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**Washington State Board of Health
Pro-Equity Anti-Racism
Strategic Action Plan
October 2024**

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Pro-Equity Anti-Racism Plan

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Washington State Board of Health

Statement on Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism

In 2022, Governor Jay Inslee issued Executive Order 22-04, which directs state agencies to implement the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism Plan and Playbook. The PEAR strategic plan intends to drive systemic change and promote equity by investing where needs are the greatest to address upstream, root cause issues that perpetuate systemic inequities.

The Washington State Board of Health (Board) wants to enable all people in Washington to flourish and thrive. This plan lays out actions the State Board of Health will take to create meaningful impact to the determinants of equity. By investing in action steps and goals, we can reduce health inequities in the State of Washington. Health inequities are differences in health outcomes that are unfair, unjust, and avoidable. Most differences in health are due to inequities, a result of a lack of access to resources so that all can meet their full health potential. These health inequities are a result of laws and policies that perpetuated health inequities.

This strategic action plan exists to guide our work and create change for communities who are disproportionately affected by systemic inequities. It embeds equity into our decision-making, policy development, and public meetings. This strategic action plan is an evolving document, that is reviewed every year to ensure that we are following through with our commitments, continuing to assess our equity impact, making informed investments, being transparent and accountable, and shifting practices as necessary.

Place holder for statement the Board develops.

All Board members can sign the statement at the time of plan approval

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For more information or additional copies of this report, contact Ashley Bell, or Board of Health Staff at wsboh@sboh.wa.gov.

Pro-Equity Anti-Racism

Team Members

Agency Executive Leadership

Patty Hayes, Board Chair, Board of Health

Michelle Davis, Executive Director, Board of Health

Board Members

Paj Nandi, Sponsor and Board Member, Board of Health

Agency Equity Officer

Ashley Bell, Equity and Engagement Manager, Board of Health Staff

Agency Employees

Shay Bauman, Policy Advisor, Board of Health Staff

Heather Carawan, Communications, Board of Health Staff

Molly Dinardo, Policy Advisor, Board of Health Staff

Hannah Haag, Community Outreach Coordinator, Board of Health Staff

Melanie Hisaw, Executive Secretary, Board of Health Staff

Jo-Ann Huynh, Administrative Assistant, Board of Health Staff

LinhPhụng Huỳnh, Health Disparities Council Manager, Board of Health Staff

Cait Lang-Perez, Health Policy Analyst, Board of Health Staff

Michelle Larson, Communications Manager, Board of Health Staff

External Partners

Amanda Shi, Research and Evaluation Manager, Tubman Center for Health & Freedom

AyeNay Abye, Tubman Center for Health & Freedom

Danisha Jefferson-Abye, Tubman Center for Health & Freedom

Tiara Ranson, Tubman Center for Health & Freedom

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Agency Partners

Washington State Department of Health

Office of Equity

Business Line Experts

Patty Hayes, Board Chair, Board of Health

Paj Nandi, Sponsor and Board Member, Board of Health

Michelle Davis, Executive Director, Board of Health

Ashley Bell, Equity and Engagement Manager, Board of Health Staff

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Baseline Equity Impact Review

The Washington State Board of Health (Board) has completed the Baseline Equity Review of our agency's key business lines to determine where the needs are the greatest.

The PEAR Team reviewed the work that the Board completes and took an inventory of the equity work currently being done. A review of the gaps in equitable service were analyzed and put into buckets. Those buckets then informed our goals and objectives. The Baseline Equity Impact Review is available upon request.

Readiness Checklist

Agency leader and all PEAR Team members watched the recordings of the PEAR Team Orientation Session hosted by the Office of Equity.

- Dr. Johnson Welcome Video
- 2022 PEAR Team Orientation Recorded Session

Agency leader and PEAR Team members meet to debrief the PEAR Team orientation session and discuss next steps in May 2024.

The Board of Health has created a Board Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Statement. This has been signed by the Board of Health Chair, Board Members, and the Executive Director. This signals the Board's commitment to Pro-Equity Anti-Racism strategies.

