

Washington State Department of Health

Federal Affairs

Protecting public health through active federal partnership, strategic outreach, and transparent communication.



Federal funding supports approximately 40% of the DOH budget and underpins workforce development, disease prevention, preparedness, immunization, and public health practice across all 39 counties. DOH's Office of Government and Community Affairs (OGCA) coordinates engagement with Congress, federal agencies, and the Governor's Office to protect these investments and ensure Washington's voice is heard in national policy decisions that affect the health of all Washingtonians.

FY27 Federal Priorities

Maintaining Vaccine Access	Sustaining immunization infrastructure, protecting Section 317 and the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, and building community confidence amidst federal vaccine policy uncertainty. Washington's childhood coverage remains below community protection thresholds, making stable federal policy and investment essential.
Sustaining Federal Funding	Advocating for stable, predictable federal appropriations for programs awarded through U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), including these operating divisions: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Monitoring changes to grant terms, conditions, and renewal timelines that could disrupt ongoing operations.
Responding to the Conditions that Drive Health Outcomes	Tracking Medicaid impacts from HR 1, rural critical access hospitals, community health centers, associated hospital/ER capacity, monitoring population health impacts related to delayed/denied care, environmental health resilience and adaptation. Coordinating with the Health Care Authority (HCA) on systems readiness, monitoring workforce capacity. Supporting rural health systems and Tribal health partnerships. Partnering with HCA and partners to implement the Rural Health Transformation Grant.
Strengthening Public Health Data System	Defending public health data infrastructure, advancing interoperability, and honoring Tribal data sovereignty amid ongoing U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) restructuring and federal information technology changes.
Food Security	Ensuring Washington's Women Infant and Children's (WIC) Program is fully funded with continued nutrition education for low-income pregnant and postpartum women and families. Monitoring impacts from reduced Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility through HR1 implementation, coordinating with agencies and communities to monitor food systems strain.

How DOH Engages the Federal Government



- **Federal Appropriations:**

DOH submits an annual appropriations request through the Governor's Federal and Inter-State Affairs Director to members of Washington's congressional delegation, elevating key CDC, ASPR, HRSA, and EPA programs that sustain the state's public health infrastructure .



- **Federal Rulemaking:**

DOH's internal Federal Relations Standing Committee (FRSC) coordinates agency-wide review and response to proposed federal rules, and submits official public comments on behalf of the department when proposed rules affect agency operations or the populations we serve.



- **Congressional Relations:**

OGCA facilitates meetings with delegation offices, leads agency responses to congressional inquiries, produces issue-specific fact sheets and briefing materials, and hosts a monthly meeting with health legislative aides from Washington's congressional delegation offices.



- **Cross-Agency Coordination on Federal Issues:**

OGCA staffs and reports on the Governor's federal sub-cabinet, participates in CDC State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial (STLT) meetings, HHS regional partner meetings, Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) coordination, American Indian Health Commission and Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council meetings.

Partner Resources

DOH publishes federal engagement materials, public comments, grant tracking, and policy updates through the Healthier Washington Collaboration Portal. Partners can access these resources and stay informed about emerging federal developments:

[DOH Federal Engagement Resources](#)

Central hub for federal engagement information, grants dashboard, appropriations updates, and partner resources

[Federal Rulemaking & Public Comments](#)

Review current and past DOH comment letters on proposed federal rules affecting public health in Washington.

For questions, please contact:

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