

Office of Equity Inaugural

Annual Report

MARCH 8, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022



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Executive Summary

The Office of Equity Task Force submitted their final proposal of what this office would be to the Legislature, and Gov. Jay Inslee signed the legislation into law establishing the Office of Equity in 2020.

We are the first statewide office of its kind in the nation. As such, we are creating a new path for everything we do. In this first annual report, we are excited to share our work from March 8, 2021 (when Dr. Karen A. Johnson was hired as director) through June 30, the end of fiscal year 2022.

As you read this report, we believe you will be proud of the work that we completed as Washington leads the way in this important effort. And, we hope you are ready to roll up your sleeves and partner, or continue to partner, with us to tackle the work that lies ahead.

What this report covers

- Summary of our work, including our strengths and accomplishments.
- Overview of how well we complied with office standards and performance measures.

Navigation tips

- You can navigate to any specific section by clicking on the desired title in the Table of Contents (on the next page).
 - We've created short 1–2-page sections to highlight the best work of the year.
 - You will find links embedded throughout the report to support documents that help you navigate more information about a particular topic.
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Director's Message

After I was hired as the inaugural director in March 2021, I immediately and intentionally planned and hosted events and opportunities for our team to listen to community members and state employees so we could better understand their priorities for our work. Each person I met impacted me. I felt their pain, their disappointment, and their hope for something better. I learned people want to be seen, valued, and heard. Our community and employees want us to share power with them. They want to be involved in the decision and actions that impact them. And, it makes sense. We all want a sense of power and control over our lives. We want autonomy. We want purpose. Yet, in a system built and sustained by white supremacy, we are paternalistic and regularly make decisions for community members and our employees.

Based on their feedback, we got to work creating Washington's *Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Ecosystem Plan & Playbook* as a statewide framework to partner with community. This partnership would help us co-create truly accessible programs and services and make decisions. I believe this methodology will advance a future where all Washingtonians can access the resources and opportunities they need to flourish and achieve their full potential ([RCW 43.06D.020](#)). We are grateful to the partners who helped us develop [Executive Order 22-04 \(EO\)](#) to lay the foundation on how to best implement PEAR methodology.

The PEAR Plan & Playbook is not our only deliverable. We established and grew relationships because it will take all of us to realize a PEAR ecosystem in Washington. We built relationships with agency leaders, legislators in both houses and both parties, and other leaders and system changers in and outside the



f *Each person I met impacted me. I felt their pain, their disappointment, and their hope for something better. I learned people wanted to be seen, valued, and heard.*

— Dr. Karen Johnson

state doing similar work across the country. We expanded our networks of relationships with community members and groups and employees within Washington. We hosted events. We shared messages. We created awareness and added complexity to the equity narrative around and supported agencies in their journey toward racial justice and equity. We began laying our own internal infrastructure to support the necessary work across the enterprise. While we have an incredible team, they alone cannot meet the demands we have. So, we will continue to advocate for more staff until we can adequately support the enterprise to advance a pro-equity, anti-racist culture across state government.

In the past year, we built internal infrastructure, relationships within and outside state government, and laid the foundation to change the way state government operates. I am proud of the work we have achieved in a such a short period of time and am excited to share our accomplishments with you.

Acknowledgments

Achieving equity in Washington and across state government takes a village. Thank you to each and every person, group, organization, and agency who helped us accomplish a tremendous amount of work in our first year. We are where we are because of you. A few examples include:

Office of Equity Logo Design Team at the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS):

Sara McCaslin, Matt Ruhl, Holly Miranda, David Brummel, Nancy Brubaker

Office of Equity Website: Governor Jay Inslee, OFM (Robin Vasquez, Sue Ann Richards, Shawn Flanagan, Allison Spector, Flora Estrada, Hayden Mackley), WaTech (Wendy Wickstrom, Dina Darrin, Sam Hales), OMWBE (Gina King, Tim Kenney, Sarah Erdmann, Lisa van der Lugt), Business Resource Groups (BUILD-Megan Matthews & Marcus Glasper, DIN- Joslyn Nelson & Mark Adreon, LLN- Abby Chavez Rubi Reaume, Tony Griego, & Victor Andino, RAIN- Ryan Douglas & Elizabeth Fontanilla, VERG- Mark Glenn, WIN- Joanne Lee, Kim Sauer, Michael Nepomuceno & Lorraine Lee, OFM- Flora Estrada), Commissions (CAAA- Ed Prince & Charlotte Kerney, CAPAA- Toshiko Hasegawa, LGBTQ Commission- Manny Santiago, Women's Commission- Kate Sowers), Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (Elizabeth Gordon), DSHS (Theresa Powell, Carolyn Cole, Ruiqin Miao, Nichole Ossa, Cassi Villegas, Megan Matthews, Norah West, Tavares Terry, Justin Chan, Jessica Zinda, Natasha House, Kristine-Marree Williams, Leah Muasau, Elizabeth Zinda, Eboney Christian, Yasmin Michaels, Angel Pele, Jodi McBride, Kathy Williams, Davida Miller, Tim Collins), WSDOT (Earl Key, Jackie Bayne, Roger Millar), OFM (Tammy Pitre)

Community Partners who held Strategic Planning Listening Sessions:

