



Health Impact Reviews

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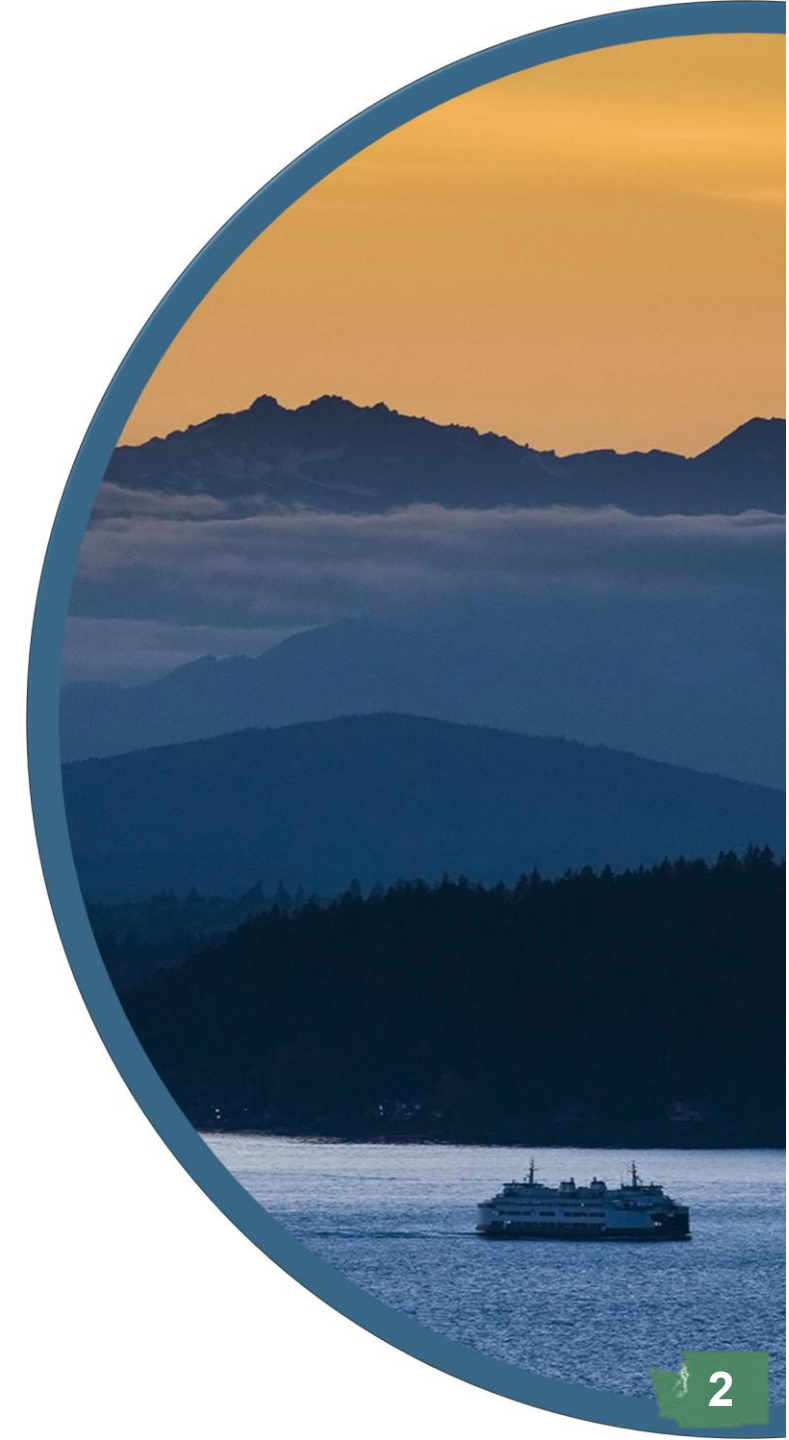


Health Impact Reviews (HIR)

