



Council Redesign: Re-envisioning our Future



August 23, 2023



Topics

- Redesign project overview and timeline
- Redesign core concepts
- Early 2023 learnings
- Summer 2023 road trip learnings

Reflections:

How was your experience with the road trip?

What did you learn?

What resonates with you?

What would you like to add or highlight?

Meeting Materials

- Current statute (RCW 43.20.270-280)
- Redesign Core Concepts
- Report on community partner feedback
- Updated draft statute & summary of changes
- And more

<https://healthequity.wa.gov/meetings/meeting-information/meeting-information/materials/2023-08-23>





The Health Disparities Council is recommending updates to our statute, the law that directs our work, to incorporate 17 years of work and learning addressing health disparities in Washington State.



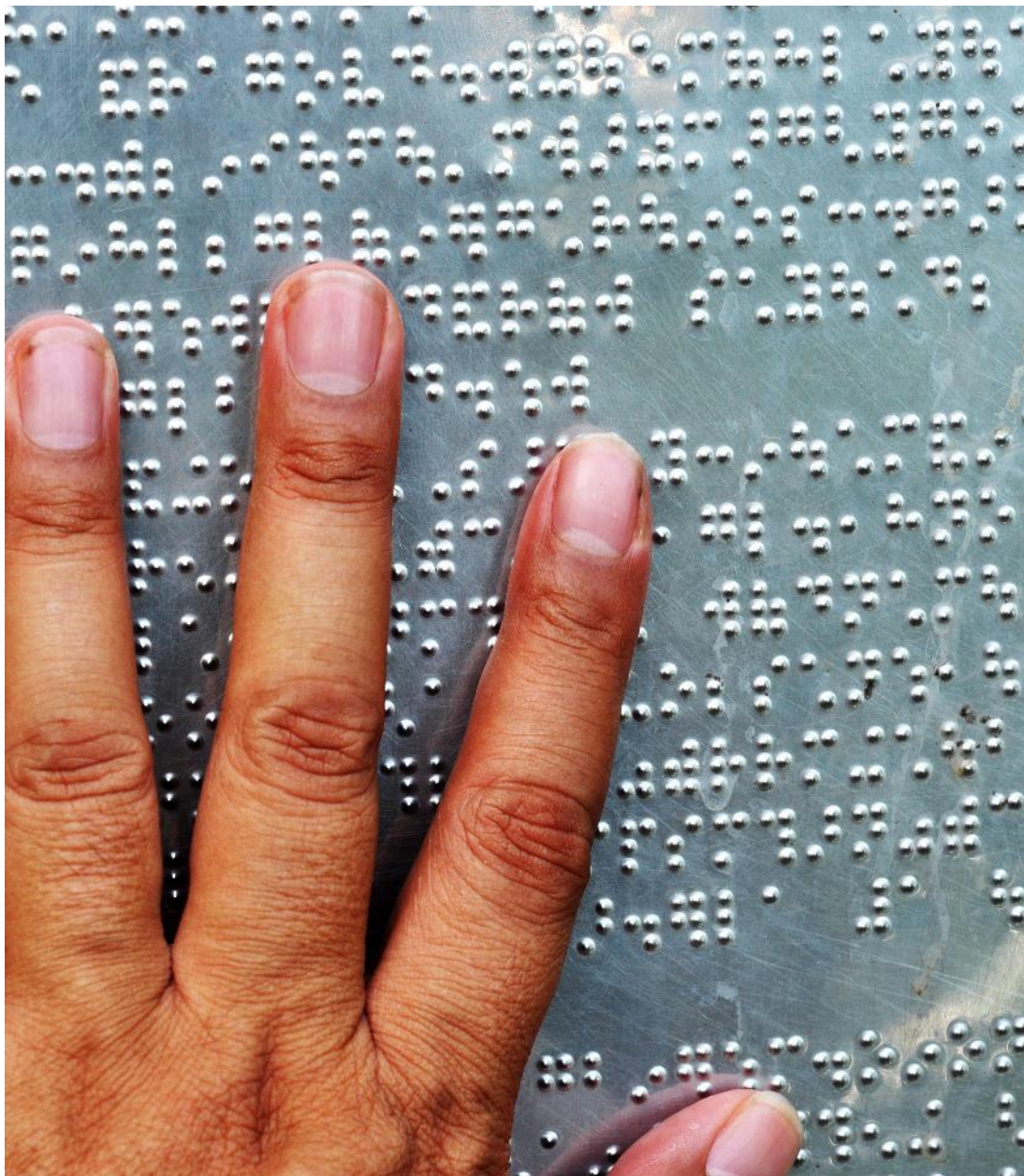
REDESIGN PROCESS

- Focus on this effort through **redesign workshops**.
- **Center the Council's vision and operating principles**.
- **Engage partners** to learn how the Council can lead or support unified goals.
- **Review laws** that govern the Council's authority (RCW [43.20.270-280](#), etc.) and **recommend specific updates**.