Adefua Cultural Education Workshop, Alizeh Bhijani We Are One America, Auroa Martin & Guillermo Rogel (Front & Centered), Career Connect Washington Statewide Team, Centro Latino, Charter School Commission, Cindy Brinker & Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care , Conference of Minority Transportation Officials , Good Shepard Youth Outreach Team, H Nguyen with Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges , James Daily Gibbs with Northwest Harvest, Jean Craciun with the Diversity Center of Washington, Jian Ma Sami Bailey, Joanne Market CELA, Joan Iva Fawcett Assistant Dean with Gonzaga University, Joana Ramos with Washington State Coalition for Language Access, Kathleen Drew, Kelley Amburgey-Richardson with the Gender and Justice Commission, Kitsap Equity, Race, And Community Engagement Coalition, Lin Crowley Asian Pacific Islander Coalition, Lynn & Tanna Engdhal, Marcia Tate Arunga, Matias Valenzuela with the King County Equity Office, Melannie Cunningham with Pacific Lutheran University, Melissa Allard Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Pam Morris with the Black Education Strategy Round Table, Pamela Jones Hadley

with the Tacoma Alumnae, Pierce County Community Engagement Task Force, Robert Lichtenberg & Superior Court Translation Commission, Rodney McAuly & Charlene Kay , Rosalund Jenkins/ Emerald Cities, Sandra Miller with Washington Workforce, Steven Byers Helping Human Systems & The Athena Group, Tiffany Lamoraux with Solid Ground & Patricia Hayden with YWCA Seattle King Snohomish Counties, Tonia Sugarman with Association of Washington Cities, Victor - Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (COPC), Vikki Gore PNW , Washington Bar Association, Wendy T. with Trillium Employment Services, Western Washington University

Providing the Strategic Planning Listening Session Surveys in other languages:

Marika Barto (OMWBE)

Representing the Office on the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI)

Language Access Workgroup: Don Clintsman, Dana Phelps, Theresa Powell, Carolyn Cole

Developing the Recognition Awards Criteria:

Charleen Anderson (DSHS), Nichole Ossa (DSHS), Christy Bezanson (Results Designing the Office's Recognition Award Coins: Sergeant Zachary Fenn (DOC), Lonnie Spikes (WDFW), Todd Dowler (DOC), Cynthia Varley (Equity)

Pro-Equity Anti-Racism Ecosystem Plan & Playbook:

Governor Inslee & team, Jan Olmsted, Vicki Lowe, Craig Bill, Office, Cami Feek, Cheryl Sullivan-Colglazier (former employee), Jessica Todorovich, Heather Bartlett, Catherine Mele, Kendrick Stewart, David Puente, Jr., Wendi Gunther, Annette Meyer, Elizabeth Smith, Carrie Basas (former employee), Scott McCallum, Manny Santiago, Regina Malveaux, Maria Siguenza, Elizabeth Gordon, Robin Vazquez, Dr. Erica Hernandez-Scott, Marika Barto, Josephine Tamayo Murray, Yazmin Aguilar, Karen Vargas, Wendy Taliaferro, Faduma Ahmed, Nicole Franklin, John Miller, Clinton Johnson, Ricardo Ibarra, Lisa Brown, Marcus Glasper, Russ Olsen, Puget Sound Partnership Team (Laura Blackmore, Larry Epstein, Stephanie Suter, Melissa Schutten

Real Talk!: Kendrick Stewart (COM), David Puente Jr. (DVA), Maria Siguenza (CHA)

What's Next Sessions: RaShelle Davis (GOV), Joslyn Nelson (HCA)

All Around Help: Manny Santiago (LGBTQ Commission), Mark Adreon (retiree), Jan Olmstead, (Office of Equity Task Force)

Background:

Why we did what we did

The Washington State Office of Equity was created when the Legislature passed [Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill \(E2SHB\) 1783](#) and Inslee signed it into law April 2020 ([RCW 43.06D.900](#)).

- **On March 8, 2021**, Dr. Karen A. Johnson was appointed as the Office of Equity’s inaugural director.
- The Office of Equity became official on **July 1, 2021**.
- Director Johnson was unanimously confirmed by the state Senate on **Jan. 12, 2022**.

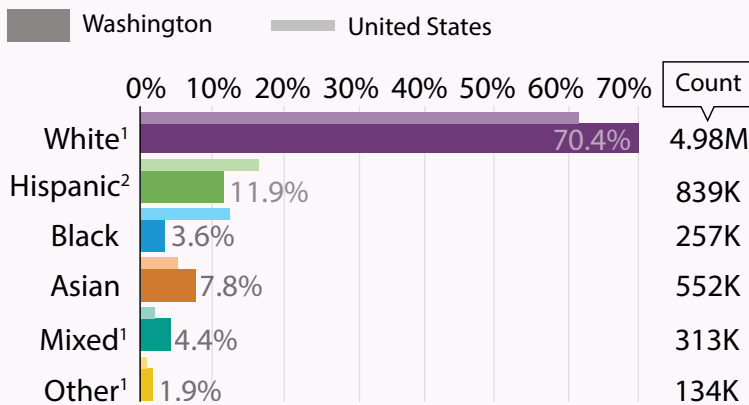
The Legislature established the Office of Equity because they found that:

The diversity of Washington’s population has increased over the last several decades.

Race and ethnicity

Percentage of the total population

Scope: population of the United States and Washington



Count = Number of members in ethno-racial group
¹Non-Hispanic ²Excluding black and Asian Hispanics

As the demographics of our state change, they found that:

1 People from historically and currently marginalized groups still do not have the same opportunities to experience health, wealth, and well-being as their nonmarginalized counterparts.

2 Inequities based on race, ethnicity, gender, and other characteristics continue to be deep, pervasive, and persistent, and they come at a great economic and social cost.

3 Work happening in agencies to address the disparate outcomes faced by people from historically and currently marginalized groups is fragmented across state government.

