraeducator Board oversees standards for paraeducator training and career advancement. PESB Board and staff also work to strengthen the educator workforce by reducing barriers to entry, addressing shortages, and advising the governor, Legislature, and Superintendent of Public Instruction on educator quality and retention.

As PESB strengthens its government-to-government relationships with Tribal nations, the agency is committed to moving beyond transactional engagement toward sustained partnership, meaningful consultation, and shared responsibility. In alignment with RCW 43.376.020 and the Centennial Accord, PESB is building staff and board capacity through government-to-government and Tribal consultation training with the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs and the Office of Native Education. PESB is also participating in Tribal leadership forums to strengthen to support shared educational priorities. The Tribal liaison serves as a key point of connection to support consistent communication, authentic consultation, and respectful collaboration that honors Tribal sovereignty, Treaty Rights, and priorities of each Tribe.

Highlights

- **Establish meaningful Tribal consultation** by developing and implementing a formal Tribal Consultation Policy that provides a consistent framework for government-to-government engagement, early communication, ongoing listening and relationship-building, and shared decision-making with Tribal nations.
- **Build organizational capacity** through ongoing staff and board training; reviewing PESB policies, curriculum, data practices, and consultation processes to better align with Tribal priorities; and expanding sustainable partnerships, funding opportunities, and Native educator workforce pathways in collaboration with Tribal consultation.
- **Advance Tribal educator pathways and workforce equity** by partnering with Tribes to reinforce educator pathways; expand recruitment and retention of Native educators; support First Peoples' Language, Culture, and Oral Traditions educators; and address compensation and professional recognition so Tribal language and educators have equitable opportunities alongside educators in other endorsed fields.
- **Provide funding to support Puyallup Tribe** to strengthen educator preparation, Native educator workforce, recruiting Washington Teacher (RWT) pathways, FPLOCT certification, language revitalization, and culturally grounded curriculum while informing future PESB policy.
- **Developing future partnerships for educator pathway initiatives** with Tribes to support Native educator preparation, Teacher Academies, language revitalization, and workforce development.

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Puget Sound Partnership

Summary

The Partnership's mission is to accelerate the collective effort to restore and protect Puget Sound. Working with our partners, we generate the Puget Sound Action Agenda, which charts the courses to recovery. We manage and report on shared measurements of recovery. We identify and guide priority science through the Science Work Plan. We support our partners through mobilizing funding, removing barriers to recovery work, and educating key decision-makers. We are the regional salmon recovery organization and create the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan, invest in salmon recovery projects, support partner habitat restoration initiatives, and track the efforts to restore salmon populations in Puget Sound.

Early and ongoing collaboration with Tribal nations and consortia and commitment to government-to-government relationships are critical and central to our agency operations.

Highlights

Tribal officials hold seats on our boards established in statute:

- Leadership Council (Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Skokomish Indian Tribe)
- Ecosystem Coordination Board (Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Lummi Nation, Nisqually Indian Tribe)
- Science Panel (Skagit River Systems Cooperative and Northwest Indian College)

Tribes hold multiple seats on our two advisory boards:

- Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (Note: Each federally recognized Tribe within Puget Sound may appoint a representative and an alternate)
- Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program Steering Committee.
    - The Partnership and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) co-facilitate the Partnership Tribal Co-management Council (PTCC). PTCC promotes ongoing state-Tribal government-to-government communications, coordination, priority setting, and information sharing.
    - The Partnership provides match for Tribal implementation and capacity grants through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Puget Sound Geographic Program.
    - The Partnership and NWIFC co-host Puget Sound Day on the Hill in Washington D.C., and Puget Sound Day on the Sound locally, to raise awareness about the need for key policy changes and sustained investment in Puget Sound restoration and salmon recovery.
    - The Partnership provided sponsorship to three Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians conventions, and the NWIFC Nutrient Management Information Exchange.
    - The Partnership has a 100% completion rate of staff attendance of GOIA's government-to-government training. This training is also offered to our boards and local partners.
    - The Partnership has a Tribal Relations webpage with policies, maps, and other resources.

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Recreation and Conservation Office

Summary

RCO manages grant programs, councils and boards, and policy offices that help to recover salmon and orca, create places for outdoor recreation, and protect wildlife habitat and working lands.

Highlights

Grants

For fiscal years 2025–26, RCO awarded more than $35 million in grants to 21 Tribes for 70 projects to restore and protect salmon habitat, develop athletic and boating facilities, and create water access sites. Funding came from 17 salmon-related and five recreation-related grant programs.

Since 1972, when the agency first funded a Tribal project, RCO has administered 886 grants to 31 Tribes. Totaling more than $378 million, these projects have helped Tribes with recreation facilities, salmon habitat restoration, fish hatchery improvements, and outdoor education.

Projects

The Nisqually Indian Tribe used a $3 million Community Forests Program grant to buy 1,381 acres of commercial forest and critical salmon habitat to expand the 4,120-acre Nisqually Community Forest. The land contains part of Busy Wild Creek, which is one of the watershed's highest freshwater priorities for protection and restoration in both the Nisqually Chinook salmon and steelhead recovery plans. The Tribe plans to restore old-growth forest characteristics while supporting forestry jobs. The purchase also will enable more education and research programs and public access.

Forterra Northwest and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation will use a Salmon Recovery Grant to buy about 143 acres of environmentally and culturally significant land in the Yakama Nation's Treaty territory. The land, known as Frog's Home, encompasses 105 riparian acres and 38 wetland acres along nearly a half mile of the Yakima River. The land has channels that provide habitat for Chinook and coho salmon, as well as Endangered Species Act-listed steelhead and bull trout. Acquisition of the land will allow the Yakama Nation to eliminate grazing and improve habitat buffers and water quality and quantity to benefit salmon recovery.

The Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians' Trafton Floodplain Restoration project will restore 230 acres of floodplain along more than two miles of the North Fork Stillaguamish, including creation of a mile of side channel habitat and installation of more than 40 logjams. The project is on land owned by the Tribe and Snohomish County and was purchased with RCO grants. This project implements actions called for in the Stillaguamish Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan and improves habitat used by Endangered Species Act-listed Chinook salmon for spawning, rearing, and migrating.

The Tulalip Tribes completed two Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board projects in Williams Creek, a tributary to the Pilchuck River in Snohomish County. The Tribes coordinated these culvert removal and replacement projects with projects led by Snohomish County to open fish access to more than 1.3 miles of habitat.

The Quileute Tribe used a Salmon Recovery Grant to restore the Hermison wetland this year. The Tribe placed six beaver-dam-like structures and replanted about three acres of former wetland to increase habitat for Chinook and coho salmon and steelhead and resident trout.

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)

GSRO regularly collaborates with Tribes and Tribal organizations for salmon and orca recovery. For example, GSRO worked with them to identify priorities for the 2025–27 biennial and 2026 supplemental salmon work plans for the Governor's Office, 2026 State of Salmon in Watersheds report to the Legislature, and intergovernmental work group activities that guide Southern Resident orca recovery. GSRO also coordinated with Tribes on federal issues for salmon and orca recovery, watershed-scale lead entity recovery planning and monitoring, and the riparian roundtable initiative. GSRO continued efforts with the Spokane Tribe of Indians and the Upper Columbia United Tribes to support establishment and long-term funding for the Spokane lead entity and reintroduction of salmon above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams.

Washington Invasive Species Council

The council collaborated with multiple Tribes in an ongoing project to protect the sagebrush sea biome in Washington from noxious weeds, resulting in installation of boot brush stations at recreation sites in eastern and central Washington. The stations allow users to clean their footwear and receive educational messaging on invasive species and their impacts. Participating Tribes were able to customize their stations and install them at high-use recreation sites on their lands.

Cultural Resource Consultation

Executive Order 21-02 directs RCO to consult Tribes on potential harm to important archeological and historic resources from ground-disturbing projects. In the past year, RCO consulted on hundreds of projects with all 29 federally recognized Tribes in Washington and five out-of-state Tribes. The work helped protect many archeological and historic resources.

This year, RCO trained grant recipients and RCO staff about the importance of cultural resources. RCO also surveyed Tribal partners to better understand their needs in the consultation process, and plans to survey grant recipients, cultural resources consultants, and RCO staff to better understand where more education is needed. RCO is drafting its first cultural resources manual to document its policies and has identified the need to assess its cultural resources review and consultation process for improvements.

