



Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention (CDC)  
Atlanta GA 30329-4027

November 10, 2021

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) Federally Recognized Tribes share the goal of establishing clear policies to further the government-to-government relationship between the United States government and federally recognized AI/AN tribes. Effective consultation results in information exchange, mutual understanding, and informed decision-making.

CDC/ATSDR would like to thank all the tribal leaders and tribal partners who provided recommendations to improve the CDC/ATSDR Tribal Consultation Policy to better engage with AI/AN Federally Recognized Tribes. CDC/ATSDR recognizes our unique relationship with AI/AN federally recognized tribes and are committed to fulfilling our critical role in promoting the health and safety of AI/AN people.

CDC/ATSDR hosted a virtual tribal consultation session on August 5, 2021, to collect input from tribal leaders on the CDC/ATSDR Tribal Consultation Policy. CDC/ATSDR has reviewed all testimonies received during the consultation period, July 2–September 7, 2021. CDC/ATSDR received input from 12 tribal nations and 4 tribal partners. The agency summarized tribal leaders' responses to the consultation's guiding questions and provided initial responses to the most frequent recommendations in a summary report titled, "Tribal Consultation on CDC/ATSDR's Tribal Consultation Policy." In this report, CDC/ATSDR categorized recommendations into recurring themes: 1) better coordination with tribes, with the CDC/ATSDR Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC), and across HHS agencies; 2) accountability in reporting and follow-up; 3) use of all relevant channels of communication and standardizing communication with tribes; 4) advanced notice of consultations via "Dear Tribal Leader" letters; 5) increased guidance on consultation procedures; 6) adequate prep time for upcoming tribal consultations; 7) meeting mechanism and increased flexibility in meeting options; 8) increased proactivity in providing technical assistance; 9) prioritization of tribal public health infrastructure and capacity; and 10) tribal funding flexibility and transparency.

For next steps, CDC/ATSDR will work to incorporate the recommendations into the current CDC/ATSDR Tribal Consultation Policy. We will then work with the CDC/ATSDR TAC for review before presenting a revised consultation policy.

If you have questions about the "Tribal Consultation on CDC/ATSDR's Tribal Consultation Policy Report", please email us at [tribalsupport@cdc.gov](mailto:tribalsupport@cdc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "José T. Montero".

José T. Montero, MD, MHCDS  
Director, Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>1</sup> [www.cdc.gov/tribal/consultation-support/tribal-consultation/policy.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tribal/consultation-support/tribal-consultation/policy.html)