Because of these findings, the Legislature requires all our action and decisions to be guided by the principles of equity ([RCW 43.06D.020](#)):

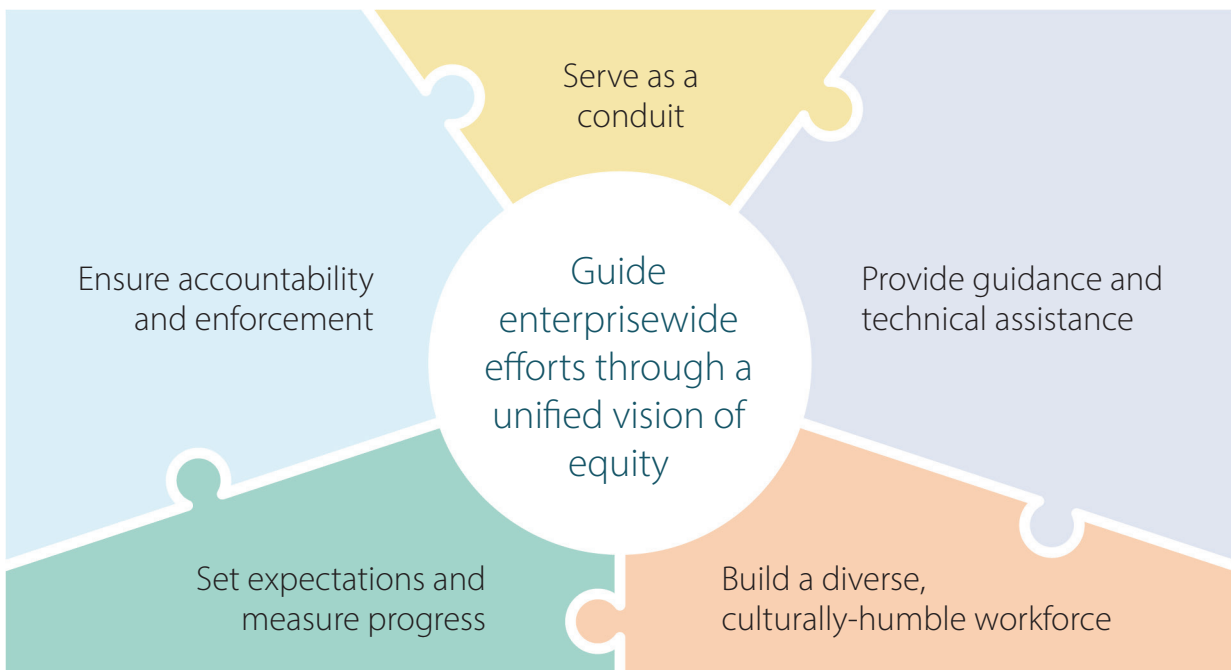
- **Equity is not equality.** Equity requires developing, strengthening, and supporting policies and procedures that distribute and prioritize resources to people in identified groups who have historically been and currently are marginalized, including tribes.
- **Equity requires eliminating systemic barriers** that are deeply entrenched in systems of inequality and oppression.
- **Equity achieves fair procedures and fair outcomes** on the people, promoting dignity, honor, and respect for all.

Our charge is to facilitate policy and systems change to promote equitable policies, practices, and outcomes through:

- Agency decision-making
- Community involvement
- Technical assistance and training to agencies
- Maintaining data and establishing performance metrics and respect for all

Source: [RCW 43.06D.040](#)

Our priorities, set by the Office of Equity Task Force, include:



Source: Office of Equity Task Force Proposal

“Not all peoples have the same historic and cultural backgrounds. We honor that there is more than one belief system and accept that the values, knowledge, and behavior of a people must be understood within their own story and cultural context. Acceptance is the opposite of oppression.”

Vicki Lowe

Descendant of the Jamestown S’Klallam and Bella Cool First Nations
American Indian Health Commission for Washington

Vision, mission, values

Our vision

Everyone in Washington has full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential.

Our mission

We work to promote equitable access to opportunities, power, and resources across state government that reduce disparities and improve outcomes statewide.

We value

- **Access:** Barrier-free environments so everyone can participate.
- **Belonging:** The right to participate in all aspects of society with acceptance, attention, and support from members of the society, while providing the same to others.
- **Dignity:** We honor the sacred nature of individual personhood.
- **Equity:** Acknowledge systemic inequalities by developing, strengthening, and supporting policies and procedures that distribute and prioritize resources to people in social identity groups who have historically been and currently are marginalized. This ensures everyone has access to the same opportunities, power, resources, and outcomes to achieve equality.
- **Justice:** Treating people fairly. To make right. What love looks like in public ([Cornell West](#)).
- **Love:** A selfless and giving act of the will. We seek to out-give and out-serve the other.
- **Ubuntu:** I am because we are. We are interconnected.



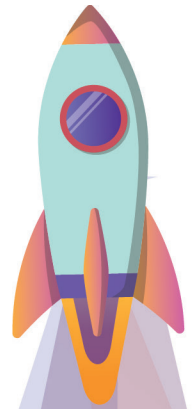
We advance our mission in three ways:

1. Lay a strong foundation. Center equity in all laws, rules, policies, programs, operations, practices, and interactions.
2. Maximize the system we have. Promote stronger policy, integration, and collaboration across systems, sectors, and jurisdictions to make the most of the system we have.
3. Build the system we need. Begin to dismantle racism by addressing root causes through bold systemic and cultural change. Build structural fairness and belonging for individuals and groups that experience discrimination, racism, or multiple forms of oppression.

Source: [Blueprint for a Just & Equitable Future: 10-Year Plan to Dismantle Poverty in Washington, Page 50](#)

We are committed to:

- Bold, revolutionary, transformative action. We will take a stand against dehumanization and injustice as it impacts employees and public policy, acknowledging past harms and repairing harm to those most impacted by present-day systems of oppression.
- Centering the voices and experiences of people facing past and current-day marginalization, inequities, and oppression. We will create and publish new narratives, use decolonized, population-specific data, and share the stories of people to make real, lasting change.
- We will own the consequences of our actions. We commit to honoring the [Seven Generation Principle](#) by making decisions today that lead to the protection of our children and a sustainable world for seven generations (and generations to come).