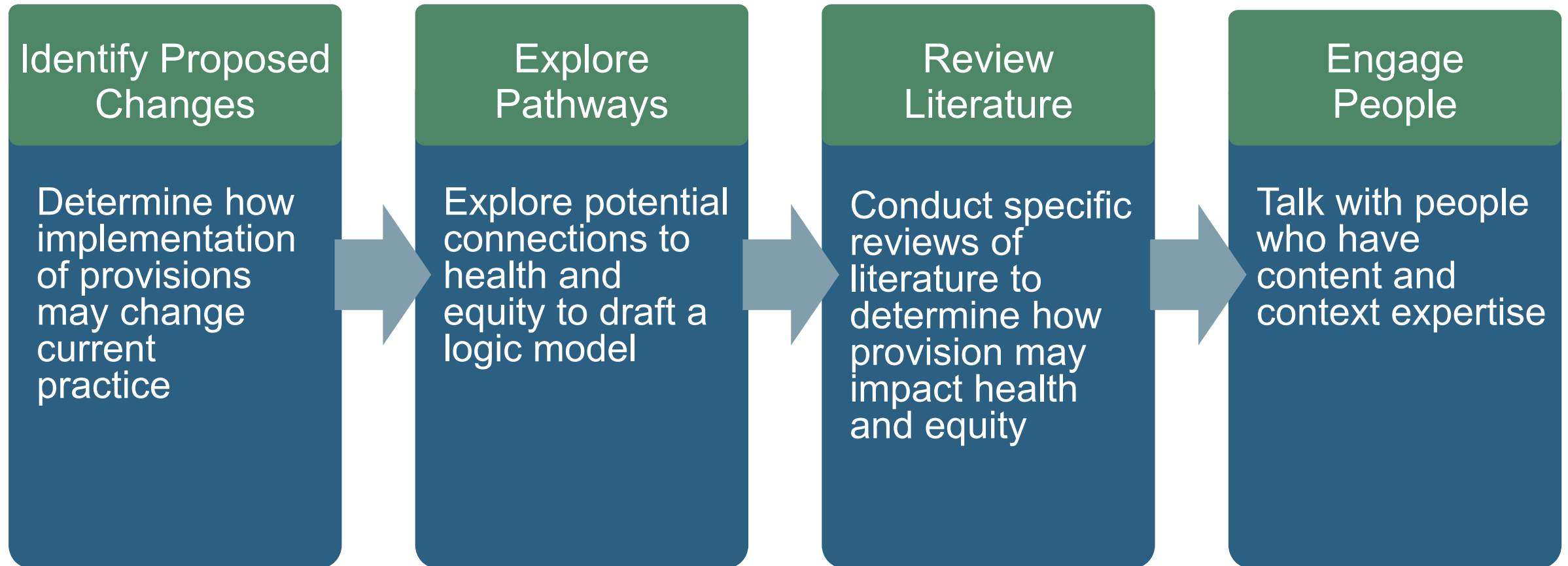
HIRs can be requested for any topic.

- **Objective, nonpartisan, evidence-based analysis**
- Prospective tool
- Determine how a legislative or budgetary change will