- Develop and advance a **legislative proposal** that seeks to change relevant laws.



Foundational Truths

- Racism is a public health crisis.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened conditions for communities.
- Community holds inherent power.
- There are many dimensions to health and wellbeing.
- We are interconnected.

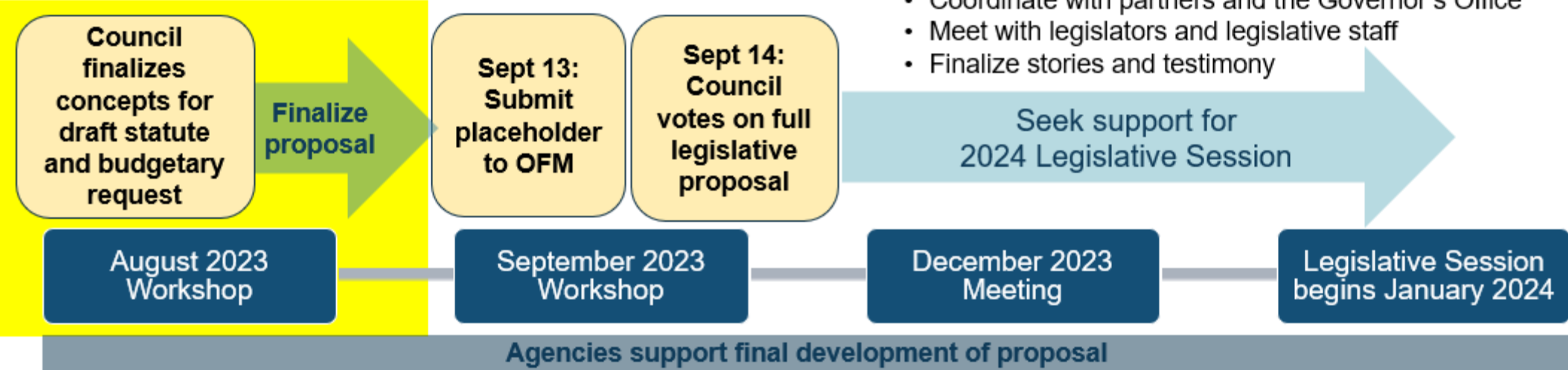




Areas of Statute

Intent	What the state hopes to achieve.
Purpose	Reason for being, including our main role and the need(s) we must address.
Power & Responsibilities	How we operate and the channels we use to achieve our purpose, make impact, and exercise influence. Interaction with key partners. Accountability measures.
Deliverables	Products we must deliver, to whom, and the frequency.
Structure	Group classification, membership, subcommittees, etc.
Staffing	Staffing level and roles dedicated to our operation.
Funding	Funding level and source(s) to achieve our purpose and sustain efforts.

Timeline for Legislative Proposal



REDESIGN WORKSHOPS

HEALTH EQUITY
Governor's Interagency Council
on Health Disparities

MAY 10, 2023

NO RESTRUCTURE WORKSHOP



adjust workshop design

PAUSE TO GET PERSPECTIVE

How can we make better show our progress?