The Board of Health Executive Director and PEAR team have created a video sharing information about the Board's PEAR statement. In addition, there is a stand-alone agency policy that outlines the Board's roles and responsibilities for implementing Executive Order 22-04.

Goal 1 Summary (Office of Equity Template)

Agency Key Business Line

Communications and Engagement

PEAR Service Line (where needs are greatest)

Engagement & Community Partnerships

Public Communications & Education

Description (Summarize the policies, processes, practices, and procedures related to this investment.

Will require policies and procedures related to access to meetings, materials, and addressing language needs.

What disparities do you seek to decrease or eliminate with this investment?

Access to government practices, information, and participation.

Which people groups and/or places, with the greatest need, does this investment focus on?

Communities at a disadvantage such as disability, education, geographic location, and language/literacy.

Did your agency consult with Tribal governments and Recognized American Indian Organizations? How does this investment address the consultation they provided?

No

What did impacted communities/employees/other interested parties identify as the root causes of the disparities? How will your investment address root causes?

Individuals feel that it is difficult to overcome barriers to participating in government forums and policy decisions. This is due to barriers, such as language access, meeting access challenges, and engagement on policy decisions. Investments in this area will focus on language access, meeting in community-based organizations spaces, and improving inclusiveness for non-regulated parties. This promotes equity in local and state practices. Systems have been in place that place barriers to participation for groups that continue to be at a disadvantage.

How does your investment address concerns and priorities identified by impacted communities/employees/other interested parties.

We will address concerns and priorities identified by ensuring that language access is present and consistent with all our written and spoken work. This will ensure our documents are presented in a way that can be better understood and increase engagement in Board activities. We will also make sure that our meeting spaces are reflective of the topics we are engaged in and the communities who may be directly impacted by our work. This will create spaces for individuals to attend our meetings and engage with our work, instead of expecting those communities to travel towards us. Finally, we will ensure that our public activities are proactively inclusive for all to attend, by focusing on providing compensation, having inclusive presentation standards, and creating space for broader public input.

PEAR Determinants of Equity supported by this investment.

Equity in State & Local Practices

PEAR Determinants of Equity Group(s) and (Community support systems (trunk), Family support systems (branches), Community infrastructure (Root system), Government Practices (Soil & nutrients) supported by this investment.

Soil & Nutrients

Root System

PEAR Habit(s) needed to achieve desired PEAR Outcomes

Making meetings, documents, and education accessible so that everyone can participate in government activities.

PEAR Service Line Investment Lead or Team (Who is responsible for leading the action.

Equity and engagement team

Collaboration needs – Who does the agency need to collaborate with to make the investment?

Collaboration with communities to determine if investment is working. Collaboration with Department of Health to meet Board accessibility standards at Board meetings. Collaboration with presenters from other agencies and organizations to meet Board accessibility standards at Board meetings.

What are the potential barriers, challenges, and/or risks of this investment?

We lack the capacity to complete a CLAS assessment. Failure to achieve these objectives can lead to barriers for community participation.

Solution(s) identified to address resource needs and barriers/challenges/risks.

Request additional funding to hire an outside contractor or consultant to complete a CLAS assessment and provide any recommendations that are needed.

PEAR Service Line Investment Start Date

10/1/2024

PEAR Service Line Investment Target End Dates

1/1/2027

PEAR Performance Measure(s) – What measures will be used to determine effectiveness of investments? Were the measures informed by impacted communities/employees/interested parties? What outcome measure was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the investment in achieving the desired PEAR outcome. What process measure used to evaluate whether investment activities have been accomplished.

CLAS assessment completion and future compliance with CLAS recommendations will be used to measure success. Guidance around plain talked presentations, documents, websites, and summaries will be created in collaboration with the executive director, equity and engagement manager, and communications manager. We will also use the amount of community compensation provided during the fiscal year, as well as increased use of compensation across all types of compensation, including reimbursements and gift cards.

The internal PEAR Team has consulted with a community-based organization on the effectiveness of this plan and its positive impact for communities and desired PEAR outcomes.

