

Questions & Answer Report:

1. What are the Federal guidelines for an indigenous territory to become federally recognized. And is there a way to get unrecognized territories to become recognized?

- A. For more information, please see the Federal Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA) website directly at <https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/ofa>. “The Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA) within the Office of the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior (Department) implements Part 83 of Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations (25 CFR Part 83), Procedures for Federal Acknowledgment of Indian Tribes. The acknowledgment process is the Department’s administrative process by which petitioning groups that meet the criteria are given Federal "acknowledgment" as Indian Tribes and by which they become eligible to receive services provided to members of Indian Tribes.”

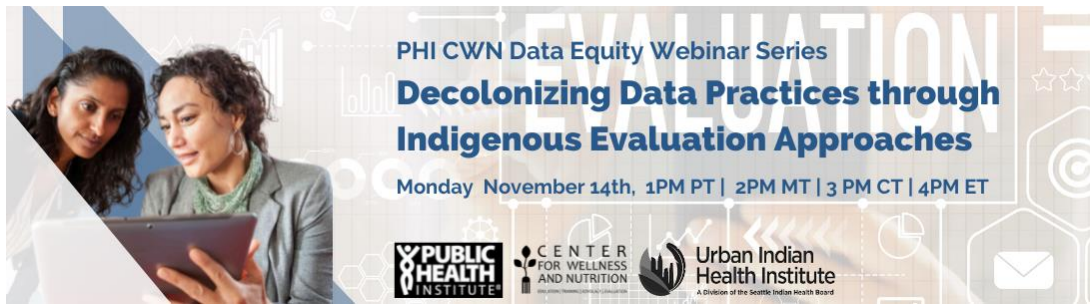
An example of a Tribe that is currently in the process of seeking federal recognition, is the Duwamish Tribe, as I mentioned, is not recognized today, they have been working for recognition for well over a decade. They had to show that there is a community of Duwamish Tribal members and as an enrolled tribal member and must show that there is a cultural element within the community. Gathering documents that show the people of Duwamish are practicing community ways and have traditional food practices and ways. These practices all must be documented and submitted often with a lot of back and forth with the Federal government and surrounding areas and populations that they reside in, because it also can lead to land rights.

2. One thing I have seen as a challenge is when we use more inclusive definitions for categories. We may end up with numerators greater than our denominators. If we were relying on census-based denominators. This especially came up when stratifying back vaccination levels by race ethnicity for cities or others. Small, smaller geographic areas have other folks found ways to account for this?

- A. With COVID data there isn't an option to collapse years, for example, used in other kinds of health indicators and data sets. It is an option for other kinds of data, breaking it down may also mean that they must reaggregate it as well with certain populations. For example, Asian Pacific Islander and Pacific Islander are separating those Indigenous populations. Maybe worth looking at those populations independently. When there is an opportunity or need to further aggregate, there are ways to bring those Indigenous populations together to increase that sample size.

3. What guidelines do States have in terms of determining what data to report on? Can this be changed?

- A. Each state has their own unique guidelines. There has been in recent years more outreach to Urban Indian Health Institute and other Tribal epidemiology centers for improved guidelines. Recognizing there hasn't been enough done for this specific



population and others that reside in the state to make them more visible within the data. Guidelines have typically been “multi-racial” or “other race” categories.

My colleague Adrian Dominguez, on behalf of Urban Indian Health Institute, over years’ work with departments in different states to help with streamlining guidelines, and in particular Washington State. Among other states it has been a very disaggregated sort of process.

The Department of Health collects and reports on to use this disaggregated model so we're starting to break through that a bit here in Washington State. It varies and different between states.

4. **Can Dr. James recommend the best answer choices to use when collecting race when collecting ethnicity. And then for collection of race data, is it a best practice to allow people to check up to 2 boxes, or is being able to check 2 boxes, still insufficient in terms of data collection?**
 - A. Two (2) isn't enough and would have a conversation with American Indian Alaska Native communities and people that have been working on that category and testing different models. I think that all of you on the call should be thinking about how that would look and if you're engaging people in South Carolina that are American Indian or indigenous, recognize that it may not be the same with regards to how the people self-identify and the language they use here in the Northwest. It is a challenging problem, but it's one that can be pursued. It's about time that it was in a robust manner, and we all can play a role in that sharing the best practices in the state that you're coming from, the rural areas that you're coming from, is going to be an important part of that process. And recognizing also that data collection, especially data collection through one manner, such as surveys, is a very blunt tool. Surveys make assumptions and that limits the analysis and the tools we have for statistical significance. But in the end, it's important to start to better adapt to the nation of American Indians, Alaska Natives and Indigenous people, and generations that self-identify in a way that's reflected with them.