

**RCW 70.24.015 Legislative finding.** The legislature declares that sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne pathogens constitute a serious and sometimes fatal threat to the public and individual health and welfare of the people of the state. The legislature finds that the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne pathogens is rising at an alarming rate and that these diseases result in significant social, health, and economic costs, including infant and maternal mortality, temporary and lifelong disability, and premature death. The legislature further finds that sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne pathogens, by their nature, involve sensitive issues of privacy, and it is the intent of the legislature that all programs designed to deal with these diseases afford patients privacy, confidentiality, and dignity. The legislature also finds that medical knowledge and information about sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne pathogens are rapidly changing. It is therefore the intent of the legislature to provide a program that is sufficiently flexible to meet emerging needs, deals efficiently and effectively with reducing the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne pathogens, and provides patients with a secure knowledge that information they provide will remain private and confidential. [2020 c 76 § 1; 1988 c 206 § 901.]