What data sources will be used to measure success? Consider data sources created by those impacted if available.

We will be using a community relationship management system to track CLAS recommendations and scores, manage community compensation, and provide data on demographics and meeting

spaces. We will also be sending responsiveness surveys to community members who participate in Board activities.

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Goal 1

Create avenues for communities to participate and inform Board activities.

Objective 1

- **Ensure that language access is present and consistent in all our written and spoken work by January 2027.**
 - Complete a CLAS assessment on our public-facing communications by the end of 2025, by an outside consultant.
 - All staff will ensure that translations of primary and secondary documents are accurate and culturally appropriate according to CLAS procedures identified in our CLAS assessment, to maintain 85% or higher compliance prior to January 2027.
 - Communications will plain talk all our external-facing, public communications, such as presentations, documents, websites, and summaries, by using internal guidance documents, created by the equity and engagement team, laying out language access standards for Board work, prior to January 2026

Objective 2

- **Ensure that our meeting spaces reflect the topics we work on and communities who may be directly impacted by our work by January 2026.**
 - The equity and engagement team establish, implement, and consistently use meeting scoping procedure to ensure we are meeting in community spaces that removes barriers and promotes equity.
 - Admin will incorporate this topic into all our internal staff meeting pre and post meeting evaluation conversations, by creating a form that allows evaluation of Board meeting spaces during briefings and debriefings.
 - Outreach coordinator will support opportunities for Board members and staff to be more visible and accessible in communities, by the equity and engagement team creating guidance documents prior to January 2026.

Objective 3

- **Ensure that all public activities are proactively inclusive of impacted, non-regulated parties by January 2025.**
 - The equity and engagement manager will ensure that the community compensation process is standardized and applied broadly across all Board work by creating internal tools and providing staff training prior to January 2025.
 - The equity and engagement team will create and implement accessibility and equity standards for presenters in our meetings, such as verbal delivery and presentation standards at our Board meetings prior to January 2025.
 - The equity and engagement manager will review and make recommendations to the Board for access to public comment period and rulemaking processes, including expanded timelines to incorporate Disability Justice practices into the Board's public activities prior to July 2025.

Goal 2 Summary (Office of Equity Template)

Agency Key Business Line

Communications, Engagement, and Policy

PEAR Service Line (where needs are greatest)

Engagement & Community Partnerships

Plans, Policies, and Budgets

Policy Agenda

Public Communications & Education

Tribal Government Relations

Description (Summarize the policies, processes, practices, and procedures related to this investment.

Will require policies and procedures for community engagement, Tribal Engagement, Government to Government work, and equitable rulemaking.

What disparities do you seek to decrease or eliminate with this investment?

Decrease disparities in policy and rule development.

Which people groups and/or places, with the greatest need, does this investment focus on?

Communities at a disadvantage such as age, disability, education, experience in/with the criminal legal system, gender identity/social orientation, geographic location, housing, language/literacy, national origin, race/ethnicity, and socio-economic status.

Did your agency consult with Tribal governments and Recognized American Indian Organizations? How does this investment address the consultation they provided?

No, but will work in collaboration with Tribes will completing objectives and for future strategic plan iterations.

What did impacted communities/employees/other interested parties identify as the root causes of the disparities? How will your investment address root causes?

Community members shared the importance of connecting with the Board and the work that the Board does. We lack visibility in communities and technical communications do not help bridge the gap, although we are a public forum. By ensuring that we build and maintain relationships, are inclusive in rulemaking, and are proactive in meeting Tribes and communities where they are, we can strengthen relationships.

How does your investment address concerns and priorities identified by impacted communities/employees/other interested parties.

Our investments will bring community voice to the table in our rulemaking process. Because of our focus on developing new and on-going relationships, we will be able to better identify community groups that may want to be present at our Board activities. Having a Tribal engagement and procedure guide will improve our connections with Tribes and facilitate the meaningful information reaching Tribal Leaders.

PEAR Determinants of Equity supported by this investment.