likely impact **health** and **equity**
- Requested by any state lawmaker or the Governor
- Must be completed in 10 days during legislative session

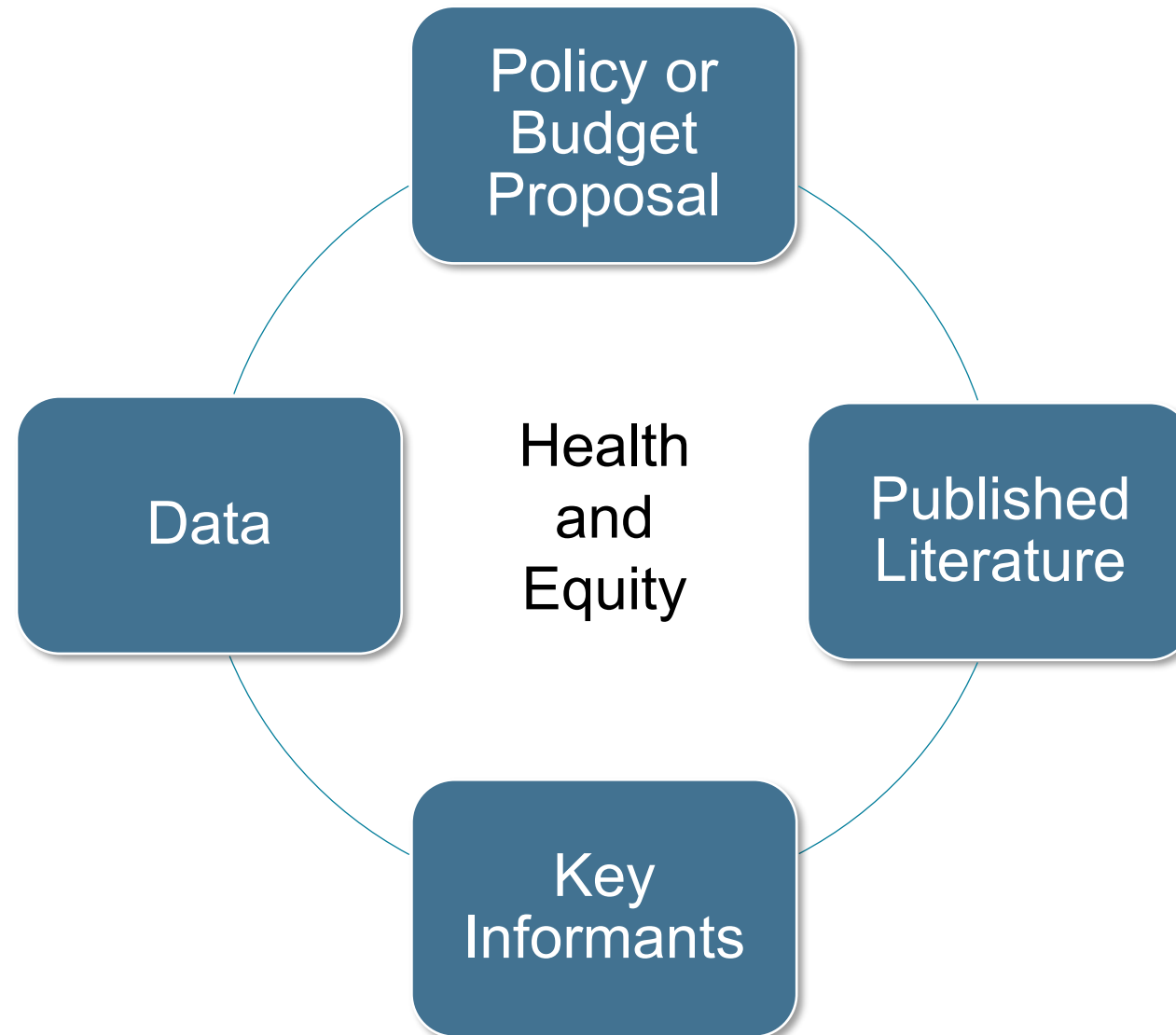
(RCW 43.20.285)



