RCW 70.54.510 Communicable disease control policy. (1) It is the policy of the state that public health responses to address communicable diseases be guided by the best available science on the safety and efficacy of evidence-based measures to control the spread of such diseases, including immunizations and vaccines.

(2) Consistent with the policy in subsection (1) of this section, the state and local health officials must, within available resources, implement and promote evidence-based, appropriate measures to control the spread of communicable diseases, including immunizations and vaccines. The state and its political subdivisions may not enact statutes, ordinances, rules, or policies that prohibit the implementation and promotion of such measures. Any such statute, ordinance, rule, or policy in place on April 21, 2025, is hereby declared null and void. [2025 c 105 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—2025 c 105: "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Communicable diseases remain a real threat to our communities and many are increasing in prevalence and severity. There are over 100 notifiable conditions that are required to be reported to local and state public health, the vast majority of which are communicable diseases.

(b) The H1N1 virus, or avian flu, remains a nationwide threat with 14 Washingtonians contracting this illness due to exposure to infected poultry in 2024. Tuberculosis remains prevalent despite the availability of effective treatment, with several local health jurisdictions experiencing their first active cases of tuberculosis in over a decade. Sexually transmitted infection rates are also increasing, particularly syphilis and gonorrhea, both of which can have serious health impacts if left untreated. For example, untreated syphilis during pregnancy can result in congenital syphilis that increases rates of stillbirth, disability, and death in infants.

(c) To address these challenges, the ability for state and local health officials to educate the public about evidence-based measures that use the best available science is critical to control the spread of communicable diseases.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to ensure that the public receives timely, well-researched, evidence-based, and science-driven information to make informed choices so that they can take personal control of their health and the health of their families.

(3) The legislature does not intend by this enactment to modify, limit, or expand any existing requirement or establish any new requirement for any individual to receive any vaccine or take any other similar measure to control the spread of communicable disease, nor does the legislature intend by this enactment to modify, limit, or expand any existing authority or grant any new authority to establish any such requirement." [2025 c 105 s 1.]

Effective date—2025 c 105: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 21, 2025]." [2025 c 105 s 3.]