



**Honorable Jay Inslee**  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504

**Dr. Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH**  
Secretary of Health  
Washington State Department of Health  
P.O. Box 47890  
Olympia, WA 98504

Contact:

**Ace Robinson, MHL, MPH**  
PCAF, Chief Executive Officer  
Ace@PCAF-WA.org  
(206) 931-3853

**August 7, 2022**

**Dear Governor Inslee and Secretary Shah:**

The undersigned eleven (11) organizations and individual stakeholder are writing to request that Washington State declare the Monkeypox Epidemic a State of Emergency. Pursuant to RCW Section 43.06.220, the State of Emergency will increase the expediency that Washington State healthcare workers, residents and visitors may access Monkeypox vaccine stockpiles; associated medical equipment including personal protective equipment (PPE); and expand the resources available to state and local health departments and their grantees to mitigate Monkeypox. Your support is critical to achieving the goals of the Biden-Harris Administration laid out with the National Public Health Emergency Declaration announced by Secretary Xavier Becerra on August 4, 2022.

In January 2021, President Biden signed an Executive Order (EO 13985) on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government. President Biden has also been fervent supporter for addressing the healthcare needs of LGBTQ+ Americans. The Monkeypox epidemic intersects both of these issues as the virus is primarily not only being identified in gay/bisexual/same gender loving men in addition to transgender/gender nonconforming people but is also being centered in Latinx and Black communities. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the majority of people diagnosed with Monkeypox are BIPOC (Black-Indigenous-People of Color) with 37% identifying as Latinx and 29% as Black compared to 33% identifying as white. Therefore, Blacks and Latinx are the most impacted by scope and scale even though both populations are far underrepresented in Monkeypox vaccine uptake.

We call on the Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities to work with LGBTQ+ focused organizations with a particular attention to BIPOC-centered entities to create a community centered Monkeypox Task Force (MTF). The MTF will advise the Washington State Department of Health on the utilization of federal and state funds to ensure a culturally responsive and timely response to communities most impacted by communicable diseases and those who have been historically excluded from preventative and treatment measures, i.e., QTPOC (Queer-Trans- People of Color), unhoused, individuals in the trade sex industry, and/or people who use substances.

**MISSION:** PCAF, through education and service, prevents HIV infection, assists persons affected by HIV/AIDS, addresses related health problems, and combats associated stigma and discrimination.



In addition to a Governor's State of Emergency proclamation, we are asking for a virtual meeting with Senior WA DOH leadership and Senior Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities members via video teleconference within seven (7) business days. As time is of the essence to avert a growing epidemic, we highly appreciate your sincere time and attention to this matter.

**Sincerely,**

**Ace Robinson**, MHL, MPH | Chief Executive Officer | PCAF (formerly Pierce County AIDS Foundation)

**S. Troy Christensen** | Executive Director | Rainbow Center

**Chace Hunter** | Executive Director | AHAT Homecare

PCAF  
AHAT Homecare  
Federal Way Pride  
Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center  
Lavender Rights Project  
Oasis Youth Center  
POCAAN  
Pride at Work  
Rainbow Center  
Yakima Pride  
Vocal-WA  
Dr. Joanna Stekler, MD, MPH

**cc:**

Senator Patty Murray (Chair, Senate HELP Committee)  
Senator Maria Cantwell  
Congressperson Pramila Jayapal  
Congressperson Derek Kilmer  
Congressperson Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Congressperson Dan Newhouse  
Congressperson Marilyn Strickland  
Mayor Janice Deccio  
Mayor Bruce Harrell  
Mayor Victoria Woodards  
Mayor Nadine Woodward

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