HIR Process



Contributing Information



Types of Key Informant Engagement



Strength-of-Evidence Criteria

Ratings are based on criteria which consider:

- The amount of research
- Appropriateness of study design
- Study execution
- Generalizability



VERY STRONG EVIDENCE

STRONG EVIDENCE

A FAIR AMOUNT OF EVIDENCE

EXPERT OPINION

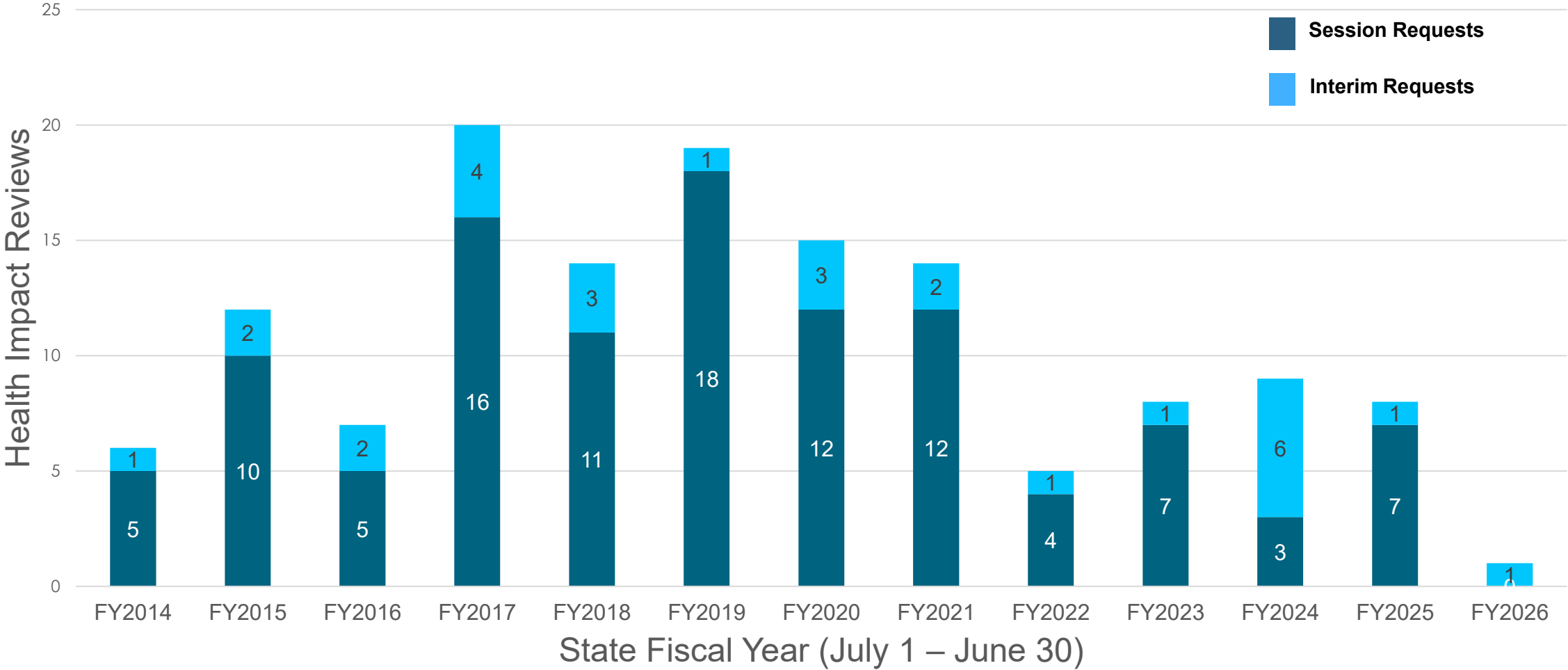
INFORMED ASSUMPTION

NO ASSOCIATION

NOT WELL RESEARCHED

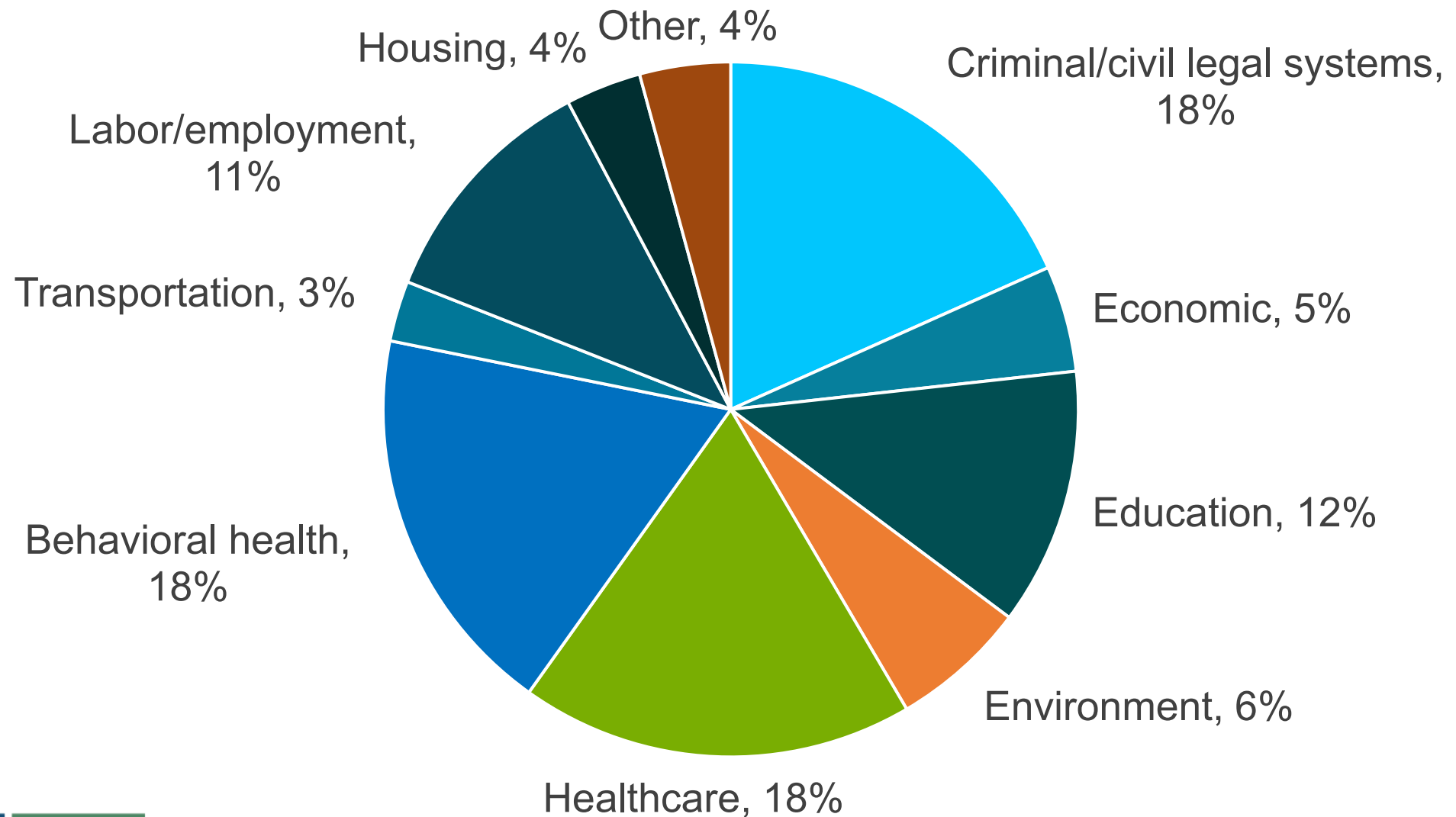
UNCLEAR

138 Completed HIRs



HIR Requests by Topic Area

Bill topics analyzed 2014-2025 (n=137)



Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) by the Numbers

8 The number of Health Impact Reviews completed during FY25.	124 The number of key informants engaged as part of HIRs completed in FY25.
88% The percentage of FY25 HIR requests made during the 2025 Legislative Session.	85% The percentage of key informants (92 of 108) engaged during Legislative Session who were new contacts.
54% The percentage of legislators who staff engaged as part of HIR outreach efforts during FY25.	1 The number of HIR-related bills that passed the Legislature in 2025 and were signed into law by the Governor.

SHB 1606 (Chapter 64, Laws of 2025)

- SHB 1606, Concerning state employee access to peer-reviewed journals
- Sponsored by Representative Engell
- Directs Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to conduct a study by June 30, 2026, of potential funding, organizational structure, and policy mechanisms to provide state employees with electronic access to peer-reviewed journals.
- Supported by the Washington State Board of Health and Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities.



How HIRs Inform Policy

Requesters have used HIRs to understand:

- The evidence base for a proposal
- If a proposal will have the intended impact
- Potential unintended consequences
- Equity implications

Requesters have used HIR findings to:

- Talk with colleagues about a proposal
- Refine a policy
- Discuss the bill on the floor
- Develop points for budget negotiations
- Inform their vote on a bill



2025 Feedback from Legislators

Legislators used and valued HIRs to:

- **Test assumptions** of bills as drafted
- Help lay out a **workplan** to refine a proposal
- Summarize available research which can help show the **impacts of investment**
- Have data and information in one place as a **central reference document**
- **Build trust** with community and advocates
- Be non-partisan, evidence-based, and a **reliable and trusted source** of information
