



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Post Office Box 47890 | Olympia, Washington 98504-7890  
711 Washington Relay Service

November 20, 2024

**Re: Informative – Agricultural Worker Immunization Outreach**

Greetings Honorable Tribal Leaders, Partners, and Professionals,

We are writing today to provide information based on direction from the CDC, that we are prioritizing seasonal flu immunization to protect the health of farmworkers at risk of exposure to avian influenza A(H5N1) virus, or "H5N1 bird flu," in dairy cows, poultry and other animals in the United States.

This communication follows the guidelines of [Chapter 43.376 RCW](#), the [Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989](#), and the [DOH Consultation and Collaboration Procedure](#). While a seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against H5N1 bird flu, it's important that people who may be exposed to infected or potentially infected birds or dairy cows get a seasonal flu vaccine. The flu vaccine can reduce the prevalence of seasonal flu and might reduce the very rare risk of coinfection with an avian virus at the same time.

The Washington State Department of Health is seeking partners to increase flu vaccination access and uptake among agricultural workers on dairy cattle and poultry farms, especially those that may not have regular access to vaccination services, such as H2A Visa agricultural workers. These efforts will keep agricultural communities healthy and safe from flu this season. Technical support and access to flu vaccines is available to interested partners.

If you would like additional information or want to provide feedback directly, please contact Lisa Niels, Tribal Immunization Liaison at [lisa.niels@doh.wa.gov](mailto:lisa.niels@doh.wa.gov) or Candice Wilson, Executive Director, Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations at [candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov](mailto:candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov) or 360-819-7626.

Sincerely,

Michele Roberts, MPH, MCHES  
Assistant Secretary  
Division of Prevention and Community Health

cc: Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH - Secretary of Health – WA-DOH  
Candice Wilson-Quatz'tenaut (Lummi) - Executive Director, OTPHR, WA-DOH  
Lacy Fehrenbach – Chief of Prevention, WA-DOH  
Kristopher Holiday - Chief of Strategic Partnerships – WA-DOH  
Lisa Niels – Tribal Liaison, Office of Immunization - WA-DOH  
Elizabeth Perez - Chief of Public Affairs and Equity - WA-DOH  
Kristin Peterson - Chief of Policy, Planning & Evaluation - WA-DOH  
Jamilia Sherls – Director, Office of Immunization – WA-DOH  
Jessica Todorovich - Chief of Staff - WA-DOH