

LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH - TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP (ESHB 1946)

Information Sheet

[Engrossed Substitute House Bill \(ESHB\) 1946](#) passed during the 2025 legislative session. It amends local board of health (LBOH) composition requirements. It clarifies appointment of Tribal representation to LBOHs. The Washington State Board of Health (Board) has the [authority](#) for adopting rules for appointing non-elected members, including Tribal representatives, to LBOHs. Updated rulemaking will establish deadlines for LBOHs to update their membership when a Tribe or Urban Indian Organization appoints a representative to the local board of health.

Under ESHB 1946, federally recognized Tribes holding reservation or trust lands within a county and Urban Indian organizations recognized by the Indian Health Service and registered as a 501(c)(3) and providing services within a county, will choose their own Tribal representative to serve on LBOHs.

The legislation changes the appointment authority from the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) to Tribes and Urban Indian organizations. This respects and affirms Tribal sovereignty and self-determination. The Tribe or Urban Indian Organization will notify the LBOH of the appointment. Local Boards of Health are required to:

- Add the Tribal representative to its membership.
- Notify AIHC of the appointment.
- Modify their membership within 60 days to balance elected and non-elected members.

This law was effective July 27, 2025. The Board has 12 months from the effective date to complete rulemaking, which may change the 60-day requirement for LBOHs to modify membership.

To learn more about this legislation and the Board's rulemaking, visit [the SBOH rulemaking page](#) or scan the QR code. You can also contact Ashley Bell, Tribal Liaison, at any time via email at ashley.bell@sboh.wa.gov