Additional RCO Initiatives

Tribes identified riparian protection and restoration as critical to salmon recovery. RCO sought additional Tribal input when reviewing its Riparian Grant Program and learned there was consistent support among Tribes for more local autonomy for riparian projects, funding certainty, and more flexibility to meet unique riparian challenges.

RCO continues to participate in the State-Tribal Impacts Initiative, a group of Tribal and state agency staff working to address the impacts of recreation on cultural and natural resources and Tribal Treaty Rights.

Additionally, a goal of the Outdoor Learning Grants program managed by RCO is to infuse traditional ecological knowledge and the John McCoy (lulilaš) "Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State" curriculum into projects, which led to many projects partnering with Tribes.

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Department of Revenue

Summary

The Department of Revenue (Revenue) is the state of Washington's primary tax administration agency, overseeing more than 60 different types of taxes.

Revenue remains committed to fostering our government-to-government relationships with the Tribes by dedicating staff and resources to work with the Tribes, Tribal citizens, Tribal businesses, and others doing business in Indian Country.

Acting Director John Ryser actively engages in government-to-government meetings with Tribes. The Tribal Tax Advisory Group is active, and meetings are co-led by the Director and Tribal co-chairs W. Ron Allen, Tribal Council Chairman for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and Josh Gabel, Treasurer for the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe.

Highlights

- Began Consultation with Tribes regarding legislative changes to the taxation of certain service activities and incorporating an understanding of Indigenous Knowledge. This included several in-person meetings with Tribal leaders to identify and understand any Tribal concerns prior to rulemaking, as required by Executive Order 25-10.
- Educated Tribes, Tribal members, and businesses regarding Tribal tax exemptions. Visited multiple retailers to provide education on point-of-sale exemptions.
- Provided advice to numerous county assessors regarding Tribal Housing Authority exemptions and personal property owned by Tribes and Tribal members. Received and processed exemption applications from nine Tribes for 96 parcels of land.
- Engaged in Consultation with multiple Tribes on the development of findings and policy recommendations for inclusion in the Data Center Workgroup's report, as required by Executive Order 25-05. Met in person with Tribal leaders to discuss the impact of data centers on Tribes, their members, and their cultural and historical resources.
- Worked with several Tribes to update our tax rate lookup tool with their respective reservation boundaries and trust properties. As a result, businesses should know that purchases by Tribes and Tribal members delivered to these properties are tax exempt.
- Completed compacting with one additional Tribe for a retail tax compact.
- Held Tribal relations training for agency leadership team and management consistent with Executive Order 25-10.

Staff contact

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Office of the Secretary of State

Summary

The Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS) is dedicated to ensuring that all federally recognized Tribes, Tribal communities, and Tribal organizations in Washington state have equitable access to resources, representation, and opportunities to shape civic life.

Highlights

Address Confidentiality Program: The Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) serves Tribal survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking. Survivors are issued a substitute address to use instead of their residential address in the public record. ACP protects two typical public records: voting and marriage. ACP currently partners with advocates within the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, Alternative to Violence of the Palouse, and Mother Nation. By partnering Tribes and Tribal organizations, survivors work with trusted Tribal staff to gain access to ACP services.

Civic Engagement Program: In February 2026, the Civic Engagement Program (CEP) hired Tribal Engagement Specialist and Tribal Liaison Leslie Burnett Locke, with the goal of developing and implementing civic engagement programs to increase civic knowledge, trust, and participation among all Tribal communities within Washington state. Since then, CEP has attended two Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Conferences to discuss barriers to voting on Tribal lands and developed OSOS's Government-to-Government Tribal Consent and Consultation Policy with input from Tribal leaders.

The Washington State Legislature recently passed SB 6035, which ensures voting access for Native American voters by requiring county auditors to schedule a meeting with any federally recognized Tribes located in whole, or in part, of their county by August 1, 2027, to discuss upcoming elections and/or the establishment and operation of ballot drop boxes and voting centers on Tribal lands. The legislation also requires that the Secretary of State meet with all federally recognized Tribes in the state each biennium, to discuss and address barriers to voting.

Corporations, Charities, and Nonprofit Division: The Corporations, Charities, and Nonprofit Division entered into a contract for education and engagement of Native-led nonprofits and charities in Washington. The contractor is Native Action Network, focusing on Native-led organizations to provide education, training, networking, and support to the organization, their leaders, and members.

Elections Division (Elections): Elections' Voter Information Services team has staffed outreach events, including school presentations on the Yakama Nation Reservation, tabling at the celebration of Billy Frank Jr. with the Nisqually Indian Tribe, and working with the TRIO Association youth program and the Inatai Foundation. Elections are also increasing the number of online trainings for people wanting to do voter registration work, with an emphasis on helping voters living on Tribal lands.

Using feedback from a statewide survey, Elections updated their educational materials to include more inclusive and accessible information for all voters, including Tribal members. These updates include a new brochure on Voting with Disabilities, updates to the Voters' Pamphlet, updating materials for plain language readability, and updating Elections' website to be more accessible for all Washingtonians.

Elections has been tracking various federal attacks on vote by mail and changes to the United States Postal Service postmarking rules to ensure that voters living on Tribal lands are still able to vote by mail. This proposed USPS rule would give the federal government control over who could vote by mail, which is a blatant overreach of their power. Elections will communicate any future changes and encourages voters to vote early and use a ballot drop box.

Washington State Archives: The Washington State Archives (WSA) digitizes and makes available thousands of documents and photographs relating to Tribal communities. WSA serves on the Billy Frank Jr. National Statuary Hall Selection Committee. In this role, WSA is documenting the work of the State Arts Commission and artist Haiying Wu, as they work to complete two nine-foot-tall bronze statues of Billy Frank Jr. These statues are scheduled to be installed in the National Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C., in fall 2026, and in Olympia, Washington, in early 2027. Over the past year, with support from the ALL Foundation, WSA has also provided schools and local libraries with free copies of Legacy Washington publications. Two recent titles, *Lightning Boldt* and *Confluence: The Boldt Decision at 50*, commemorate the 50th anniversary of the landmark 1974 Boldt Decision.

Washington State Libraries: In 2025, the Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded 13 Tribes the Native American Library Services Basic Grants (up to $10,000). Those Tribes included: Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Lummi Nation, Makah Tribe, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Samish Indian Nation, Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, and Swinomish Indian Tribal Community.

The library awarded Blackfeet Nation author K.A. Cobell with the 2025 Washington State Book Award for Young Adult Literature for Cobell's thriller, *Looking for Smoke.* In April 2026, the Washington State Library hosted its second annual Tribal Library Summit in Yakima to bring together all library staff for a day of connection, collaboration, and learning. PBS Books and the Library of Congress featured Washington authors on their Reading Road Trip program, including Coast Salish author Sasha taqʷšəblu LaPointe and her memoir, *Red Paint*. Former Washington State Poet Laureate, Lhaq'temish (Lummi) Nation author Rena Priest will represent Washington state at the 2026 National Book Festival with her collection of poems and essays in, *Positively Uncivilized*.

Washington Talking Book & Braille Library: The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) provides comprehensive statewide library services at the library and by mail for Washington Tribal residents who can't read standard print material due to blindness, low vision, Deafblindness, physical disability (cannot hold a book or turn pages), or a reading disability. Services include books and magazines in audio or braille, sent for free by mail or downloaded from our website or mobile app for reading convenience. In 2026, WTBBL produced 279 new braille books and 195 new audiobooks with a Northwest focus to add to the national collection, making more materials in accessible formats available to people with print disabilities. WTBBL also provides readers' advisory, training and instruction, and youth services. Programming includes introduction to braille and low vision workshops, summer reading, early literacy, accessible gaming lab, and weekly multisensory story times. Visit the WTBBL page to learn more.

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Department of Social and Health Services

Summary

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has about 18,000 FTEs serving approximately two million clients annually. DSHS services include aging and long-term care, behavioral health and habilitation, support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, vocational rehabilitation, Medicaid pathways based on age and disability, and other public benefits such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and administering the state's child support program. We work with Tribes in partnership, government-to-government, to deliver DSHS services.

DSHS remains focused on people power, customer experience, and results-driven services. We work to reduce barriers to service access, create equity, belonging and justice for our employees and clients, and ensure a stable and supported workforce. DSHS is committed to carrying out our work and implementing new ideas as one agency, with one voice. The highlights that follow reflect our agency's commitment to partner with people to access support, care, and resources.

