

Current Authorizing Statute

RCW [43.20.270](#)

Governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities—Action plan—Statewide policy.

The legislature finds that women and people of color experience significant disparities from men and the general population in education, employment, healthful living conditions, access to health care, and other social determinants of health. The legislature finds that these circumstances coupled with lower, slower, and less culturally appropriate and gender appropriate access to needed medical care result in higher rates of morbidity and mortality for women and persons of color than observed in the general population. Health disparities are defined by the national institute of health as the differences in incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of disease and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States.

It is the intent of the Washington state legislature to create the healthiest state in the nation by striving to eliminate health disparities in people of color and between men and women. In meeting the intent of chapter 239, Laws of 2006, the legislature creates the governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities. This council shall create an action plan and statewide policy to include health impact reviews that measure and address other social determinants of health that lead to disparities as well as the contributing factors of health that can have broad impacts on improving status, health literacy, physical activity, and nutrition.

[[2006 c 239 § 1.](#)]

RCW [43.20.275](#)

Council created—Membership—Duties—Advisory committees.

(1) In collaboration with staff whom the office of financial management may assign, and within funds made expressly available to the state board for these purposes, the state board shall assist the governor by convening and providing assistance to the council. The council shall include one representative from each of the following groups: Each of the commissions, the state board, the department, the department of social and health services, the department of commerce, the health care authority, the department of agriculture, the department of ecology, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the department of children, youth, and families, the workforce training and education coordinating board, and two members of the public who will represent the interests of health care consumers. The council is a class one group under RCW [43.03.220](#). The two public members shall be paid per diem and travel expenses in accordance with RCW [43.03.050](#) and [43.03.060](#). The council shall reflect diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender. The governor or the governor's designee shall chair the council.

(2) The council shall promote and facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration among relevant state agencies and communities of color, and the private sector and public sector, to address health disparities. The council shall conduct public hearings, inquiries, studies, or other forms of information gathering to understand how the actions of state government ameliorate or contribute to health disparities. All state agencies must cooperate with the council's efforts.

(3) The council with assistance from the state board, shall assess through public hearings, review of existing data, and other means, and recommend initiatives for improving the availability of culturally appropriate health literature and interpretive services within public and private health-related agencies.

(4) In order to assist with its work, the council shall establish advisory committees to assist in plan development for specific issues and shall include members of other state agencies and local communities.

(5) The advisory committee shall reflect diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender.

[[2018 c 58 § 19](#); [2006 c 239 § 3](#).]

NOTES:

Effective date—2018 c 58: See note following RCW [28A.655.080](#).

RCW [43.20.280](#)

Action plan for eliminating health disparities—Council meetings—Reports to the legislature.

The council shall consider in its deliberations and by 2012, create an action plan for eliminating health disparities. The action plan must address, but is not limited to, the following diseases, conditions, and health indicators: Diabetes, asthma, infant mortality, HIV/AIDS, heart disease, strokes, breast cancer, cervical cancer, prostate cancer, chronic kidney disease, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), mental health, women's health issues, smoking cessation, oral disease, and immunization rates of children and senior citizens. The council shall prioritize the diseases, conditions, and health indicators according to prevalence and severity of the health disparity. The council shall address these priorities on an incremental basis by adding no more than five of the diseases, conditions, and health indicators to each update or revised version of the action plan. The action plan shall be updated biannually. The council shall meet as often as necessary but not less than two times per calendar year. The council shall report its progress with the action plan to the governor and the legislature no later than January 15, 2008. A second report shall be presented no later than January 15, 2010, and a third report from the council shall be presented to the governor and the legislature no later than January 15, 2012. Thereafter, the governor and legislature shall require progress updates from the council every four years in odd-numbered years. The action plan shall recognize the need for flexibility.

[[2006 c 239 § 4](#).]