



## REDUCING **POVERTY & INEQUALITY** IN WASHINGTON

We'd love to know your insights, questions, and priorities on these issues.

We've assembled our teams to achieve a just and equitable future for all Washingtonians. They are resources for you. You have access and can route questions or ideas to these teams for follow-through.

- Join the [mailing list](#) for regular updates.
- Contact Lori Pfingst, [lori.pfingst@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:lori.pfingst@dshs.wa.gov), or Tim Probst, [tprobst@esd.wa.gov](mailto:tprobst@esd.wa.gov), with questions.

### Background

Governor Inslee's Poverty Reduction Work Group (PRWG) was created via directive in November 2017. PRWG is co-led by the state departments of Commerce, Employment Security, and Social & Health Services, in partnership with tribal and urban Indians, state racial and ethnic commissions, employers, community-based organizations, legislators, advocates, and philanthropy. Full documentation of all PRWG meetings can be found on [Governor Inslee's PRWG issues page](#).

### Why It Matters

Even before COVID-19, 1.75 million Washingtonians—25% of all the people in the state—lived below the income standard for food benefits (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP). This affects people of color, rural communities, and people with disabilities the most, and COVID-19 has made the problem worse.

### 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty in Washington

The [10-year plan](#) 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.



## Elevating the Expertise & Influence of People Experiencing Poverty

The strategies and 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. PRWG also utilized a racial equity consultant and toolkit to specifically address the undue burden of poverty among Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians, and includes recommendations specific to other groups most affected, including women, children, seniors, single parents, rural communities, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and immigrants and refugees.

## Who's Involved and How We Work Together

This work involves three groups:

1. Legislative Executive WorkFirst and Poverty Reduction Oversight task force (LEWPRO)
2. The seven-agency Human-Centered Poverty Reduction design team (HCPR)
3. LEWPRO has designated the Poverty Reduction Work Group (PRWG) as LEWPRO's Advisory Committee



### LEWPRO

LEWPRO is created in state law to coordinate Legislative Branch and Executive Branch actions on poverty reduction, as well as the WorkFirst program. LEWPRO has created a [5-year strategic plan](#) for poverty reduction that is aligned with the PRWG's 10-year strategic plan, and LEWPRO has selected the PRWG as its advisory committee.

Membership includes state senators and representatives from both major parties, as well as the Governor's office and executive branch agencies. Meetings are open to all and well-attended by allied organizations and members of the public.

## HCPR Team

The HCPR Team works on behalf of LEWPRO and the PRWG to make sure the state agencies follow through and implement program coordination aspects of the LEWPRO and PRWG strategic plans. It was voluntarily chartered by Employment Security, Commerce, and DSHS. Later, the Department of Health; State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Department of Children, Youth, and Families; and Health Care Authority voluntarily asked to join and were added.

The team designs detailed implementation options for the agencies to create a coordinated continuum of care across programs, as called for in the strategic plans, and over 40 program experts from the 7 agencies are members.

## LEWPRO Advisory Committee

LEWPRO is statutorily required to create an advisory committee and has selected the PRWG for this role. The PRWG is described above.

## Next Steps for You

Please **use these teams as resources** so we can all work together for economic inclusion and equitable poverty reduction. Join the mailing list at [www.dismantlepovertyinwa.com/contact](http://www.dismantlepovertyinwa.com/contact), or reach out to Lori Pfingst or Tim Probst with any questions, at [lori.pfingst@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:lori.pfingst@dshs.wa.gov) or [tprobst@esd.wa.gov](mailto:tprobst@esd.wa.gov).