1:1s with Council Members

Racism is a PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Pandemic has worsened conditions for communities

COMMUNITY holds inherent POWER

There are many dimensions to



We are INTERCONNECTED

HIGH-LEVEL OVERVIEW

1. Establish **HEALTH AS A RIGHT**
2. Advance **HEALTH EQUITY**
3. **CHANGE the NARRATIVE** around health & wellbeing
4. Focus on **ROOT CAUSES**



DETAILED INPUT ON DRAFT STATUTE LANGUAGE

Many **CHANGES** & **ADDITIONS**

Challenging general language
BE SPECIFIC. NAME IT!



EMERGING COUNCIL STRUCTURE & MEMBERSHIP

How to balance



7. Proactively **SUPPORT COMMUNITIES** in building POWER

"We are highlighting & centering those most impacted by racism & oppression."
- Ben Danielson

8. Update **COUNCIL STRUCTURE & MEMBERSHIP**

Need a **BROAD APPROACH** to create an enduring document



Redesign Core Concepts

1. Establish health as a right
2. Advance health equity
3. Change the narrative around health and wellbeing
4. Focus on root causes
5. Position the Council to develop and advocate policy recommendations
6. Contribute to initiatives that unify partners, align efforts, and reinforce accountability
7. Proactively support communities in building power
8. Update Council structure and membership

Access the full core concepts presentation [online](#).



Early 2023 Learnings



In early 2023, staff and redesign project leads met with individual Council members to gather input and feedback. Here's a reminder of what we learned.



Balance general & specific language

General	Specific
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be visionary and remove barriers, so statute is enduring. Need to be nimble enough to transform with state government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Where the rubber hits the road”: Be specific about our role and how we will work toward the goal.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is an <i>enabling</i> statute—consider what needs to be included, what can be established elsewhere (e.g., bylaws), and what requires time to develop outside of statute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words and narrative carry power: historical trauma; racism is a public health crisis; health is a right
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance various forms of justice. Work with partners to build wellbeing and justice for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have expertise in health and health equity. Health is holistic and has many dimensions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targeted universalism: Establish the highest conceivable goals for health and wellbeing. Use focused strategies to achieve those goals.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand parameters. Address social determinants of health and root causes of health disparities and inequities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be intentional with the groups/concepts we name and prioritize. Use anti-racist and inclusive language. Be mindful of non-static concepts and the limits of categorization.



ADDITIONAL THEMES

COVID-19 Pandemic

- Recognize the shifts caused by the pandemic and response
- Consider how naming the pandemic helps/hinders the longevity of statute

Racism is a Public Health Crisis

- Recognize impacts of racism in its many forms, including to specific communities
- Consider the relationship between the statute proposal and a declaration on Racism is a Public Health Crisis

Impact and Indicators

- Provide statewide leadership
- Create resources that will also be helpful for local/community groups
- Maintain the authority to write reports and make recommendations
- Work with partners to align and leverage accountability frameworks (e.g., Pro-Equity Anti-Racism – PEAR; Healthy Environment for All Act – HEAL Act)
- Consider creating indicators and metrics, but don't slow down or duplicate work
- Align efforts with the 15 determinants of equity (PEAR framework)
- Agencies can help track implementation of policies
- Measure processes *and* outcomes
- Beware of fallacies and perpetuating harm (e.g., measuring the wrong things)



ADDITIONAL THEMES

Fully Equip Council Members

- Members need to be close to agency decision makers while also holding health equity commitment/expertise
- Need more autonomy to act as health equity experts and change agents
- Need the ability to take a position on policy
- More participation in legislative session
- Need resources to implement new policies and equity initiatives (PEAR, HEAL)
- Need Council resources for research, policy development, community engagement, etc.

Community Engagement

- Document and lift up community solutions and aspirations
- Center community voice and decision making
- Strengthen relationships between state agencies and community leaders
- Avoid extraction and exhaustion
- Build community capacity
- Work with state commissions as focal points
- Co-govern and use participatory processes
- Build infrastructure for democratic participation
- Invest in relationships proactively
- Need dedicated staffing and resources



Summer 2023 Road Trip Learnings



In July and August 2023, staff met with selected community partners to gather input and feedback. Here's a summary of what we heard.



