

# Poverty Reduction Work Group

## Strategies and Recommendations

The Poverty Reduction Work Group’s 10-Year Plan for the Future is the culmination of two years’ work with a diverse group of state agencies, legislators, racial and ethnic commissions, community-based organizations, advocates, employers, and philanthropy that met monthly to develop strategies and recommendations that, if implemented, will meaningfully and measurably reduce poverty and inequality in our state. The eight strategies and 56 recommendations are grounded in existing data and evidence, and strongly influenced by the expertise of a 22-member Steering Committee made up of people experiencing poverty.



<b>STRATEGY #1:</b> Understand structural racism and historical trauma, and take action to undo their harmful effects in state policy and programs	<b>Recommendation 1a.</b> Require state entities to collaborate with the emerging Office of Equity (Bright Spot #2) to develop trainings on historical trauma, institutional racism, and implicit bias that are required of all public employees in systems that touch upon the lives of people experiencing poverty.
	<b>Recommendation 1b.</b> Require state entities to collaborate with the emerging Office of Equity to develop data, processes, and tools that prioritize racial equity in state government policies, programs, practices, and partnerships.
<b>STRATEGY #2:</b> Make equal space in decision-making for people and communities most affected by poverty and inequality	<b>Recommendation 2a.</b> Task the emerging Office of Equity to collaborate with Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians to develop a formal process for truth and reconciliation.
	<b>Recommendation 2b.</b> Institutionalize the practice of including people most affected by poverty in decision making by establishing a state-level entity to collaborate with stakeholders on the implementation of this 10-Year Plan for the Future.
	<b>Recommendation 2c.</b> Invest state resources to increase ownership capacity in communities most affected by poverty.
<b>STRATEGY #3:</b> Target equitable education, income growth, and wealth-building opportunities for people with low incomes.	<b>Recommendation 3a.</b> Adopt the Washington Kids for Washington Jobs recommendations, but bolster with more specific, intentional strategies to achieve equity.
	<b>Recommendation 3b.</b> Enforce stronger salary/wage transparency and fair labor practices among employers to ensure pay equity for women and people of color.
	<b>Recommendation 3c.</b> Expand access to no- or low-cost financial resources and education that empower, rather than prey upon, people experiencing poverty.
	<b>Recommendation 3d.</b> Enact changes to the state tax system that lower the effective tax rate for low-income households.
	<b>Recommendation 3f.</b> Adopt the Child Care Collaborative Taskforce recommendations to increase the availability of affordable, high quality early care and education.
	<b>Recommendation 3g.</b> Increase and preserve affordable housing for renters and owners.
	<b>Recommendation 3h.</b> Enact changes to the tax system that support equitable economic growth.
<b>STRATEGY #4:</b> Strengthen health supports across the life span to promote the intergenerational well-being of families.	<b>Recommendation 4a.</b> Create a state funded supplemental Apple Health assistance benefit.
	<b>Recommendation 4b.</b> Ensure funding and access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and support services before, during, and after pregnancy.
	<b>Recommendation 4c.</b> Expand culturally and linguistically appropriate home visiting so all eligible families can receive it.
	<b>Recommendation 4d.</b> Ensure access to free and low-cost contraceptive options and counseling, including long-term acting reversible contraceptives (LARCS) for people who want it.
	<b>Recommendation 4e.</b> Increase administrative funding to support culturally appropriate outreach for WIC, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition program.
	<b>Recommendation 4f.</b> Increase in-home Medicaid funds for supported living for seniors so they can receive care in their home and avoid costly residential programs.

<p><b>STRATEGY #5:</b> Address the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness, violence, mental illness, and/or addiction.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 5a.</b> Provide greater resources for community-led data collection.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5b.</b> Increase state and local rental assistance and diversion programs that allow children, youth, adults, and families to avoid homelessness.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5c.</b> Increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing options.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5d.</b> Develop stronger public-private partnerships to increase opportunities for supported education, job training, and employment.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5e.</b> Create a Medical-Financial Partnership model for Washington state.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5f.</b> Improve access to prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5g.</b> Improve integration of behavioral health treatment in early learning settings and K-12.</p>
<p><b>STRATEGY #6:</b> Build an integrated human service continuum of care that addresses the holistic needs of children, adults, and families.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 6a.</b> Develop a shared set of outcomes for individual, child, and family wellbeing, in partnership with communities most affected by structural racism and poverty that each agency is collectively held accountable to achieve.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 6b.</b> Update “Standard of Need,” assistance levels, and eligibility to reflect the real costs of what it takes for individuals and families to make ends meet.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 6c.</b> Develop a universal intake, data sharing, and technology platform so that we can share essential information on people across agencies, systems, and sectors.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 6d.</b> Increase cash assistance and make it unconditional upon work.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 6e.</b> Smooth on-ramps and off-ramps for programs.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 6f.</b> Revamp policies, programs, and practices to inspire hope and build resilience.</p>
<p><b>STRATEGY #7:</b> Decriminalize poverty and reduce reliance on the child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice systems.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 7a.</b> Decriminalize and destigmatize poverty by shifting resources toward diversion, healing, and support services.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7b.</b> Rapidly engage families and connect them to support services when a child or adult is at risk of entering the juvenile or criminal justice systems.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7c.</b> Increase in-home assistance and support services to keep children in the care of people and environments that make them feel the most stable and safe.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7d.</b> Provide robust, trauma-informed case management to children, adults, and families involved in child welfare, juvenile, and criminal justice systems.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7e.</b> Expand education, job training, and employment opportunities for children and adults while they are in the care of the juvenile and criminal justice systems.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7f.</b> Eliminate Legal Financial Obligations (LFOs).</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7g.</b> Provide adequate funding to increase the availability of safe, culturally responsive foster homes and permanent living options for children and youth involved with the child welfare system.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7h.</b> Connect children, adults, and families to public assistance and support services at least three months before they exit a system.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7i.</b> Eliminate education and employment barriers, and invest in stronger, better-coordinated exit and re-entry policies, services, and programs.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7j.</b> Expand and strengthen post-release family and peer support services.</p>
<p><b>STRATEGY #8:</b> Ensure a just transition to the future of work.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 8a.</b> Adopt the recommendations detailed in the FOW Taskforce report, 71 and bolster it with more specific, intentional strategies to achieve equity for workers of color, women, immigrants and refugees, and rural Washingtonians.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 8b.</b> Create tax structures for employers that offer full-time employment with living wages and robust benefit packages.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 8c.</b> Protect Washingtonians from economic downturns by developing an economic “trigger” to provide countercyclical funding in human services, education, and job training.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 8d.</b> Develop and pilot a portable benefits model and a guaranteed basic income program.</p>