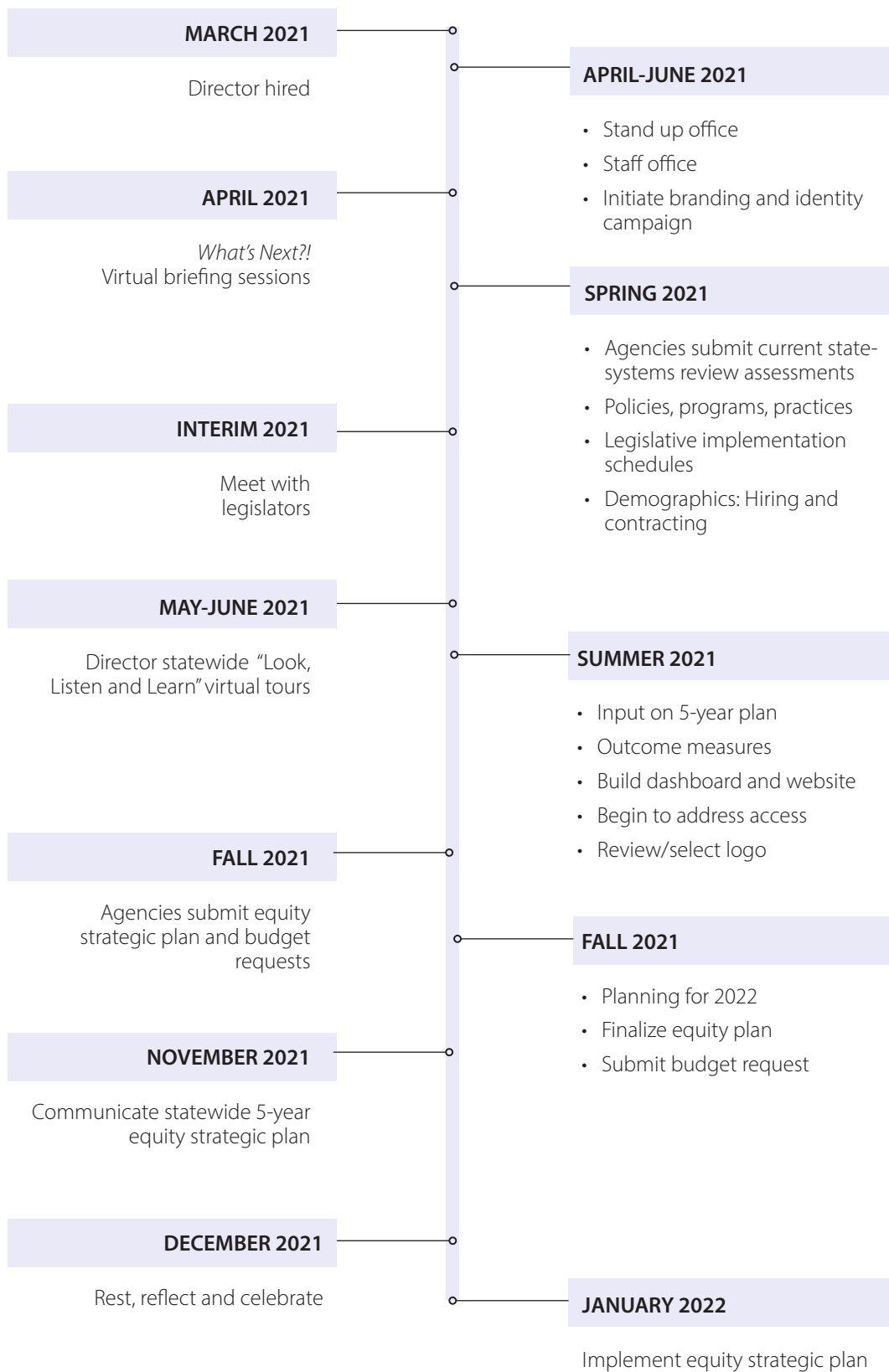


Our First Year: Listening, Learning, Building



In 2021, we spent time listening to state employees and communities to determine the state of the enterprise and our priorities. We knew that whatever we built was going to be based on what people shared with us.

State Office of Equity: Timeline and milestones



Listening

From April through July 2021, we listened to voices across Washington. We gathered the collective wisdom from community partners, and stakeholders, and people and communities that historically have been and currently are marginalized. Together, we co-created a five-year strategic plan to bridge opportunity gaps and reduce disparities. We did this so everyone in Washington can flourish and achieve their full potential for the next seven generations and beyond.

Our staff also engaged in the following activities:

Bimonthly check-in meetings with executive and small agency cabinet directors.

In April 2021, over 650 *new and different* people attended at least one of our 12 What's Next virtual briefings.

Eighty-nine listening sessions with agencies, boards, commissions, business resource groups, and community members and organizations.

Launched surveys to capture perspectives from those who did not attend listening sessions. We received 5,787 [responses](#).

Met with 290 individuals and groups in addition to the meetings we listed above.

Met with 73 legislators from both parties in the House and Senate and their staff during interim session.

Presented our work to the State Government and Tribal Relations Legislative Committee.

Emceed at the People of Color Legislative Summit.

Held recurring one-on-one meetings with the Governor's Office legal and policy staff, Attorney General's legal and policy staff, Office of Financial Management staff, executive directors of the ethnic and social justice commissions, boards and commissions staff, state elected officials and their teams, and numerous state employees.