- Community & Public Safety
- Equity in State & Local Practices
- Healthy Built & Natural Environments
- Health & Human Services
- Housing & Home Ownership
- Parks, Recreation & Natural Resources

PEAR Determinants of Equity Group(s) and (Community support systems (trunk), Family support systems (branches), Community infrastructure (Root system), Government Practices (Soil & nutrients) supported by this investment.

- Soil & Nutrients
- Trunk
- Branches

PEAR Habit(s) needed to achieve desired PEAR Outcomes

Foster and maintain relationships so that Tribes and communities have a louder voice in rule and policy development.

PEAR Service Line Investment Lead or Team (Who is responsible for leading the action.)

Equity and engagement team

Executive Director

Collaboration needs – Who does the agency need to collaborate with to make the investment?

Collaboration with communities to determine if investment is working.

Collaboration with Department of Health for rules process.

What are the potential barriers, challenges, and/or risks of this investment?

Rules follow the APA standards, which may limit community co-creation, which is what the community wants to maintain positive relationships.

Solution(s) identified to address resource needs and barriers/challenges/risks.

Find creative ways to create equitable policy and rulemaking that can maintain relationships with Tribes and communities. A responsiveness feedback survey can help with this.

PEAR Service Line Investment Start Date

10/1/2024

PEAR Service Line Investment Target End Dates

1/1/2027

PEAR Performance Measure(s) – What measures will be used to determine effectiveness of investments? Were the measures informed by impacted communities/employees/interested parties? What outcome measure was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the investment in achieving the desired PEAR outcome. What process measure used to evaluate whether investment activities have been accomplished.

The Board will use the completion of guidance documents as part of the performance indicators. Without a foundation, additional investments cannot be made. During our technical advisory groups (TAC), we will be able to review the demographic data of our participants, ensuring that we have included key messengers in communities in our TACs. We will also monitor our engagement database, and track new relationships, looking for a percentage increase in relationships each year.

Additionally, during our update of our PEAR plan, we will be able to listen to community feedback on changes in engagement, participation, and outreach.

What data sources will be used to measure success? Consider data sources created by those impacted if available.

We will be using a community relationship management system to receive data on outreach, participation, and engagement. Social media can also provide us with post engagement information. We will also be sending responsiveness surveys to community members who participate in Board activities.

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Goal 2

Build relationships with Tribes, community-based organizations, and impacted community members.

Objective 1

- **Center community partnerships during rule development by July 2025.**
 - Board staff will review rulemaking policies and procedures with an equity lens to ensure they are creating equitable, accessible opportunities for participation.
 - The equity and engagement team will develop a review tool in partnership with impacted communities to assess draft rules language for likely equity impacts.
 - Coordinate with community engagement staff to ensure people with direct lived experience are included equitably on our Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and other rulemaking activities.

Objective 2

- **Develop new and ongoing relationships with communities who are currently, and have been historically marginalized and oppressed, by January 2026.**
 - The equity and engagement team will create and maintain a community engagement database to coordinate engagement with community across all Board staff by January 2025.
 - All Board staff will engage with community-based organizations and other trusted messengers prior to all Board activities, through the use of social media, emails, community events, and other avenues. Guidance will be provided to staff by the outreach coordinator by July 2026.
 - The equity and engagement team will create opportunities for Board members to interact with and build relationships with communities, including community panels at Board meetings, and document a process by January 2027.

Objective 3

- **Build stronger ties with sovereign Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Tribal communities by July 2025.**
 - The Tribal Liaison will create a Tribal engagement plan, which centers Tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relationship, for the Board by July 2025.
 - The Tribal Liaison will provide guidance to staff and Board members around the Board's Tribal engagement procedures and processes by July 2025.
 - Board staff will provide quarterly updates to Tribal partners that are intentional and meaningful, as identified by the Tribes, by July 2025.

Goal 3 Summary (Office of Equity Template)

Agency Key Business Line

Human Resources and Professional Development

PEAR Service Line (where needs are greatest)

Leadership, Operations, & Services

Workforce Equity

Capacity Building

Description (Summarize the policies, processes, practices, and procedures related to this investment.