- Be a Washington State product and include **state-specific** information



2025 Key Informant Interviewee Feedback

Role	Total
WA State Agency	17
Community-Based Organization	4
Professional Association	3
Individual, Community Member	2
Agency outside of WA	0
Researcher	0
Total	26 (21%)

Of key informants who responded...

- **96%** said participation was worthwhile
- **23%** reported using HIR findings

Ways HIR findings were used:

- Education
- Advocacy

Most useful about HIR findings:

- The data included in the review
- Nonpartisan review
- Findings provided a different way to think about the policy
- Explored intersections with the overall policy landscape
- Illustrated the need for more research

National Connections

Public Health Law Center (PHLC) at Mitchell Hamline School of Law

- **Report:** [Applying Racial & Health Equity Impact Assessments for Better Policy Making](#) (In English) (March 2025)
- **Webinar:** [Exploring the Impact and Challenges of R/HEIA Implementation: Stories and Insights from State and Municipal Staff](#) (In English) (May 2025)

Center for Public Health Law Research at Temple University

Community of Practice: Legal Epidemiology (May 2025)

Network for Public Health Law (NPHL)

- **Panel Presentation:** Embedding Equity in State-Wide Decision-Making to Address Root Causes of Health Inequities (September 2025)



New Connections with State Researchers

State Agency	Work
Office of Financial Management, Public Safety Policy & Research Center (PSPRC)	• Serve as source for public safety data, research, policy, and statistical analyses. • Conduct Criminal Justice Racial and Ethnic Impact Statements (REIS) to identify potential disproportionate impacts of proposed sentencing-related policy changes on communities of color.
Office of the Washington State Auditor (SAO), Performance Audit Team	• Conduct performance audits to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of government programs. • SB 5414 (Chapter 135, Laws of 2025) requires SAO to consider social equity impacts during all performance audits.
Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB), Research Program	• Conduct, analyze, and report internal and external research that is evidence-based and non-partisan related to the products, policy, and regulation of alcohol, cannabis, tobacco, and vapor products.



Contact the HIR Team

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Completed Health Impact Reviews can be found on the
Washington State Board of Health website:
<https://sboh.wa.gov/health-impact-reviews>

THANK YOU

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