650 +
people attended
virtual briefings

89
listening sessions

5,787
survey responses

290
meetings with other
groups and individuals

73
meetings with
legislators

April 2021 and May 2021 Meet and Greet

Division	Number of agencies we met with	Total number of agencies
Executive cabinet	24	24
Small cabinet	30	30
Agencies under boards/ commissions	7	41
Business Resource Groups	7	7
Labor	2	2
Other	6	
	76	104

Speaking and engagement activities

Number of speaking engagements within state government	34
Number of speaking engagements outside state government	12
Number of community events attended	32



Media events

- [A Conversation with Dr. Karen Johnson on the Office of Equity](#), by Aaron Kunkler, Washington State Wire, Oct. 4, 2021.
- Several interviews with Urban Forum Northwest (KKNW 11 AM radio) hosted by Eddie Rye, Jr.
- Interviewed by Cindy Bright, Author of *The Color of Courage*, on Heartbeat Radio.

Trainings conducted

Agency	Time
Washington State Department of Transportation	3.5 hours
Labor & Industries	4.5 hours
Family Treatment Court	2.25 hours
Washington State Patrol	1 hour
Sentencing Guidelines Commission	4.5 hours
Department of Ecology	2.5 hours
Evans School	2 hours
Total Time	20.25 hours



Learning

We heard the following from the numerous listening occasions and events we hosted and participated in:

[Office of Equity Task Force priorities](#)

Center community voice in state government decisions.

Improve access to information for people who speak languages other than English.

Assess policy, program, and budget decisions through an equity lens.

Improve equity in grant and contracting.

Hold organizations that receive state support accountable to promote equity.

Promote the exchange of information and best practices.

Collect, analyze, and distribute disaggregated (population-specific) data.

Guide enterprisewide efforts through a unified vision, plan, and strategy for equity.

Serve as a conduit between government and communities.

Build synergy with equity partners.

Serve as a conduit for state institutions.

Provide guidance and technical assistance to foster systems and policy change.

Set expectations, measure progress, and ensure accountability.

Community key priorities taken from the [Strategic Planning Listening survey responses](#)

- Accomplish your stated vision and mission. Support and advocate for equitable treatment for all in work and social settings.
- Check hiring and promotional opportunities for minoritized workers.
- Accomplish more positive staff morale. The rest will take care of itself.
- Give allies a way to support and advance equity efforts.
- Work to abolish the “this is how we’ve always done it mentality” and keep pushing for change.
- Work on the management; show, and teach them what professionalism, honesty, and respect look like. When front line workers observe managers and leaders doing it, they will start to believe that it is truly a value.

Agency staff key priorities taken from the [Strategic Planning Listening survey responses](#)

- Increase representation within Washington Management Service (WMS) positions and higher.
- Help make our workplace the employer of choice.
- Help create a cohesive culture for the entire state of Washington, so that a work culture at one agency feels much the same at another agency.

- Shift culture from defensiveness to civility and respect for others, from a sense of entitlement to a desire to be introspective and become increasingly aware of how our behavior and words impact others.
- Destroy systemic racism.
- Don’t give up. Seek continuous improvement. Ask those appropriate questions. What are we doing right? What do we need to improve? How do we report to all employees? Lots of good stuff is there!
- Establish foundational training and education.

Strategic plan listening and joint work session recommended priorities

- End disparities, including racial and ethnic disparities.
- Improve outcomes statewide across state government, particularly in hiring and promotions; increase equity in state spending for public works, goods and services (including client services), and procurement; and increase access to services.



Building

We began to stand up the Office of Equity while building our organizational capacity.

Internal operations

We established ourselves during the COVID-19 pandemic, which required us to set everything up while working remotely. Working virtually, we:

Designed and finalized the Office of Equity logo.

Built and launched our [website](#) Dec. 10, 2021.

Created office templates and tracking systems.

Established email addresses and postal mail inboxes for our staff.

Established a GovDelivery account and added relevant topics.

Completed employee training.

Began developing hiring and onboarding processes.

Began establishing our budget processes and submitted budgets.

Began establishing office policies.

Established records management processes.

Established the process of and processed public disclosure requests.

Established the office telephone number.

Established the office mailing address.

Designed office letterhead.

Established our contracts management process.

Developed a bill tracking system for legislative sessions.

Hired two executive assistants, a senior administrative assistant, an assistant director for Equity, Access and Belonging, an assistant director for Shared Power Design, and a deputy director of operations.

External relationship building

“To truly innovate your product line, or services offered, you need inspiration and input from internal stakeholders and customers alike. Removing the collaboration phase from the process is a huge misstep, as it creates an incomplete model. This is why it should come as no surprise that brands who fully commit to the collaboration phase of customer led co-creation are universally recognized as the dominate players within their respective industries and have set themselves up for long-term success.”

– Lisa Fuchs ([What is the difference between Co-Creation and Ideation? – KL Communications](#))

We embrace the international concept of and principles behind shared power. We believe we need the partnership and innovation of many people, communities, and organizations to accomplish our mission. Toward that effort, we engaged with and grew relationships with partners external to state government.

- Built relationships with equity leaders in state governor’s offices of New York, New Jersey, and California to learn from and support each other.
- Built partnerships with some of those we met at Strategic Planning listening sessions to advance our mission.

Universities and colleges	City and county officials
Philanthropists and foundations	Tribes
Non-governmental organizations	Civic organizations
People and groups in the following communities: Black, Asian, Latino, LGBTQ+, Women, Disability, Youth, Immigrant, Faith	People and organizations who advocate for equity in the following spaces: contracting, education, criminal justice, disability justice, food, health, housing, labor, child welfare
Non-profit organizations	



Built ways to connect

Daily Flow emails

Established in 2021, The Daily Flow is a daily message from Dr. J to honor special observances, celebrate our different communities, educate, encourage, and inspire its 1,200 subscribers each day.

Message from the director

Top-of-mind updates about the Office of Equity and more.

News for you

Job announcements, special messages, and more.

Show up and speak up!

Pass on opportunities where people can engage to influence decision-making to achieve equitable outcomes in Washington.

Real Talk!