Highlights

- The Washington Economic Justice Alliance is a collaboration between experts with lived experience, state and Tribal governments, community organizations, and legislators to implement the state's 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty. The Alliance's mission is to ensure every Washingtonian can meet their basic needs, fully contribute their talents, and pass well-being on to future generations.
    - Implementation of the 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty with Alliance partners continues, taking more than 450 actions to reduce poverty in the state since the plan was submitted in 2021. As the Alliance marks the midpoint of the 10-Year Plan, it is conducting a refresh of the plan and welcomes continued Tribal partnership. The Alliance has two voting positions for Tribes, and one position is filled.
    - As the Alliance has evolved, its work increasingly lives at the intersection of economic, health, and environmental well-being. We recently received two Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grants to support a statewide approach to building an economy in Washington state that prioritizes well-being for people and the environments we depend on. In the fall, we will announce a community-led initiative and RFP for communities throughout the state to participate in this exciting work.
- Several workgroups including Tribal representation formed under the governor and Tribal Leaders Social Services Council in partnership with the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council; the Washington Tribal Opioid/Fentanyl Task Force and the American Indian Health Commission to address concerns brought forth from the Centennial Accord; Tribal Opioid/Fentanyl Awareness Summits like the Tribal Opioid/Fentanyl Education Campaign; and Tribal Housing and Wraparound Services. The workgroups continue to meet and present recommendations to the Washington Tribal Opioid/Fentanyl Task Force and the GTLSSC Social Services Council Subcommittee.
- The Tribal General Welfare Workgroup formed in January 2026 under the governor and Tribal Leaders Social Services Council framework to address concerns brought forth from Tribes related to the counting of Tribal General Welfare as unearned income for various state-administered social and health service programs. The workgroup continues to meet to explore, discuss and identify issues Tribes are seeing in their communities.

- DSHS Secretary Angela Ramirez came to the agency in September 2025 and continues to meet individually with Tribes across the state to hear about issues they are facing in their communities, establish relationships, and see how DSHS can assist.

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Behavioral Health and Habilitation Administration

Summary

The DSHS Behavioral Health and Habilitation Administration (BHHA) offers care for people who receive behavioral health services in state-operated facilities. These facilities provide round-the-clock care, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

BHHA facilities include inpatient behavioral health care for adults in psychiatric hospitals, behavioral health and treatment centers, and centers for civilly committed sex offenders. Additionally, BHHA operates a psychiatric hospital for youth with behavioral health needs. BHHA manages the state's adult forensic mental health care programs, providing competency evaluation and restoration services.

Highlights

- A workgroup began meeting monthly in January 2026 to develop the BHHA 7.01 Plan. This plan includes how BHHA will implement the governor's Executive Order 25-10, the Centennial Accord, and DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01. The BHHA 7.01 Plan is focused on government-to-government relationships, culturally attuned services for patients and residents, training for BHHA staff, and policy development. BHHA has provided regular updates on the 7.01 Plan development at DSHS Indian Policy Advisory Committee subcommittee meetings and American Indian Health Commission meetings. To finish developing the plan, BHHA will request/offer Tribal consultation and then begin implementing the final plan.
- Phase Four of the Trueblood settlement is ongoing. DSHS, in partnership with the Health Care Authority, provided training to Trueblood service providers on how to work with Tribes and Tribal people to meet settlement requirements.
- Construction continues on the new forensic hospital at the Western State Hospital campus and is expected to complete in 2028. The hospital will serve as a Forensic Center of Excellence, focusing on providing state-of-the-art care for patients in an environment that supports safety and delivers proven practices.

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Developmental Disabilities Administration

Summary

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families are valued, and the DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) strives to help them live and thrive in their chosen communities with the supports they choose. As of March 2026, DDA had 608 clients across the state with self-identified affiliation to a federally recognized Tribe in Washington, up from 551 in 2025.

Highlights

- Launched a 10-year strategic plan project to guide the future of services for children and adults with developmental disabilities, their families, and caregivers in Washington state. This work will address the broader service and support needs people have. Tribes will be invited to participate in the creation of this plan.
- Continued to manage the Dan Thompson Developmental Disabilities Community Services Account. DDA is committed to providing technical assistance for Tribes and Tribal organizations to apply for the grants. Additional funds from the supplemental budget will allow for additional awards.
- Began developing a plan to phase out of the Community Protection Waiver, which was repealed during the 2026 legislative session. As of March 2026, DDA had eight clients affiliated with Tribes in Washington who were receiving these therapeutic residential services. They will be transitioned to other supported services.
- Hired additional staff to authorize services under the new Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) program for DDA clients. These benefits can include rent assistance / temporary housing, nutrition support, home safety/accessibility modifications, and caregiver respite. These benefits are in addition to the HRSN funds that were earmarked for Tribes by the Health Care Authority.
- Invited Tribes to share input during the formal public comment period on mitigating the effects of the closure of Rainier School at a future date, any potential impacts of the sale, and transfer or alternative uses of the property in Buckley. Senate Bill 5393 directed DSHS to stop new admissions at Rainier School by July 1, 2027.
- Partnered with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to update the state's Youth Transition Plan. The plan focuses on supports that students with disabilities might need as they move from school into adult life, including employment, education or training after high school, independent living, and community participation. Tribes were invited to share input on the draft legislative report about the plan.
- Continued to partner with the Washington State Department of Commerce to deploy $44 million in funding from the state's Housing Trust Fund, specifically designated for housing people with developmental disabilities. DDA is committed to providing technical assistance for Tribes and Tribal organizations to apply for future funding by the program.
- Hosted a virtual Community Summit that brought together people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and people who support them. This year's Community Summit had 52 registrants identified as American Indian or Alaska Native.
- Collaborated with the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Tribal partners to expand Home and Community-Based Services waiver programs to dependent children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Summary

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) helps people living with disabilities to participate fully in their communities and become employed. DVR continues its cooperative working relationships and service delivery commitments with all federally recognized Tribes in Washington — including those that do not operate federally funded Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) programs — and with Urban Indian Organizations. DVR actively maintains a strong partnership at the state and local levels with all TVR programs in Washington to ensure American Indians and Alaska Natives with disabilities receive the services they need to ensure their independence and inclusion in the workforce.

Highlights

- Every three years, DVR conducts a federally required comprehensive statewide needs assessment and joined with the Department of Services for the Blind to do so this year. Tribal engagement included roundtables and consultation. The goal of the needs assessment is to understand what is going well, what needs to be improved, and how DVR is engaging with non-Tribal and Tribal participants. DVR is developing an ongoing action plan from the feedback received at the consultation.

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Economic Services Administration

Summary

The Economic Services Administration (ESA) partners with all 29 federally recognized Tribes and seven Urban Indian Organizations across Washington. Through strong government-to-government relationships, ESA supports Tribal Self Determination by collaborating on services that impact the everyday lives of Native individuals and families, such as food, cash, medical care, child support, and employment programs.

The Community Services Division (CSD) and the Division of Child Support (DCS) are housed within ESA. They maintain 12 Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and eight Tribal Child Support intergovernmental agreements. ESA employees also participate in ongoing joint planning and policy development with Tribes under DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01. Those efforts helped improve services in Tribal communities and child support collections last year by over $600 million.

Highlights

- ESA has struggled to receive federal guidance from the USDA Food and Nutrition Administration to clarify how Tribal General Welfare payments should be considered for food assistance eligibility. CSD provided technical assistance, shared information, and worked to better understand program impacts and support accurate and consistent eligibility determinations. CSD will continue engaging with Tribes to gather input, improve understanding and support government-to-government dialogue.
- On July 4, 2025, the president signed into law House Resolution 1 (H.R.1). It includes numerous changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). ESA engaged in roundtables and consultation with Tribes to convey information and solicit questions and concerns. Ongoing actions resulting from consultation include the following workgroups:

