



# Health and Community Services

Cynthia Foley

Council Initiated:

☐ Yes

☒ No

**ECAF:** 2024-3018  
**Ordinance:** 24-110

**Type:**

- ☒ Contract  
☐ Board Appt.  
☐ Code Amendment  
☐ Budget Action  
☐ Other

**Requested Handling:**

- ☒ Normal  
☐ Expedite  
☐ Urgent

**Fund Source:**

- ☐ General Fund  
☐ Other  
☒ N/A

**Executive Rec:**

- ☒ Approve  
☐ Do Not Approve  
☐ N/A

**Approved as to**

**Form:**

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ N/A

**Subject:** ESSENCE Data Sharing Agreement with Washington State Department of Health

**Scope:** Snohomish County, through the Health Department, is seeking to enter into an agreement with the Washington State Department of Health to access the CDC National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP) Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community based Epidemics (ESSENCE) platform.

Snohomish County may publish, redisclose, or release aggregated data in order to protect public health so long as DOH Small Numbers Publishing Guidelines (Appendix D) and Rapid Health Information Network (RHINO) Data Best Practices included in the [RHINO Guidebook](#) are adhered to and direct or indirect identifiers are excluded.

Under the terms of the contract, Snohomish County agrees to comply with security practices and safeguards meet Washington State Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) security standard [141.10 Securing Information Technology Assets](#).

**Duration:** Upon execution through August 31, 2026.

**Fiscal Impact:** ☐ Current Year ☐ Multi-Year ☒ N/A

There is no exchange of funds.

**Authority Granted:** Ordinance 24-110 authorizes the County Executive to sign an agreement with the Washington State Department of Health for data sharing.

**Background:** The Washington Department of Health supports local health jurisdictions (LHJs) and tribes in their disease and injury surveillance and control activities by providing timely access to data. ESSENCE data is some of the timeliest information available, with over 90% of emergency departments reporting visits within 24 hours. LHJs and tribes use this information to identify and respond quickly to public health threats such as novel pathogens, as well as track injury and health condition trends, evaluate interventions implemented, and use ESSENCE data within their statutory authority to provide quality public health services.

On October 25, 2023, Council approved Ordinance 23-091 authorizing the county Executive to execute an agreement with the WA DOH for access to ESSENCE data for the purpose of monitoring opioid overdose data and other programmatic uses.

**Requested Action:** Move to the GLS agenda to set time and date for a Public Hearing.