



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", with a horizontal line underneath.

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)