    - H.R.1 SNAP Changes Tribal Communications Workgroup to support Tribes in communicating with Tribal communities.
    - Tribal SNAP Geographic Waiver Workgroup to explore options for Tribes to request geographic waivers related to SNAP time limits for people designated as Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents.
- CSD finalized an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Suquamish Indian Tribe in July 2025. It establishes the Tribe's new Tribal TANF program with state Maintenance of Effort funding, making this the 12th Tribal TANF program involving 17 federally recognized Tribes. CSD continues engagement with two additional Tribes that are pursuing federal approval to operate Tribal TANF programs.
- CSD continues working to expand the Tribal SNAP Eligibility Determination Project. It supports Tribal Self Determination by enabling participating Tribal TANF programs to determine SNAP eligibility and issue benefits directly. This year, CSD revised Indian Nation agreements, updated training materials, and partnered with the Lummi Nation, Quileute Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, and Spokane Tribe of Indians to develop implementation plans tailored to each participating program.
- CSD engaged Tribes in the continued implementation of Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer, also known as SUN Bucks. Efforts focused on outreach, card distribution options, future data-sharing opportunities, and exploring Tribal participation in the procurement process for a future SUN Bucks contractor.
- CSD supported Basic Food Employment and Training services at the Northwest Indian College (NWIC) on the Lummi Indian Reservation. Through Tribal investment and federal funding, NWIC provides education, workforce training, and supportive services that strengthen economic mobility and meet workforce needs in Tribal communities. During the current program year, NWIC served 39 participants.
- CSD Tribal Relations and the Business and Infrastructure teams provided support to Tribes to help strengthen Tribal program administration by modernizing agreement processes and improving coordination with Tribal governments. Together, teams supported Tribal TANF Intergovernmental Agreements, Operating Agreements, Outstation Agreements, Data-Sharing Agreements, and Tribal SNAP implementation efforts while identifying opportunities to reduce administrative burden.
- The CSD Domestic Violence Program funded victim advocacy, prevention, and community engagement services through partnerships with the Kalispel Tribe of Indians and Lummi Nation.
- In 2024, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement awarded DCS a five-year grant to develop a project to provide employment services to noncustodial parents. Meaningful employment could help parents make more consistent child support payments. The project includes assisting parents with job readiness, interview preparation, employment searches, and locating community resources. Some examples of recent highlights from this project include a parent successfully completing their GED, another parent locating and moving into stable housing, and a parent being hired by a major retailer.

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Finance, Technology, and Analytics Administration

Summary

The Finance, Technology, and Analytics Administration helps manage Tribal-consolidated contracts through Intergovernmental Agreements. This management includes preparing, negotiating, and maintaining the agreements with General Terms and Conditions that are developed specific to DSHS. These agreements are in effect from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2029.

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Home and Community Living Administration

Summary

The Home and Community Living Administration (HCLA) serves all clients who receive home and community-based services through the state's contracted network of providers, such as older adults, Tribes, families, and communities across Washington. The administration is focused on improving access to care, strengthening local partnerships, and supporting people in the places they call home.

Highlights

- Advanced government-to-government priorities by moving forward a request from the 2025 Centennial Accord and sent the U.S. Congress a letter supporting the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.
- Built the future care workforce by offering need-based funding for the 2026 High School Home Care Aide Course, which offers support to Tribes that were interested in offering the course through Tribal schools.
- Improved access to Adult Protective Services training by offering Tribal representatives quarterly open registration for the Adult Protective Services Academy.
- Advanced Tribal Self Determination in elder services through co-stewardship with Tribal Area Agencies on Aging and administered services reflecting local priorities, culture, and community needs.
- Expanded regional collaboration on Home and Community-Based Services by holding a five-state Money Follows the Person Tribal Initiative Summit in October 2025, themed: "Strengthening Our Communities Through Care and Tradition." The summit hosted 20 Tribal nations and 168 registrants to identify ideas to improve services for Tribal communities.
- Improved access to essential in-home support through home-delivered meal programs supporting nutrition, independence, and care at home to rural or homebound Tribal elders.
- Sustained and supported person-centered health coordination through the Health Home Program. This program supports Tribal care coordination wrap-around services that help people manage their own health care needs.
- Increased WA Cares implementation readiness through monthly webinars that kept communities informed and supported coordinated decision-making. A small pilot launched in January 2026 in Lewis, Mason, Spokane, and Thurston counties; applications were accepted through February 2026. Feedback helped shape the May 2026 launch of the application portal. WA Cares also hired a Tribal Policy Specialist to support Tribal representation.
- Helped kinship caregivers find support through the Tribal Kinship Navigator program. This program assists Tribes in connecting families to kinship care services, community resources, and state programs.

- Advanced Tribal-state relationship, reinforcing government-to-government partnerships and supporting coordinated access to local, community-based, state, and Medicaid-related services for Tribes with established Indian Nation Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding.

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Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)

Summary

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) is a 10-member council of education leaders, with a cabinet-level state agency supporting the Council. WSAC's mission is to increase the number of people in Washington who get education or training beyond a high school diploma. WSAC pursues this mission by 1) leading statewide strategic planning to increase educational attainment; 2) managing programs that help people access and pay for college or training; and 3) advocating for the economic, social, and civic benefits of higher education. We aim to close equity gaps for students who are furthest from the state's goal of 70% of adults ages 25 to 44 having a postsecondary credential. In 2024, this rate was 25% for American Indian or Alaska Native people in Washington.

Highlights

- During the 2025 legislative session, WSAC collaborated with the Lummi Nation to request HB 1540. As a result of the bill's passage, Northwest Indian College (NWIC) became eligible to participate in the Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness program. NWIC received a grant of $102,000 in fiscal year 2026 to help students who are facing housing insecurity or who have aged out of foster care access to housing, food, case management, and other resources.
- WSAC's Regional Challenge Grant supports Native American Health Sciences (NAHS) at Washington State University. NAHS develops culturally responsive health sciences pathway programs to help more Native American learners in Central and Eastern Washington pursue health care careers. NAHS coordinates with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and Spokane Tribe of Indians.
- WSAC administers the Native American Apprentice Assistance Program (NAAAP). During fiscal year 2026, NAAAP provided a total of $1,234,000 in flexible block grant funding. Grantees included the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Lummi Nation, Makah Tribe, Nez Perce Tribe, Puyallup Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, and Spokane Tribe of Indians. The funds supported approximately 100 Native American apprentices in paying tuition and other education costs. In addition to convening NAAAP stakeholders and advisors, WSAC staff attended the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Annual Convention, Pacific Northwest TERO Region Spring Conference, and other outreach events to promote the program.
- WSAC administers the American Indian Endowed Scholarship (AIES). AIES provides $500 to $3,000 annually for up to five years of college. Upper-division and graduate-level students are prioritized, with 10–15 students selected each year. Students applying for AIES must demonstrate financial need and have close social and cultural ties to an American Indian community in Washington.

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Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Office of Native Education

Summary

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), through the Office of Native Education division, works in partnership with Tribes, educators, schools, and communities to improve outcomes for Native students across Washington state. This work is grounded in the Centennial Accord, the Millennium Agreement, and state and federal laws that affirm government-to-government relationships with federally recognized Tribes.

During the 2025–26 reporting period, OSPI strengthened its commitment to Tribal partnership by expanding meaningful consultation, supporting Tribal sovereignty in education, and advancing systems that center Native student success. OSPI focused on three major areas: strengthening Native student learning outcomes, building educator capacity through culturally responsive and sovereignty-centered practices, and improving systems and structures that support collaboration with Tribal governments and Tribal schools.

OSPI's work reflects a shared responsibility with Tribes to ensure that Native students have access to high-quality, culturally relevant education. Across programs and in collaboration with the Washington State Native American Education Advisory Committee, the agency continues to center Tribal voice, honor Traditional Knowledge, and build long-term relationships that support student success and community well-being.

Highlights

Advancing Native Student Success

OSPI continued to strengthen statewide efforts to improve educational outcomes for Native students through the Native Student Success Program. This work emphasized relationship-centered engagement, collaboration, and professional learning.

Key accomplishments include:

- Continued development of the Native Student Success Framework, a community-informed resource designed to guide schools, districts, Tribal Education Departments, and partners in advancing Native student success.
- Expanded implementation of Native Literacy Principles and Indicators through professional learning communities, learning huddles, and conference presentations.
- Increased access to regional and statewide training opportunities focused on culturally responsive and Indigenous-centered practices.
- Launched and completed the inaugural Indigenous Educator Nakia Academy cohort, serving more than 40 Indigenous educators across the state. The Academy strengthened leadership, mentoring, coaching, and retention of Indigenous educators.
- Improved collaboration across OSPI programs to align Native student supports with broader school improvement, student services, and educator development initiatives.

This work reflects OSPI's commitment to supporting Native students through approaches rooted in culture, identity, and community connection.

Tribal Consultation and Training

OSPI continued to implement and expand Tribal consultation requirements under state and federal law. These efforts ensure that Tribal governments have meaningful opportunities to shape education policies and programs that impact Native students.