Invest in professional development for staff and Board members. Will require a review of internal hiring practice that includes recommendations for additional job postings and outreach.

What disparities do you seek to decrease or eliminate with this investment?

Decrease workforce equity disparities and increase engagement knowledge, skills, and abilities among all staff.

Which people groups and/or places, with the greatest need, does this investment focus on?

Potential workforce, Board Members, and Board Staff.

Did your agency consult with Tribal governments and Recognized American Indian Organizations? How does this investment address the consultation they provided?

No

What did impacted communities/employees/other interested parties identify as the root causes of the disparities? How will your investment address root causes?

Board staff were consulted, and they stated that they lack training and professional development that centers equity. Many of the inequities that persist are due to lack of training and better methodologies for completing work. Communities shared that engaging with Board staff can be a scary process. By investing in community relationship training, Board members can be present in the community in ways that do not perpetuate harm.

How does your investment address concerns and priorities identified by impacted communities/employees/other interested parties.

By providing education and training around equity and engagement type activities, staff will be better prepared to work with groups that are currently and have been historically marginalized. By providing engagement training to Board members, they will be able to connect with community and Tribes in ways that do not perpetuate harm. Guidance for hiring practices will increase the number of applicants with diverse backgrounds.

PEAR Determinants of Equity supported by this investment.

Equity in Jobs & Job Training

PEAR Determinants of Equity Group(s) and (Community support systems (trunk), Family support systems (branches), Community infrastructure (Root system), Government Practices (Soil & nutrients) supported by this investment.

Root System

PEAR Habit(s) needed to achieve desired PEAR Outcomes

Provide training opportunities to staff and Board Members. Reevaluate hiring practices.

PEAR Service Line Investment Lead or Team (Who is responsible for leading the action.

Equity and Engagement Manager

Executive Director

Collaboration needs – Who does the agency need to collaborate with to make the investment?

Collaboration with communities to determine if investment is working.

Collaboration with Department of Health for human resources guidance and policies.

What are the potential barriers, challenges, and/or risks of this investment?

The Board of Health has a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Health for recruitment, hiring, and other human resource needs.

Solution(s) identified to address resource needs and barriers/challenges/risks.

Look at recruitment needs for the Board of Health and add additional recruitment requirements. Provide training in recruitment and other training as needed.

PEAR Service Line Investment Start Date

10/1/2024

PEAR Service Line Investment Target End Dates

1/1/2026

PEAR Performance Measure(s) – What measures will be used to determine effectiveness of investments? Were the measures informed by impacted communities/employees/interested parties? What outcome measure was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the investment in achieving the desired PEAR outcome. What process measure used to evaluate whether investment activities have been accomplished.

The Board will use the completion of guidance documents as part of the performance indicators. Without a foundation, additional investments cannot be made.

What data sources will be used to measure success? Consider data sources created by those impacted if available.

We will provide learning and growth surveys at the end of training and professional development opportunities for both Board members and Board staff.

Goal 3

Ensure that hiring and professional development activities increase Board and Board staff understanding of equity principles by January 2027.

Objective 1

- **Provide opportunities for candidates from diverse backgrounds to have the same opportunities to obtain work at the Board of Health by January 2027.**
 - The Executive Director, or designee, will document recruitment processes that include employment outreach beyond traditional avenues prior to January 2027
 - The Executive Director, or designee, will document will write guidance around hiring processes that work to remove biases, including intersectionality on the hiring panel, by January 2027

Objective 2

- **Invest in Board staff professional development by providing equity-centered education and training by January 2027.**
 - The equity and engagement manager will provide or arrange quarterly training on anti-bias, cultural humility, pro-equity and anti-racism by
 - The equity and engagement team will ensure that Board members and staff are visible in communities in ways that do not perpetuate harm, by providing training and support to both Board members and staff.

Desired Outcomes

Write what the overall desired outcomes are for this plan and the key service lines presented.

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