

Tribal Testimony Guidance

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Tribal testimony is an opportunity for all federally recognized tribes to provide a formal written or spoken statement to CDC/ATSDR that identifies concerns and communicates needs. Tribal testimony is part of the formal tribal consultation process that occurs at the in-person CDC/ATSDR Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings twice a year. Tribes may deliver testimony to the agency by direct address at these meetings, or they may submit their testimony in writing prior to the meeting date. All testimonies submitted before or during the meeting are used to create the list of issues and recommendations for CDC/ATSDR's formal response. CDC's Office of Tribal Affairs and Strategic Alliances will share the response with tribes online at <http://www.cdc.gov/tribal>.

Testimonies assist the agency by creating awareness of issues concerning tribes and identifying priority areas for agency activities in Indian Country. In the interest of generating robust participation in this opportunity, the agency has developed the guidance below to assist tribes.

Structure of Tribal Consultation Testimony

- **Briefly introduce your tribal testimony.** Please describe the current state of the tribe as relates to public health. This section should not exceed two paragraphs.
- **List the top CDC/ATSDR priorities for your tribe.** Please be specific. For example, if epidemiological assistance is needed, please briefly state the purpose (i.e., Epi-Aid to assist with data distillation from tribal wellness survey). This list can be in a bulleted format. For a list of some key CDC services, see [Examples of Resources Available to State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Health Agencies](#).
- **Describe each issue from your list.** Please provide background information to enhance the agency's understanding of each issue. It is sometimes helpful to separate issues by subject area. Tribes are encouraged to consider the following:
 - o Data/Surveillance
 - o Disease/Health Disparities
 - o Environmental Issues
 - o Funding/Budget
 - o Policy/Legislative
 - o Preparedness/Response
- **Summarize the issues and recommendations:** From the descriptions above, please list the issues and/or recommendations for ways the agency could best address an issue. The list can be in a bulleted format.

Length of Testimony

In general, a tribal testimony, whether written or spoken, should be concise and to the point. However, the exact length will vary based on the tribe's areas of focus and the complexity of the issue. It is not unusual for tribes to address one to three primary issues, in which case the testimony might be only a few minutes in duration or one to two pages in written text. At other times, the testimonial narratives are longer to provide sufficient background on areas of concern.

Importance of Testimony

CDC/ATSDR values the government-to-government relationship and the opportunity to improve an understanding of the unique needs of tribal nations. The greater the participation, the better the consultation process.

More Information

Contact the CDC/CSTLTS [Office of Tribal Affairs and Strategic Alliances](#).