Key accomplishments include:

- Delivered Strengthening Tribal Consultation (STC) trainings through multiple formats, including in-person, hybrid, and online options, to increase access for school districts and partners.
- Supported statewide compliance with SB 5252 (2022), which requires school board directors and district leaders to complete Tribal consultation training.
- Facilitated implementation of HB 1426 (2022), requiring educators and administrators to complete government-to-government relationship training as part of certification and renewal.
- Reached over 1,100 administrators through training and certification efforts during the reporting period.
- Hosted and supported Tribal Leaders and School Directors Convenings in partnership with the Washington State School Directors' Association, creating space for relationship-building and shared problem solving.

OSPI also engaged in statewide and national convenings, including the Washington State Indian Education Association Conference and the National Indian Education Association, to share best practices and support continued learning.

Since Time Immemorial (JMLSTI) Curriculum

OSPI expanded implementation of the John McCoy (lulilaš) Since Time Immemorial curriculum, which ensures that all K-12 students in Washington learn about Tribal history, sovereignty, and contemporary issues.

Key accomplishments include:

- Developed and launched a new regional training model that expands access to JMLSTI professional learning through place-based, tribally partnered cohorts.
- Introduced differentiated learning tracks for elementary, middle school, high school, and a new administrator track to better support varied educator roles.
- Partnered with Tribes, Educational Service Districts, and higher education institutions to co-design and deliver training.
- Hosted two regional trainings (Wenatchee and Spokane), reaching 153 educators, administrators, Tribal staff, and community members.

This approach centers Tribal authority in how curriculum is taught locally and strengthens educator understanding of sovereignty and Tribal perspectives.

State-Tribal Education Compacts (STECs)

OSPI continued to support State-Tribal Education Compacts, which provide a pathway for Tribes to operate schools that reflect their language, culture, and community priorities.

Key accomplishments include:

- Ongoing support and oversight for eight STEC schools across Washington state.
- Provided consultation, technical assistance, and cross-program coordination to support school operations, compliance, and student outcomes.
- Strengthened collaboration across OSPI programs — including Agency Financial Services, Student Transportation, Child Nutrition Services, Special Education, School Facilities, and Assessment Operations — to better meet the unique needs of Tribal schools.
- Supported the Tulalip Tribes' application for a State-Tribal Education Compact, including coordination of internal review and preparation for government-to-government consultation.

These efforts reflect OSPI's commitment to supporting Tribal sovereignty in education and ensuring that Tribal schools have access to the resources and systems needed for success.

Tribal Education Leaders Summit (TELS)

OSPI hosted the 2026 Tribal Education Leaders Summit in partnership with Tribal leaders and education partners. The summit serves as a key government-to-government consultation forum grounded in the Centennial Accord.

Key accomplishments include:

- Convened Tribal leaders, Tribal Education Directors, and OSPI leadership for two days of dialogue and consultation.
- Facilitated Tribal-led sessions focused on priorities such as student outcomes, data sovereignty, language revitalization, and federal policy impacts.
- Conducted direct government-to-government consultation between Tribal leaders and the superintendent, ensuring Tribal priorities inform agency decision-making.
- Prepared formal materials to connect Tribal input to agency action and policy development.

The summit reflects OSPI's commitment to centering Tribal voice as the foundation of education policy.

Food Sovereignty and Child Nutrition

OSPI strengthened efforts to support Tribal food sovereignty and incorporate traditional Indigenous foods into school nutrition programs.

Key accomplishments include:

- Partnered with Tribal representatives and Native-led organizations to deliver trainings on Tribal food sovereignty and Northwest Indigenous foods.
- Highlighted the cultural importance of traditional foods such as salmon, roots, berries, and bison.
- Expanded access to locally sourced Indigenous foods through the Washington Local Foods program.
- Supported Tribal and Tribal-owned vendors, including Muckleshoot Seafood Products.
- Reduced barriers related to cost, transportation, and administration to increase participation by schools.

This work supports both student nutrition and cultural connection through food.

Data and Systems Improvements

OSPI made progress in improving data systems to better serve Tribal schools and reduce administrative burden.

Key accomplishments include:

- Advanced alignment between federal (NASIS) and state (CEDARS) data systems used by STEC schools.
- Developed tools that allow schools to generate reports that meet both federal and state requirements using a single system.
- Reduced the need for duplicate data entry and additional software systems.
- Prepared training and support resources to assist schools in implementing new data processes.

These improvements support more efficient operations and better data-informed decision-making.

Ongoing Challenges and Opportunities

OSPI continues to address challenges that impact service delivery and collaboration with Tribal schools and communities.

These include:

- Variability in needs across Tribal schools, requiring tailored approaches and increased program coordination.
- Staff turnover within both OSPI and partner organizations, which can disrupt relationships and continuity of services.
- Complexity in navigating multiple programs, contacts, and funding streams across the agency.
- Limited shared infrastructure for Tribal schools compared to school districts and charter systems.

OSPI is committed to addressing these challenges through stronger coordination, clearer communication, and continued partnership with Tribes.

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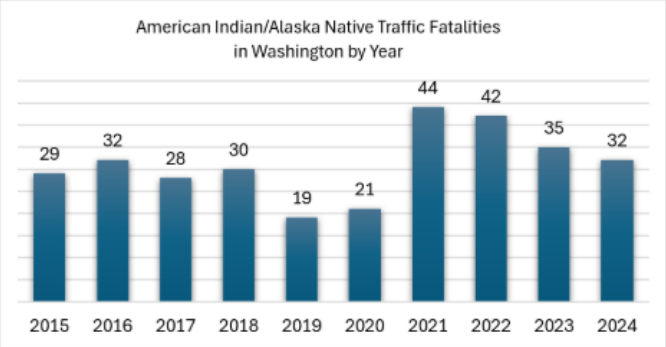
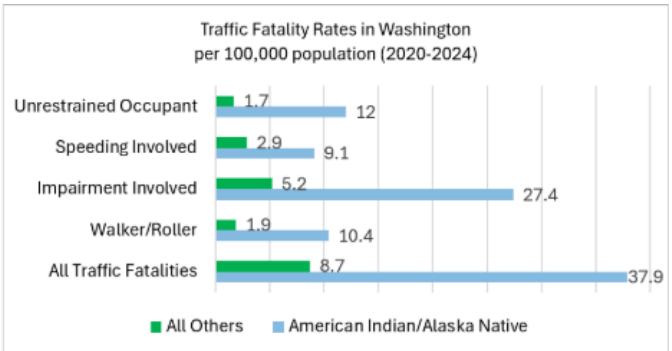
Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC)

Summary

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission partners with Washington's Tribes through government-to-government relationships to support Tribal-led traffic safety efforts and strengthen Tribal capacity. Although American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people represent 2% of Washington's population, they continue to experience disproportionately high traffic fatality rates (more than four times the rate of all other groups), despite declines since the 2021 peak. More than 60% of fatal crashes on Tribal lands involve a non-AI/AN victim. Tribal communities bear a greater share of the response and impact because these roadways serve travelers from across the region. These disparities reinforce the importance of government-to-government partnerships that support Tribal priorities and improve traffic safety in Tribal communities.





Data Source: American Indian/Alaska Native and Tribal Land Dashboard.

Highlights

- WTSC partnered with nine Tribes to provide traffic safety equipment and resources and awarded larger Tribal traffic safety project grants to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and Makah Tribe for locally identified, Tribal-led projects.
- WTSC supported fourteen Tribal Police Departments in the transition to the Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS) electronic reporting system, modernizing crash and citation reporting and improving access to timely traffic safety data.
- WTSC supported Child Passenger Safety Technician training for participants from the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Hoh Tribe, Lummi Nation, Makah Tribe, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Nooksack Indian Tribe, and Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, expanding Tribal capacity for child passenger safety education.
- WTSC strengthened government-to-government partnerships through year-round collaboration with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation Tribal Traffic Safety Committee and engagement with the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, Washington Tribal Transportation Planning Organization, Tribal Injury Prevention Coalition, and the Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference.

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Washington Department of Transportation

Summary

Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) mission is to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective transportation options to improve communities and economic vitality for people and businesses throughout the state. Our vision is to provide travelers with a safe, sustainable, and integrated multimodal transportation system that collaborates with Tribes on project development and administration, safety, planning, workforce development and more to achieve our mission. A key element of this is early engagement with Tribes regarding the effects of WSDOT projects on natural and cultural resources and economic development. Below is a small sample of the accomplishments and day-to-day coordination and collaboration between Tribes and WSDOT.

