

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

This document is **for discussion only** and recommendations have not been adopted by the Task Force. These proposed recommendations, if adopted, would **supplement** the recommendations in the Task Force's [preliminary report](#).



GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

- In partnership with GOIA, gauge tribes' interest in engaging in consultation. (*Office of Equity*)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CO-CREATION

- Adequately fund the Office of Equity and statutory commissions to conduct community outreach and engagement. (*Legislature & Governor*)
- Provide opportunities for communities to take the lead in creating information about and for themselves, including through contracts and grants. (*Office of Equity & agencies*)
- In partnership with the statutory commissions, build connectivity with communities that are isolated (socially, technologically, geographically, linguistically). (*Office of Equity & agencies*)
- Prioritize issues that are most important to communities and work with them on emerging issues. (*Office of Equity & agencies*)

IN RESPONSE TO HB 1783 & STATE OPERATING BUDGET

- [HB 1783](#): "[I]t is the intent of the legislature that the office and the commissions shall work in a complementary manner with each other, support each other's work, jurisdictions, and missions, and adequately fund the commissions and the office as they take on their new complementary roles."
 - Provide adequate resources for the Office of Equity, so it can build internal capacity and resilience, support the enterprise, and achieve its intended purpose. (*Leg & Gov*)
 - Adequately fund key partners, including the statutory commissions, to do reinforcing work. They require adequate resources and staffing to investigate complaints, advocate for and serve communities, advise the Governor, etc. (*Leg & Gov*)
- Work with agencies to move toward transparency and accountability. With adequate resources, assist agencies in developing DEI plans and language access plans, conduct performance reviews, and build/maintain a public dashboard to display progress. (*Office of Equity*)
- Give the Office of Equity rule-making authority, so it can establish regulations around DEI plans, performance reviews, and accountability. (*Leg*)

OFFICE OF EQUITY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Apply an intersectional, multi-dimensional framework to all efforts. (*Office of Equity*)
- Build synergy with partners—including the statutory commissions, community organizations, and business/employee resource groups (BRGs)—through mutual support and complementary relationships. (*Office of Equity*)
 - Be a hub for discussions; weave together work on strategies, policy, and legislation
 - Support each other in community outreach and engagement

- Leverage commissions' and BRGs' roles as focal points for their communities
- Elevate issues that matter to commissions/BRGs and their communities
- Promote barrier-free access to participation and services
- Promote the use of standard equity-related language and competencies through content and policy development, education, and training. (*Office of Equity with commissions, DES, OFM*)
 - Glossary of equity-related terms; competencies and training requirements (for all staff, for managers, for agency leadership)
 - Work with partners to provide education and technical assistance on DEI-related laws, policies, initiatives, and other requirements
- Implement the following accountability approaches (*Office of Equity*)
 - Lend visibility to important issues that are unheard or unseen
 - Establish standards that apply across the enterprise
 - Create markers to show progress (or lack thereof) in a transparent way
 - Shine a light on how data should be collected and used
 - Promote consistent training, including training related to disability rights
 - Model a supportive and engaging approach when working with agencies

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (see pages 39 – 43 of preliminary report)

- Consider keeping/removing staff positions related to ombuds, investigations, audits.
 - Consider creating the role of 'Ombuds Liaison,' which would work with state ombuds offices to identify, elevate, and address equity issues across sectors based on concerns from families and communities.
- For performance reviews:
 - Consider designating new staff positions to conduct agency performance reviews; OR
 - Consider recommending additional agency liaison positions, which would provide guidance and technical assistance to agencies *and* conduct performance reviews
- Remove the 'Staffing & Responsibilities Chart' (page 44 of preliminary report)

LESSONS FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC & RESPONSE

- The impacts of COVID-19 highlight systemic barriers and institutional oppression. There is disproportionate burden on communities of color, immigrant communities, low-income communities, the LGBTQ community, the disability community, and vulnerable labor forces.
- 'Hitting pause' on services is not neutral—it is harmful. Agencies must be prepared to continue serving all populations (e.g. students with disabilities, isolated communities).
- For some communities, state support structures did not apply to their lives in the first place. They are dependent on these structures now more than ever.
- Do not revert to inequitable systems and behaviors; do not replicate and reinforce inequities.
- What will be different this time? We have the responsibility to ensure communities are not left behind, and a unique opportunity to rebuild systems to be more just and equitable.
- The door is open even wider than before for an Office of Equity—it is needed now more than ever.

PRIORITIZATION



URGENT	FOUNDATIONAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As resources allow, serve communities and agencies during the response and recovery ▪ Shine a light on inequities; elevate partners' and communities' priorities ▪ Be at the decision making table to advise the Governor and agencies ▪ Promote consideration of socioeconomic and cultural contexts in policy development ▪ Develop an equity toolkit for agencies to use as they make decisions ▪ Encourage systems change by coordinating discussions and advising on strategies <p style="text-align: center;">[Additional items?]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apply an intersectional, multi-dimensional framework ▪ Advocate for a diverse workforce ▪ Help develop cultural humility training and resources ▪ Help develop DEI-related language and competencies ▪ Build relationships with tribes, agencies, and communities ▪ Develop complementary relationships with commissions and support their work <p style="text-align: center;">[Additional items?]</p>

WITH INVESTMENT

- Recommendations on the Office of Equity's roles and responsibilities show what a fully effective Office looks like (see preliminary report and additional recommendations above)
- The COVID-19 response, including the work of the Community Engagement Task Force, demonstrates the tremendous efforts and resources needed to support the enterprise in developing and implementing equity-related policies and tools.
- The pandemic accelerated equity-related efforts, and made possible what was thought to be impossible (e.g. statewide language access plan, multilingual resources, timely grants for community organizations). Turn this 'emergency paradigm' into a post-emergency reality that changes the way government does business.

SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION – For the enterprise, with assistance from the Office of Equity

- Advocacy
 - Shine a light on inequities
 - Name power disparities & elevate voices
- Communication & connectedness
 - Bring communities together to work side-by-side with government
 - Invite communities to help identify and fill gaps; promote opportunities for engagement
 - Connect with underrepresented and isolated communities
 - Create space for relationship development (w/ other agencies, communities)
 - Focus on compliance **and** compassion
- Achieve barrier-free access (information, technology, services, resources, systems)
 - Promote opportunities for communities to create information about and for themselves
- Equity in policy development & decision making
 - Use an equity lens/toolkit: “Prioritize those who’ve been farthest from opportunity”
 - Be proactive in building equitable systems, not reactive
 - Challenge the tendency to revert to inequitable systems and behaviors
 - Consider historical experiences & socioeconomic and cultural contexts
 - Be adaptive to specific industries/sectors and consider vulnerable labor forces
 - Preserve safety net programs
- Workforce diversity & competencies
 - Ensure cultural and linguistic representation in the state workforce; build community in institutions before we can lean on communities
 - Ensure cultural humility training and resources, which are foundational
 - Ensure those in supervisory roles understand and model concepts of equity and inclusion
- Data equity
 - Disaggregate data, using enterprise-wide standards, to understand and address needs (race/ethnicity, occupation, geography, LGBTQ status, disability status, language)
 - Ensure ‘data dives’ that inform policy are community-driven; conduct participatory reviews
 - Discuss and address data collection and access issues, including those that affect tribes