COMMUNITY PARTNER VISIONS AND PRIORITIES

Read the full Community Partner Engagement Report on [our website](#).

“We committed genocide and now we want community to come into our health clinics?”

“Resources are often designed to make us feel better without changing the systems that are making us sick.”

“The state is active around the climate crisis. Closing the racial wealth gap should be as much of a priority.”

There is much alignment between the redesign core concepts and partners’ visions and priorities.

- Health is holistic
- Health can look different for each person and community
- Health is a right
- History and culture are key to health
- Focus on social determinants of health
- Address root causes
- Racism is a public health crisis
- Healing is necessary
- Move toward shared and optimal health and wellbeing
- Support communities in building power



COMMUNITY PARTNER VISIONS AND PRIORITIES

Added dimensions

- Communities should determine definitions, conditions, and processes for wellbeing.
- Promote rights in the health care setting.
- Health systems should fit what people need, rather than people fitting the systems.
- People need quality, culturally safe, culturally appropriate, and linguistically appropriate health services. There are still significant gaps.
- Workforce diversity and supply are critical, but not enough. Health systems need to change to better serve people.
- Organizations serving marginalized communities require sustainable support, including funding.

“Me daba cuenta de que el intérprete no decía lo que yo decía. No le estaban comunicando mi mensaje al médico”.

“Even with diversity in the workforce, racism prevents equity.”

“Who can live in a home that has cooling in summer and heating in winter—it’s not just an environmental issue, it’s an equity and health issue.”



RECOMMENDED COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Data and information

- Support community-led narratives
- Highlight information and data from community organizations and members
- Provide policy research support and share information
- Promote a flow of information

“How much more effective could we be if we pool our resources and brilliance? Exponentially.”

Connect, convene, and build relationships

- Connect people doing health equity work
- Support transparency and systems navigation
- Nurture partnerships to learn and grow together
- Align with power outside of systems of oppression
- Apply the Council's influence in service of shared goals
- Work on big issues together (health equity, systemic racism, incarceration, racial wealth gap, language justice, etc.)
- Gather groups across community and government for dialogue and coordination



RECOMMENDED COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Community Engagement

- Develop a cohesive community engagement strategy
- Promote civic engagement and vitality
- Create space for under-resourced organizations and communities
- Focus on building relationships and trust
- Learn about communities and maintain reciprocal relationships
- Have staff liaisons who can be a direct contact and share information
- Create space for elder and youth voices

***Make sure the “table is ready”
for new members.***

- Build statewide connection, so all parts of the state are included
- Connect with existing community groups and also engage directly with community members
- Co-design and co-create with community
- Adequately support community members who interact with the Council



RECOMMENDED COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Member Representation and Roles

- Have a presence in community
- Share the Council's work and vision
- Integrate the Council's work in all agencies
- Get agency commitment
- Council members from state agencies should have influence on agency operations
- Revise the selection process for Council members and leadership
- Care about inequities and have lived experience with these issues
- Be courageous in speaking up and disrupting the status quo

“It would make a whole world of difference if someone from the government would show up where we are to share your work and vision.”



RECOMMENDED COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Accountability

- Focus on community-led strategies instead of recycling research on disparities
- Develop goals and do work that meet community expectations
- Support the most impacted groups in creating global, cross-system goals

“Ensure there is action and address the root causes instead of recycling what we already know.”

Embrace a “process that moves toward liberating ourselves.”

- Create goals that everyone can align with and support from the ground up
- Take meaningful and concrete action to advance changes in agency practices
- “Sharpen” discussions around equity in government, without adding unnecessary layers. Offer best practices.
- Need equitable and liberating practices within the Council

REFLECTIONS

Staff, Council members ,community partners,
and all participants

**How was your experience with
the road trip?**

What did you learn?

What resonates with you?

What would you like to add or highlight?





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THANK YOU



To request this document in an alternate format, please contact the Washington State Board of Health at 360-236-4110 or wsboh@sboh.wa.gov. TTY users can dial 711.

