APR 12 2021

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to provide you with guidance on how to request access to the Department of Health and Human Services's (HHS) Protect environment in support of public health activities to respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

HHS Protect is an ecosystem of data sharing platforms that connect more than 200 data sources for analysis and modeling. HHS Protect aggregates data from federal agencies, all states and territories, health care facilities, academia, and the private sector.

HHS and federal partners, in collaboration with the White House Coronavirus Task Force, are working with state, local, tribal, territorial governments, and the private sector to execute a "Whole of America" response to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and protect the health and safety of the American public.

Access to data and analysis to inform public policy decisions is of the utmost importance in responding to COVID-19. Coordinating these activities and data collection efforts will accelerate our work to protect the public and lessen the spread and impact of this pandemic. The Indian Health Service (IHS) supports providing tribes and tribal organizations with access to HHS Protect, and the IHS is committed to working in coordination with HHS to facilitate that access.

There are roughly 2.5 billion data points within HHS Protect. By bringing data together into one ecosystem of platforms, HHS Protect can help federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial leaders make strategic decisions and maximize resources. Specific data sets housed in HHS Protect include:

- Multiple COVID-19 case count sources to ensure comprehensive visibility;
- Hospital capacity, utilization, inventory, and supply data from states and territories;
- Supply chain data from government and industry;
- Diagnostic laboratory testing data;
- Census population and demographic statistics;
- Community-based testing sites;
- State policy actions;
- COVID-19 and flu-like Emergency Department data; and
- Private sector insights and collaborations.

HHS Protect informs policy makers so they can make decisions with as much information and visibility as possible. Hundreds of government professionals have access to HHS Protect as part of the response effort. Response teams have used this data to build models on topical areas, such as resource allocation, increases or decreases in patient visits, and policy implementation.

Data protection is critical. Access to HHS Protect data is based on role, requirements, and affiliation with the response. Similar access controls are applied to protect federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government *non-public* datasets. HHS Protect has implemented robust security controls to protect data within the platform. <u>Please note that access to HHS Protect is ultimately an HHS determination</u>. The IHS cannot guarantee access to HHS Protect will be granted for any particular person/entity, nor can the IHS guarantee that a particular level of access will be provided.

The process for requesting access to HHS Protect is outlined in detail in the Enclosure that follows.

An overview of this process is as follows:

1) Reach out to your IHS Area Sponsor (see Enclosure). They will send you a digital DocuSign packet.

2) Complete and submit the DocuSign packet.

3) Set up a time to complete identity proofing. You will receive an e-mail prompting you to do so.

4) Attend the identity proofing session, with two forms of picture identification.

5) Set up Okta dual-factor authentication. An e-mail with next steps will be provided by your Area Sponsor or designee.

6) Access HHS Protect through the following Web site address <u>https://protect.hhs.gov/</u>. Please ensure that you select HHS-Okta from the drop-down menu.

If you have questions or concerns about this process, please contact Mr. Mitchell Thornbrugh, Chief Information Officer, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-2019, or by e-mail at <u>mitchell.thornbrugh@ihs.gov</u>.

Sincerely,

/Elizabeth A. Fowler/
Acting Director

Enclosure: HHS Protect Account Activation and Deactivation Process