

JAY INSLEE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
Office of the Governor

March 27, 2020

Dear Honorable Tribal Leaders:

During times of emergency, it is critical that Washington State maintains open and robust government-to-government communications with its tribal partners.

Earlier this week, I issued a *Stay Home, Stay Healthy* order (Emergency Proclamation 20-25), which generally prohibits Washingtonians from leaving their homes, except in pursuit of certain enumerated essential activities. I intend this letter to clarify that order as it relates to activities on tribal lands.

First, none of my Emergency Proclamation orders apply to conduct on tribal lands. Tribal governments, as sovereign nations, are making their own decisions in response to the current COVID-19 emergency.

Second, constituents have presented several questions to my office regarding individuals who commute to tribal lands or Washington businesses that work on tribal lands. While I have defined essential activities (for purposes of Emergency Proclamation 20-25) in Washington, tribal leaders maintain sovereignty to define essential activity on tribal lands. Accordingly, if tribal governments classify certain activity or business on their lands as “essential,” under Emergency Proclamation 20-25, Washingtonians may leave their homes to pursue those tribally defined essential activities on tribal lands — even if those activities are not considered essential on non-tribal lands.

Thank you for your leadership during this very trying time.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee".

Jay Inslee
Governor