Highlights

- **The I-5 SR 528 Marine Drive and 88th St. NE Interchanges**: This project is the result of extensive coordination between the Tulalip Tribes and WSDOT to alleviate congestion at these intersections and improve access in and out of the Tulalip Tribes reservation. With funding secured by the Tulalip Tribes, WSDOT provided technical review of plans and developed agreements for operating within WSDOT right of way. The project went to Advertisement in June 2026, and WSDOT will continue to coordinate with the Tribes throughout construction of the project.
- **I-5 East Fork Lewis River Bridge Replacement Project – Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde**: This project will replace the northbound I-5 bridge that spans the East Fork Lewis River adjacent to Paradise Point State Park. During archeological recovery in 2023–24 (per the Memorandum of Agreement), a significant site was uncovered that led to extensive consultation with the consulting parties. Testing of artifacts removed during the recovery effort is ongoing. To allow time for consultation, the Design Build procurement was canceled in June 2026. Site soils that had been moved offsite were relocated to Cowlitz property in June/July 2025, where the Cowlitz will oversee screening work beginning in fall 2026.
- **SR 105 Graveyard Spit Restoration and Resilience Project with Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe**: Construction began in July 2025 and was completed in March 2026. However, additional work to address an area of high erosion is planned for fall 2026. WSDOT has an agreement with the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe for four years of Endangered Species Act bird monitoring via grant funding. The Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe and WSDOT have completed pre- and post-construction monitoring with great success.
- **SR 142 Realignment at Horseshoe Bend Road Project with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation**: This Chronic Environmental Deficiencies (CED) project will address erosion on the northeast quadrant of the Horseshoe Bend Road and SR 142 intersection. The project has a high likelihood of there being culturally significant artifacts within the project limits. Section 106 consultation was initiated in April 2026. The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation will conduct a Cultural Resources Survey in fall 2026.

- **The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and local partners development of the SR 164 Vision and Implementation study**: The study, which extends through the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe reservation, will provide recommendations that address identified safety and multimodal mobility needs along the SR 164 corridor.
    - The Lummi Nation and local jurisdictions will deliver a series of roundabouts and improvements in the I-5/Slater Road area that will manage congestion and improve multimodal facilities. Project improvements will improve traffic flow in the project area and access to the Lummi Nation Reservation. Construction of all project phases is anticipated by 2030.
    - A capital construction grant with the Makah Tribe resulted in successful progress for upgrades to bus shelters throughout the Makah Reservation. Staff responded immediately to concerns about meeting construction specifications, worked through each project site to break down the requirements, and came out with an even stronger working relationship with better access to this essential public transportation service.
    - The Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation applied and received their first public transportation grant award of $152,000 to purchase two electric passenger vans that allow Tribal elders to get to medical appointments, activities, events, and more.
    - WSDOT coordinated with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to complete a fish passage project along US 101. The project not only corrected the fish barrier at Johnson Creek but also incorporated a Wildlife Connectivity Corridor for the local elk herd and all other wildlife in the area. This project received the 2025 Partnership of Excellence in Contract Administration Statewide Design Build Projects.
    - WSDOT collaborated with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe to jointly pursue an Aquatic Organism Passage grant to correct the three most downstream fish passage barriers along Charlie Jones Creek. The SR 164 crossing is on WSDOT's Fish Passage Delivery Plan, developed because of the 2013 injunction between the state of Washington and northwest Washington Tribes.
    - The Sam Snyder fish passage project on SR 305 began construction in October 2023 and concluded in May 2025. This project constructed a 234' steel, single-span bridge over Sam Snyder Creek creating a fish habitat gain of 2.0 miles. The construction site was located, in part, on a highway easement through the Suquamish Reservation. A Tribal fireworks enterprise was immediately adjacent to the project and the project team worked closely with the Suquamish Tribe throughout the duration of construction to minimize impacts to the adjacent business.
    - The Elwha River Bridge replacement project on US 101 began construction in March 2023 and concluded in September 2025. The project installed a bridge approximately 500 feet long and 40 feet tall at the crossing of US 101 and the Elwha River, removed the existing structurally deficient bridge at the same crossing, and installed 12 Engineered Log Jam (ELJ) structures to improve fish habitat downstream of the new bridge crossing. The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe provided subject matter expertise during the design of the ELJs, offered spawning data to help inform acceptable in-water construction schedules, and were otherwise key collaborators throughout the construction process.
- **Heritage Connectivity Trails (RAISE Grant)**:
  South Central Region, in partnership with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, received a federal RAISE Grant to begin Phase 1 planning for the Heritage Connectivity Trails project. The study will evaluate a multi-use path along the US 97 corridor between Toppenish and Union Gap to improve pedestrian safety, expand multimodal transportation options, and strengthen community connectivity.

- **Yakama Nation Tribal Complex Access Improvements:**
  South Central Region continues to coordinate closely with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation as it completes a feasibility study evaluating transportation improvements around the Yakama Nation Tribal Complex, including safer connections to US 97. The region supports efforts to improve safety and mobility and values the collaborative planning process.
- **Ongoing Government-to-Government Coordination**:
  South Central Region maintains regular engagement with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation through quarterly Tribal Traffic Safety Committee meetings and monthly coordination with Yakama Engineering on active transportation projects. The region incorporates Tribal input into project development and collaborates on community outreach events, including the Treaty Day Parade, annual school supply giveaway, and a joint booth at the Central Washington State Fair.
- **US 97 Corridor Safety Improvements**:
  In partnership with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, South Central Region continues implementing safety improvements along the US 97 corridor between Union Gap and Toppenish. Construction of the corridor's third roundabout is scheduled for completion this summer. Design continues on the SR 22 and SR 223 Chambers Road Intersection Safety Improvements project, with construction anticipated to begin in spring 2027.
- **Annual Tribal Consultation**:
  Consistent with the Programmatic Agreement, South Central Region conducts annual coordination meetings with Tribes, including the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, to discuss active and upcoming projects and the status of Tribal consultation efforts.
- **Environmental Stewardship and Emergency Response**:
  Following the December 2025 atmospheric river event, South Central Region stabilized a slope failure along I-90 near North Bend to protect the interstate highway. After the Tulalip Tribes raised concerns about impacts to the adjacent river corridor, the region worked collaboratively with the Tribe to develop a revegetation plan that will restore the disturbed area this fall, demonstrating continued partnership in environmental stewardship and emergency recovery.
- **Children of the Sun Trail NSC:** WSDOT Eastern Region has worked in close collaboration with the Spokane Tribe of Indians to complete the North Spokane Corridor (NSC) Children of the Sun Trail project, which is in the Tribe's traditional homelands. It is a 10.5-mile parallel pedestrian-bike path that incorporates architecture and trail features inspired by the Tribal name, "Children of the Sun," to highlight how ingrained the Tribe's identity is in the region. As work continues to connect the NSC to Interstate 90, WSDOT Eastern Region continues to consult and coordinate with the Tribe.
- **Chewelah Complete Streets:** The Kalispel Tribe of Indians and Spokane Tribe of Indians collaborated in the pre-design phase of WSDOT Eastern Region's Chewelah Complete Streets project. The project is rehabilitating five miles of US 395 and adding bike lanes and a shared use path in the town of Chewelah. During the construction phase of the project, WSDOT utilized the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance to employ members of the local Tribes on site.
- **Keller Ferry Signage Upgrade:** The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation have been part of the process for upgrading signage for when the Keller Ferry, M/V Sanpoil, is out of service. Currently, it can take an additional hour when the ferry is out of service to detour around. Due to lack of cell service in the area and signs being changed manually, the notification process when the ferry is out can take hours. There is a critical need to service this area with time sensitive information to make informed decisions. The Tribes have provided feedback in the early stages of preliminary design as we work toward finding

solutions, with the ultimate outcome being electronic message signs providing real-time information on the ferry's status.

- **US 2 and Lyons Rd. Roundabout:** The Kalispel Tribe of Indians designed and built a roundabout on US 2 in Airway Heights to improve access to Tribal developments and the Airway Heights community. WSDOT Eastern Region Developer Services staff provided key input and coordination assistance to the Tribe throughout the process to construct a roundabout on this critical highway. The Tribal project team and WSDOT staff convened meetings and community outreach activities to inform the community and gather comment on the roundabout facility.