Real Talk! is a space where state employees can lean in, be curious, and engage in honest dialogue about racial equity, justice, and belonging to co-create a state government system that works for everyone. Centered in belonging, we unpack truth, reconcile the past, learn from one another, connect, and — together — experience healing from harm.

We believe this is the moment and place to have real conversations to truly transform our agencies into places where real people experience equity, justice, and belonging every day, now and for generations to come.

We hosted six one-hour Real Talk sessions beginning this January. We added 30-minute post-talk sessions in May to have more dialogue between participants and Real Talk hosts. On average, about 280 state employees attend each Real Talk session.

“Incorporating DEI as a guiding lens for the effective and impactful operation of state government is essential to ensure that our office is best serving every Washingtonian. When I came into office, one of the first things I did was reach out to the Office of Equity so that our state Treasury can move forward on this important journey. And, with their help, we have jump-started DEI initiatives and assembled a leadership team that will put together the tangible steps for progress.”

Mike Pellicciotti

Washington State Treasurer's Office




Legislative work

Our work is to:

- Lay a strong foundation that supports state agencies in applying an equity lens in all aspects of agency decision-making.
- Maximize the system we have.
- Build the pro-equity, antiracism system that we need for everyone in Washington to have full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential.

During our first year, we spent over 167 hours providing training, technical support and consultation to agencies working to center equity in all aspects of agency decision-making. A few examples include:

Legend

-  Consultation
-  Collaboration
-  Technical assistance

Broadband Equity and Affordability Grants (SSB 5651)

Consult on eligible proposals

Public Works Contracting Procedures (SB 5032)

Consult to develop best practices guidelines

Environmental Justice (ESSSB 5141)

Collaborate to fill Environmental Justice Council positions

Racial Equity Analysis - OFM (ESSB 5092)

Collaborate to provide recommendations on equity impact analysis on legislative proposals

Zero Emissions (HB 1287)

Collaborate on zero emissions mapping and forecasting tool

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (SHB 2905 ESSB 5092)

Manage contract and provide technical assistance

Food Security (WSDA Sec 311)

Provide technical assistance: alternative to farms to food; grants for minority, women, small business; underrepresented farmers/ranchers inclusion

Racial Equity Analysis - JLARC (ESSB 5405)

Provide technical assistance on implementing racial analysis into reports

Universal Health Care (E2SSB 5399)

Member of the Universal Health Care commission

“Thank you for your presentation yesterday. You packed a lot in a small amount of time. People are very excited for the bigger presentation in February. I appreciate you taking the time and I appreciate you. We are all going to do great things together!”

Pixie Needham
Health Care Authority

“Thank you for your contributions to the zero-emission vehicle (EV) mapping tool project. It’s been a learning experience and a pleasure working with you. I will do my best to include the Office of Equity early and often in future efforts to reach a diversity of stakeholders and potential EV drivers.”

Tonia Buell
Washington State Department of Transportation

Gov. Jay Inslee message

Working together to co-create our PEAR Plan

President Abraham Lincoln’s call for a government ‘of the people, by the people, and for the people’ remains a unifying vision across our country, but it is a vision that requires constant work and reflection. We believe in the disability justice call to action, “nothing about us, without us.” This means we are committed to partnering with those who have been historically and systematically excluded in our decision-making.

It’s why, in December 2020, I declared that Washington will be an anti-racist state and committed to take actions that hold our state to that commitment.

This work has started with learning how to strengthen partnerships within our own agencies. Thanks to the Office of Equity, we’ve engaged thousands of state employees and community members to develop Executive Order 22-04, and *Washington’s PEAR Plan Ecosystem & Playbook*. The final PEAR P&P is scheduled to be released by the end of 2022.

Our *PEAR Plan & Playbook* positions us to build equity into our services, systems, and operations to make sure Washington is where every person has equitable access and opportunity to flourish and reach their full potential. It provides a roadmap, an online toolkit, and other resources. State agencies and stakeholders across Washington can use these to collectively measure progress toward our shared broad goal to achieve equity here — especially in public contracting, public employment, public education, and access to public services (Executive Order 22-02).



We will no longer replicate and reinforce systems, processes and behaviors that create barriers to state government services and inequities based on race, ethnicity, gender, and other characteristics.

By holding all leaders of executive cabinet agencies accountable for reducing disparities across state government, and using input from communities served by state government, together, we will make Washington the best place to live, learn, work, and play.

I invite other statewide elected officials, institutions of higher education, agencies of the judiciary, agencies of the Legislature, and boards and commissions to join us in this PEAR-active approach to disrupt longstanding injustice and inequity and create a sustainable, equitable and just new normal, statewide and across state government.

I look forward to rolling up my sleeves alongside you to create a PEAR ecosystem in Washington – this will not only make us better agencies, but it will make us better people. Let’s get to work.

— Gov. Jay Inslee

Our key accomplishments

Executive Order 22-04

The governor signed [Executive Order 22-04: Implementing the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism \(PEAR\) Plan & Playbook](#) (EO 22-04) March 21, 2022. The signing provides the authority and accountability to implement the Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) methodology in state government to fundamentally change **how** government works. We thank everyone who contributed to this historic executive order to make Washington a leader in advancing equity for all.