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Office of the State Treasurer

Summary

State Treasurer Mike Pellicciotti is Washington's chief financial officer, who manages the Office of the State Treasurer (OST). OST is the state agency that serves as the bank for Washington state government. OST divisions manage public investments, debt, and cash for the state of Washington while leading policy initiatives affecting the State Treasury and long-term fiscal health.

Highlights

- I**nvestments:** In fiscal year 2026 (FY 26), OST managed approximately $38 billion of state government operating cash and local government surpluses through OST's Local Government Investment Pool and Separately Managed Accounts programs. Both programs are available for Tribal participation.
- **Debt:** As of the end of FY 26, OST managed approximately $25.7 billion of outstanding state debt from legislatively approved bond sales that financed infrastructure, major capital, and transportation projects. While Washington maintained its Aaa credit rating from Moody's Ratings, and AA+ rating from both Fitch Ratings and S&P Global Ratings, the state did receive a "negative outlook" from both Moody's and Fitch.
- **Cash:** In FY 26, OST handled $328.7 billion in annual cash flow for state government, including most state deposits, withdrawals, and transfers.
- **Policy:** Treasurer Pellicciotti leads state and national policy initiatives affecting the State Treasury and the state's long-term fiscal health through legislation and representation on the following state boards and commissions: the State Finance Committee, the Public Deposit Protection Commission, the Economic and Transportation Revenue Forecast Councils, the Washington Economic Development Finance Authority Board, the Washington State Investment Board, the WA529 Committee, the Washington Saves Board, the Washington State Housing Finance Commission, and the ABLE Governing Board.
    - In the 2026 legislative session, Treasurer Pellicciotti worked with the Legislature and the Governor's Office, advocating for budgets with strong financial principles to preserve our state's credit rating, working toward resiliency in the face of economic uncertainty and fluctuating federal funding.
    - Treasurer Pellicciotti partnered with Tribes to introduce legislation mandating financial education be included as a graduation requirement in our schools.
    - The Treasurer continues to advocate for the *Washington Future Fund,* which would invest in future generations and disrupt the cycle of generational poverty. Investing now puts time on our side to help ensure all children born in the state of Washington have a chance to own a home, start a business, or pursue the educational opportunities they hope to achieve.

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Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

Summary

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) regulates investor-owned electric, natural gas, water, telecommunications, and transportation companies that provide essential services throughout Washington, including services that directly affect Tribal communities. The UTC also oversees the safety of pipelines and railroad crossings (including infrastructure safety) located on or near Tribal lands.

The UTC supports the Centennial Accord by fostering government-to-government relationships with Tribal nations through respectful engagement, meaningful consultation, and collaborative problem solving. Over the past year, the agency has expanded efforts to build stronger Tribal relationships to improve engagement in regulatory processes and develop agency-wide practices that recognize Tribal sovereignty, Tribal expertise, and Indigenous Knowledge.

Highlights

- **Strengthened Tribal consultation efforts –** The UTC began developing a commission-wide Tribal consultation framework that establishes expectations for early and meaningful engagement, consistent communication, and incorporation of Tribal input into agency decision-making processes. This work will help create a more consistent approach across commission proceedings.
- **Supported Tribal participation in energy planning –** The UTC continued reviewing Clean Energy Implementation Plan Public Participation Plans submitted by investor-owned utilities to ensure Tribal communities are appropriately included in public participation efforts and that Tribal engagement processes meet statutory expectations.
- **Advanced wildfire planning with Tribal engagement opportunities –** Following passage of legislation requiring investor-owned electric utilities to develop Wildfire Mitigation Plans, the UTC began implementing processes that include opportunities for consultation with Tribal governments and other affected parties during planning review processes.
- **Invested in staff education and relationship building –** UTC staff participated in Tribal relations training offered by GOIA and partnered with other state agencies to host a screening of *These Sacred Hills*, followed by a discussion with leaders from the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation about Tribal sovereignty, cultural resources, and Indigenous perspectives.
- **Planning for the future –** The UTC's Tribal liaison continues leading work to strengthen agency policies and practices related to Tribal consultation, proactive engagement, and the recognition of Indigenous Knowledge as part of the agency's ongoing commitment to Executive Order 25-10 and the Centennial Accord.

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Department of Veterans Affairs

Summary

We are committed to serving all veterans and their families in a culturally appropriate manner. This includes approximately 4,600 American Indians and Alaska Native veterans in the state. This group serves in the United States armed forces at a higher rate than any other ethnic group. They also have access to unique federal veterans' programs to better meet their needs. Our goal is to better serve Native American veterans by supporting program expansions and making sure they can access their earned benefits.

Highlights

- We signed a memorandum of agreement with the Spokane Tribe of Indians to provide training, accreditation, web-based systems access, veterans' disability claims appeals representation, and technical assistance to their Tribal veteran service officer.
- We invited the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation to participate in consultation and coordination on the development of the Washington State Veterans Cemetery, Richland.
- We presented to the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians veterans committee on our ability to collaborate with American Indian Tribes to support their Tribal veteran service officers and the development of the Washington State Veterans Cemetery, Richland.
- We presented to the Joint American Indian Veterans Advisory Council to discuss Tribal veteran service officer memorandums of agreement, veterans' disability and survivors' benefits, long-term care benefits, suicide prevention, and the development of the Washington State Veterans Cemetery, Richland.
- We invited Tribal veterans representatives and Tribal veteran service officers to attend our two-day 2025 Serving Those Who Served veteran service provider conference, with representatives from five Tribes participating in the event. The event focused on improving systems integration and local collaboration between veteran service providers.
- We participated in the 2025 Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation Veterans Day Powwow.
- We participated in the 2025 National Congress of American Indians conference and Native American Veterans Honoring Ceremony
- We participated in the 2025 Nooksack Indian Tribe Community Resource Fair.
- We participated in the 2026 Yakama Warriors Association Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day event.
- We participated in the 2026 Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation Treaty Day Commemoration.
- We participated in the 80th Annual Lummi Stommish Water Festival hosted by Lummi Nation.

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Washington State Patrol

Summary

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is committed to earning the trust of the communities we serve through integrity, accountability, and public service rooted in partnership. Our motto, *Service with Humility*, continues to guide our work across Washington. This includes strengthening relationships with Tribal nations, honoring Tribal sovereignty, and advancing public safety through collaboration with Tribal governments and community partners.

During this reporting period, the WSP Tribal Relations Unit (TRU) expanded its engagement with Tribal nations, Tribal law enforcement agencies, and community partners throughout Washington. TRU continued its work addressing the Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and People (MMIWP) crisis through outreach, training, technical assistance, family support, and coordination with Tribal, federal, state, and local partners. The unit also increased information sharing, strengthened communication pathways between Tribal nations and law enforcement, and supported implementation of statewide initiatives focused on MMIWP prevention, response, and public safety.

Highlights

- Fostered partnerships with more than 20 Tribal nations statewide through government-to-government engagement, outreach, training, and public safety collaboration.
- Increased awareness for statewide use of the Missing Indigenous Persons Alert by providing training, technical assistance, and guidance to Tribal and non-Tribal law enforcement agencies.
- Elevated statewide MMIWP outreach and information sharing through the creation of a law-enforcement-specific distribution network and regular dissemination of Missing Indigenous Women and People information and resources.
- Assisted families, advocates, Tribal partners, and government agencies by connecting them with investigative, victim service, and missing persons resources during active cases.
- Developed and delivered Tribal community, cultural awareness, and MMIWP curriculum for the Washington State Patrol Academy and provided presentations at conferences, task forces, Tribal events, and professional gatherings throughout the state.
- Facilitated the second national gathering of MMIWP coordinators, bringing together Tribal, state, and local advocacy partners to increase collaboration and improve responses to the MMIWP crisis.
- Engaged in statewide and national workgroups addressing MMIWP, victim services, trafficking prevention, and Tribal public safety issues, including service on statewide steering committees and advisory groups.
- Widened Tribal Relations Unit outreach and communication infrastructure through the development of contact databases, law enforcement information-sharing networks, and Missing Indigenous Persons resources that improved coordination among Tribal, local, state, and federal partners.
- Participated in the renewal of the Cooperative Public Safety Agreement between the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation and Washington State Patrol.
- Cultivated ongoing partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs Missing and Murdered Unit, Federal Bureau of Investigation Victim Services Division, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, Office of the Attorney General, Washington Military Department, and Tribal law enforcement agencies.

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Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech)

Summary

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech) supplies quality technology services to state, local, and Tribal governments. WaTech operates the state's core technology services — the central network and the State Data Centers — and provides strategic and comprehensive information security to protect state networks from growing cyber threats. The agency is committed to the principles of the Centennial Accord and making sure our services are accessible and beneficial to Tribes.

In 2025, WaTech sent a letter to Tribes in Washington state to establish a more direct governmental partnership. The sovereign nature of Tribal governments makes them both a unique partner and, at times, a customer of state services. The agency sought Tribal feedback on our Tribal relations approach. After analyzing this feedback and current engagement efforts with Tribal governments, WaTech identified the need for increased communication and understanding to address and support Tribal information technology needs.

WaTech also began outreach to Tribal government partners that utilize the Secure Access Washington tool, slated for replacement, to understand and mitigate any impacts to Tribal communities in receiving digital services. Understanding the experience Tribal partners have when interacting with state government is critical to the success of the new platform.

Highlights

Provide Connectivity to the Intergovernmental Network

WaTech maintains the State Data Center and central network technology network that connects state government to state, local, and Tribal governments to provide and support state services. Local and Tribal governments can securely connect to state systems hosted within the State Data Center and cloud environments through the Intergovernmental Network (IGN). Additionally, WaTech works with Tribes at their request to provide direct access to the IGN so Tribal governments can use technology services maintained by state government agencies. This includes law enforcement systems and emergency services. For example, the IGN allows the Stillaguamish, Suquamish, and Swinomish Tribal police to use the Washington State Patrol (WSP) SECTOR application to write citations. WSP sends those citations to the Justice Information Network Data Exchange, which then sends the electronic ticket message containing the citations back to the Tribes Records Management System.

WaTech continues to provide IGN access to the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Puyallup Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, and Tulalip Tribes. The IGN service is available to any Tribe based on need.

Geospatial program

WaTech's geospatial program supports statewide geographic information system (GIS) services such as land imaging and electronic mapping of the state. The geospatial program leads the Statewide Imagery Consortium, which houses these images. The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission participates as a member of the consortium on behalf of its member Tribes. The consortium pools resources to buy statewide imaging at a significant discount. This imaging is used to support efforts such as wetland evaluations and updates and Tribal forestry management.

In addition, the geospatial program also co-chairs a workgroup for Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) technology use in the state. LIDAR can be used to make high-quality maps and three-dimensional representations of the earth's surface. This is especially useful for hard-to-reach or remote places. The Quinault Indian Nation, Spokane Tribe of Indians, and Tulalip Tribes participate in two meetings each year to provide their input on coordinating statewide activities regarding LIDAR collection, use, and planning. The Northwest Indian Fisheries 127 Commission

also participates in these planning discussions. This program provides consultative and informational services to Tribes on request.

State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act established a dedicated state and local cybersecurity grant program for government entities. While there is a specific Tribal Cybersecurity grant program (TCGP) available under federal law, Tribes are also eligible to apply for funds from the SLCGP.

Working in partnership with the Military Department, WaTech informs Tribal governments about the grant program through planned communications and meetings. In 2023 (fiscal year 2022), SLCGP funding was awarded to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Lummi Nation, Puyallup Tribe, and Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe to assist with increasing cybersecurity resilience and reducing cyber risk. In 2024 (fiscal year 2023) the Puyallup Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe were awarded grants. Total grants awarded in the first two rounds were $766,223 to the five Tribal nations. The third round of funding saw two Tribal governments apply for and receive funding: The Lummi Indian Business Council received $105,000, and the Puyallup Tribe received $106,135 for three projects. Since the 2025 report was published, we have seen previous year projects close and submit for reimbursement from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Puyallup Tribe, and the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe. The fourth and final round of funding is currently underway for 2026 (fiscal year 2025) and the number of Tribal applicants is not yet known.

Cybersecurity Outreach

RCW 43.105.450 empowers the Office of Cybersecurity (OCS) to "serve as a resource for local and municipal governments in Washington in the area of cybersecurity." This includes Tribal entities. OCS is reaching out to municipal governments, including Tribes, to obtain accurate contact information in the event of a cyber event within the local/Tribal entity. This information will allow OCS rapid contact in an emergent cyber issue. Additionally, the information can be used for other outreach activities such as training opportunities, inclusion in Cybersecurity Awareness Month and other collaborative activities.

Equity Analysis Guidelines for Deployment of Generative AI

Guidelines on the deployment of AI was created by WaTech in collaboration with the Washington State Office of Equity, Tribal governments, and other partners pursuant to the governor's Executive Order 24-01. The purpose is to provide guidance that state agencies can use to analyze the impact of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) technology on vulnerable communities, including criteria to evaluate equitable outcomes in deployment and implementation of high-risk use cases. As reliance on technology (e.g., artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies) increases, the state must be prepared to interact with Tribal governments in a manner that promotes understanding of need and cultural considerations in filling those needs while strengthening the relationship between the state and Tribal governments.

Digital Equity and Broadband Equity and Access Deployment (BEAD)

The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program; the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program; and the Digital Equity Act require state and local governments to partner with Tribes to provide resources for establishing and maintaining broadband networks. These initiatives aim to connect Tribal communities to economic, health, education and civic engagement opportunities, while honoring their digital sovereignty.

As the operator the state's core technology services, the agency has engaged in multiple digital equity efforts with state and local governments, Tribal representatives, non-profit agencies, legislative members, and technology industry partners to bridge the digital divide, develop the workforce, increase digital literacy, and make devices more accessible.

A combination of the efforts outlined in this report and a strong partnership with each of the Tribal governments in the state will help coordinate a comprehensive and collaborative approach to achieving digital equity and technological advancement.

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Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

Summary

The Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board advanced the Centennial Accord by strengthening its approach to respectful government-to-government engagement with Tribal Nations. During this reporting period, the Workforce Board worked with the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs and partner agencies to align Tribal engagement with statewide workforce planning, identify opportunities to elevate Tribal workforce priorities, and support consistent consultation practices. These efforts reinforced the Centennial Accord's principles of sovereignty, collaboration, and sustained state-Tribal relationships.

Highlights

- **Strengthened agency coordination.** The Workforce Board met with Tribal liaisons from partner agencies to share priorities, identify shared goals, and reduce duplicative outreach. Participating agencies included the ESD, OSPI, SBCTC, Commerce, DSHS, L&I, WSAC, and GOIA.
- **Aligned workforce planning with Tribal engagement.** The agency sought advice on how to include Tribal input in the state strategic plan for workforce development and began coordinating with partner agencies to connect this work with existing Tribal liaison efforts.
- **Engaged GOIA as a coordination anchor.** Workforce Board staff met with GOIA staff to discuss acknowledgements at public meetings, strategic planning, Tribal consultation guidance, and appropriate approaches for respectful state-Tribal engagement.
- **Supported interagency learning and compliance**. Staff participated in GOIA-led Tribal Consultation Guidelines/Handbook meetings and used the process to inform agency planning, liaison responsibilities, and future consultation practices.
- **Advanced relationship-building with Tribal Nations and Tribal organizations.** Staff attended inter-Tribal listening sessions to listen, learn, and identify workforce-related opportunities.
- **Clarified internal responsibility for Tribal relations**. The agency shared Tribal liaison responsibilities among leadership team staff while identifying the need for a designated liaison structure that supports direct access to agency leadership and consistent engagement with GOIA and Tribal governments.
- **Focused on alignment**. The Workforce Board used partner interviews and liaison conversations to confirm that effective support should amplify existing work, coordinate behind the scenes, respect Tribal sovereignty, and avoid creating duplicative meetings or reporting requirements.

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Your Washington

Summary

Your Washington equips Washington state agencies with tools, performance insights, and collaborative support to improve service delivery. Our work helps agencies operate more effectively, solve shared challenges, and strengthen accountability the public can see and trust. We also support agencies as they improve services and partnerships with Tribal governments and American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN).

Highlights

- In 2026, we provided state employees with practical improvement tools through the annual Customer Experience Conference, communities of practice, training, and cross-agency collaboration. This work helps employees strengthen processes, improve service delivery, and support diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging throughout state government.
- Our work is increasingly centered on customer experience. We are helping agencies better understand the needs of the people they serve, use customer and employee feedback, reduce barriers, and improve key services.
- We are also continuing our work toward a Tribal consultation dashboard designed to simplify transparency and increase accountability among Tribal governments, state agencies, and the public. The dashboard will help make consultation activities and progress easier to understand while supporting stronger government-to-government relationships.

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