Community roundtable with governor

Before the governor signed EO 22-04, he met with community members and state agency leaders. He listened to what they shared about what was needed for state employees and community members to work together to create Washington's pro-equity, anti-racism ecosystem. Highlights include:

1. Establish co-governance at every level to plan and take action.
 - Use PEAR framework to co-create and embed community (including family experiences and sentiment) into agency decision-making as the state's new competency and approach.
 - Use Equity Impact Reviews as a gap analysis to achieve equity and social justice for all.
 - Communities must give examples on how to co-create, how to listen, and how to co-govern.
2. Nonprofits who serve communities have a hard time serving the people because the state and federal rules and reporting guidelines take a lot of time to complete.
 - Need community at the decision-making table, especially when grant decisions are made.
 - Prioritize getting people to the table and taking sufficient time to listen over the quick legislative or federal funding turnaround deadlines associated with funding requests.
3. Go to the people. Listen often and early (before the process is designed or decisions are made) rather than listen late or not at all. We need to get this right.
 - Need accountability to align and support the work of the grantor and grantee.
 - Explore sustainability from a community perspective: explore how to build learning structures and culture.
4. Do not create splitting, pitting, or divisive environments for people impacted by inequities.
 - Agencies need to understand the differences in cultural values when co-creating with communities.

5. Hire staff who look like communities they serve and ensure they are at the decision-making table.
 - Build trust and relationship by hiring people from impacted communities.
 - Look at classification system: need a process for encouraging skills-based experience in hiring.
 - Set truth and reconciliation tables to lay solid foundation of trust to take responsibility for harm and begin healing.
 - Intentionally make time to hear the stories from the community about the harm that government has caused (worst first laws (prioritizing those who have been most harmed), energy future, language access, reporting, rural areas, technology, infrastructure, and the like), and own the pain caused.
 - Take the necessary time to be 'relational' instead of rushing this as a work transaction.
6. Ensure that people know what services are available and how they can access those services.
7. Need integrated service delivery instead of agencies working in silos, especially for language translation services.
8. Do not allow state government systems and bias to drive what we think people need and do not use barriers as an excuse for maintaining the status quo.
 - Acknowledge that we cannot shift a culture with a one-time training on equity.
 - Defensive people – remind the dominant culture that this is 'systemic change' to ward off fragility and defensiveness.
9. Give ourselves grace in rising and falling together, and learning and growing together, as we set a gold standard for the nation in becoming a PEAR ecosystem in Washington.

PEAR Plan & Play Book Orientations

Between May and July 2022, we conducted 20 PEAR Team Orientation sessions to provide state agencies the information needed to complete their initial equity impact review and PEAR Strategic Action Plans, according to EO 22-04.

Additionally, we responded to over 250 inquiries sent to the PEAR@equity.wa.gov inbox, including requests for one-on-one consultation.



Agency compliance

This section is an overview of how well agencies are complying with EO 22-04.

EO 22-04 Compliance

Agencies are required to meet the following deadlines:

- **April 30:** Establish PEAR Team
- **Aug. 1:** Complete initial equity impact assessment (EIR)
- **Sept. 1:** Complete a PEAR Strategic Action Plan
- **Sept. 1, 2023 (and annually):** Prepare and submit PEAR Annual Performance Report to the Office of Equity

We are thrilled to report that we received the initial contact information for **72 PEAR Teams**.

The 72 PEAR Teams represent:

- **812 total PEAR Team members**, including agency executive leaders, agency equity officers, employees, and external customers, partners, and experts.
- **100% of executive cabinet** agencies.
- **Approximately 74% of small cabinet** agencies (not including Office of Equity).
- **25 additional agencies, boards, and commissions, and organizations**, including those that accepted the governor's invitation in EO 22-04 and opted in, including but not limited to:
 - o **Three elected offices:** Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Office of the Insurance Commissioner; Office of the State Treasurer
 - o **One institution of higher education:** Eastern Washington University

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In this first year of EO 22-04 implementation, we offered 18 PEAR Team Orientation sessions over the last two weeks in May 2022 and into the first week of June 2022. We hosted two additional make up sessions in July for a **total of 20 PEAR Team Orientation live sessions.**

We had 607 people or approximately **74%** of total PEAR Team members attend the live sessions, including state employees and community members.

There were an additional **189** views of the [recorded PEAR Team Orientation session](#).

We ensured accessibility for participants with disabilities by:

- Providing American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services for 15 PEAR Team Orientation live sessions.
- Providing Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) captioning at all PEAR Team Orientation live sessions.
- Working closely with the Department of Services for the Blind to review and improve accessibility of PEAR Team Orientation session materials for participants who are Blind or have low vision.
- Inviting registrants to indicate on their registration information if they had any accessibility needs to fully participate in the PEAR Team Orientation session and providing a 'registration by email and phone' option.
- Providing accessibility information for Zoom participation at the beginning of each live session.
- Providing captions for the recorded PEAR Team Orientation session.

In this reporting period, we responded to over **200 inquiries** that were sent to the PEAR@equity.wa.gov inbox, including requests for one-on-one consultation.

As of Sept. 1, 2022, we are delighted to report that over 50 state agencies submitted their first PEAR Strategic Action Plans.

We continue to consult with other agencies and state government partners that are interested in establishing PEAR Teams.



"I just wanted to say thank you for the PEAR orientation video and introduction by Dr. J. It really helped me solidify all the paperwork I had been reading. The effort your department is putting in to making this work as clear as possible is incredible. I had an amazing first meeting with WSP on their PEAR team yesterday. Having been in criminal justice for the last 30 years, it was refreshing to listen, and be heard. The system has a great opportunity to change with the leadership of the state today."

Bobi Foster-Grahler

Washington State Patrol PEAR Team Member

Pierce College

Office of Equity Task Force report review

The law requires my team and me to review the final recommendations submitted by the Office of Equity Task Force and report back to the governor and the Legislature any additional recommendations necessary for us to carry out the duties in [RCW 43.06D.040](#).

The Office of Equity Task Force made the following recommendations in their [Final Proposal](#).

We must:

- Be properly funded with staff and necessary resources.
- Disrupt and dismantle systems of institutional racism and oppression.
- Have a seat at the table at the highest levels of government for decision-making with a statewide impact.
- Share power and resources with community: build relationships of trust and partnership so government work aligns with community-defined priorities and community-driven solutions.
- Prioritize government-to-government relationships and model this across state government.
- Operationalize equity and intersectionality.
- Help agencies target resources to address root causes and prioritize areas with the highest need to invest upfront to mitigate the source, not symptoms of problems.
- Break down silos; it is ineffective and costly to continue working in a fragmented manner.
- Be given time to focus on processes and outcomes because systemic change takes time.
- Reach hearts and minds to affect personal and institutional change.
- Build capacity with agencies for this work.
- Honor existing DEI efforts.
- Be guided by a strategic plan for the state.
- Measure the state's progress.
- Build community within government and grow capacity to engage with community.
- Center storytelling as data and not just numerical data.
- Provide support and promote accountability.
- Build resilience and sustainability.

Our recommendations

Based on our review of the final recommendations submitted by the Office of Equity Task Force, we report to the governor and the Legislature that the following recommendations are necessary for us to carry out the duties in [RCW 43.06D.040](#).

1. Continue to build capacity within agencies and community across government to reach hearts and minds to affect personal and institutional change.
2. Provide support and promote accountability within state agencies to build resilience and sustainability.
3. Help agencies target resources to address root causes and prioritize areas with the highest need while engaging community to focus systemic change.

What's Next: Office of Equity 2022-2023 priorities

[Our recommendations](#) are critical for laying a strong foundation. These recommendations will support state agencies as they apply an equity lens in all aspects of agency decision-making, maximizing the system that we have while building the pro-equity, antiracism system we need for everyone in Washington to have full access to the opportunities, power and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential.

Internal operations priorities

Phase 1: Compliance

Support agencies in meeting [Executive Order 22-04](#) to apply a pro-equity, anti-racism lens in all aspects of decision-making.

1. Establish PEAR Teams
2. Equity Impact Review
3. PEAR Strategic Action Plans
4. Annual PEAR report

Phase 2: Transformation

Champion agency transformation that seeks and embraces community partnership, centering the voice of people impacted by state programs and services in all we do.

Phase 3: Accountability

Establish statewide and agency-specific process and performance measures that foster continued growth and movement towards equity and justice for all, measuring outcomes and impact.

Capacity building

We will dedicate protected time to hire and onboard staff to:

- Build the capacity to collect, maintain, and report data and establish performance metrics.
- Focus on inequities in hiring, contracts and service delivery across state government.
- Lead the statewide implementation of Executive Order 22-04.
- In partnership with Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, establish the appropriate level of communication and consultation with tribal governments, non-federally recognized tribes, and American Indian organizations.
- Prioritize achieving equity in blue and green spaces (food systems, natural resources, environment).
- Contract with experts to help state agencies build internal capacity to create high-performing workplace cultures of equity, access, and belonging.
- Communicate and share information and services with all Washingtonians, regardless of ability and English proficiency.
- Compensate eligible community members participating in our work groups ([2SSB 5793](#)).

Deliverables

We plan to complete and release several key documents next year to further our mission:

- PEAR Plan & Playbook
- Statewide Universal Access and Belonging plan
- Enterprise Community Compensation Guidelines for Class-One work groups ([2SSB 5793](#))
- Toolkits and resources to support state agencies doing this work

Tasks

We will continue to facilitate policy and systems change to promote equitable policies, practices, and outcomes through:

- **Agency decision-making.** Help state agencies apply an equity lens in all aspects of agency decision-making, including service delivery, program development, policy development, and budgeting ([EO 22-04](#)).
- **Community involvement.** Establish our community advisory board ([ESSB 5693 Sec. 117\(14\)](#)).
- **Technical assistance and training to agencies.** Serve as a clearinghouse for tools and resources.
- **Accountability.** Build the infrastructure to measure and show progress in a transparent way.
- **Learn from each other.** Host events to amplify historically marginalized voices, bring community and government together, and highlight the positive work that is occurring.



Legislative priorities

Legend



Consultation



Collaboration



Lead

Demographic and Geographic Information Collection (ESSB 5693)

Consult on demographic tracking information

DOH Health Equity Assessment (ESSB 5693)

Consult on the assessment and develop recommendations

Homeownership Disparities (ESSB 5693)

Consult to appoint work group members

LCB Cannabis Social Equity Program (ESSB 5693)

Consult on a third-party contractor

OMWBE Racial Equity in Public Spending

Consult on a state equity toolkit for public spending

RCO Equity Assessment (ESSB 5693)

Consult to develop and conduct community engagement to inform

Capital Equity Review (ESSB 5693)

Collaborate to develop and conduct community engagement process for the review

Community Reinvestment Plan (ESSB 5693)

Define "by and for organizations" and partner to develop plan

Digital Equity Plan (ESS HB 1723)

Co-facilitate forum, review outreach effort, jointly appoint members, transmit recommendations

TAG Measurement and Data Framework (ESSB 5693)

Collaborate to inform analysis

WSP DEI Program (SHB 2057 ESSB 5689)

Collaborate to hire consultant, provide technical assistance to WSP, report on performance

Lived Experience Compensation (2SSB 5793 ESSB 5693)

Develop enterprise guidelines for issuing stipends

External priorities

We are committed to serving as the state's subject matter expert on equity to state agencies and supporting state agencies, boards, and commissions as they apply a pro-equity, anti-racism lens to all aspects of their decision-making.

Good Jobs Challenge

Over the next three years, we will prioritize our partnership with the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), the Employment Security Department (ESD), Washington STEM, and the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) to implement Washington's Jobs Initiative, a \$23.5 million award from the Good Jobs Challenge. This partnership will expand career opportunities for 5,000 Washington residents by scaling and enhancing Washington's existing Career Connect Washington (CCW) strategy.

Our role is to:

- Ensure accountability when reaching and serving communities experiencing inequities.
- Provide training for majority white-led entities and employers whose programs serve people of color and others who experience inequities.



