

# STATE POLICY AGENDA 2026

**We are working side by side with communities to build an equitable future where everyone has a safe place to call home, enough to eat, a quality education, and access to the resources they need. Racial justice guides our work.**

United Way of King County advocates for policies that address the drivers of systemic inequities that disproportionately affect Communities of Color. We encourage the Legislature to reinvest in proven programs and infrastructure that serve our most vulnerable neighbors, while adopting progressive revenue solutions and expanding community-driven investments that promote opportunity, stability, and well-being for all Washingtonians.



## **ADVANCING ECONOMIC MOBILITY**

- Strengthen and protect Washington's SNAP program to offset federal cuts and expand access for immigrant and refugee households.
- Support strategic investments in 211, a free phone line that connects people to critical programs and services.
- Increase funding for high-quality, culturally responsive, and accessible mental and behavioral health for all.
- Increase and fund access to affordable and culturally responsive childcare and after-school care by maximizing childcare subsidies and on-campus child care facilities, and by creating partnerships with nonprofits to expand childcare access.
- Create pay pathways for undocumented students in post-secondary education.
- Support undocumented workers by creating and fully funding an unemployment insurance program for undocumented workers.
- Codify and fully fund the Apple Health Expansion program that covers low-income immigrant and refugee community members.
- Increase state funding to ensure equitable pay for human services providers and fully cover the true cost of delivering essential community services.
- Support the creation of a statewide Community Enhancement Fund to invest in BIPOC-owned small businesses, strengthening local economies and building community wealth.



## **PROMOTING HOUSING STABILITY**

- Authorize counties and cities to adopt a voter-approved real estate excise tax to fund affordable housing.
- Advocate for the Affordable Homes Act that increases the supply of affordable and workforce housing.
- Prohibit local laws that criminalize people experiencing homelessness.
- Increase investments for affordable housing, rental assistance, and homelessness services.
- Prevent local barriers to shelter and permanent supportive housing by creating state pathways to appeal discriminatory or unjust local decisions.



## **INTERRUPTING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE**

- Ensure every student can eat free with universal school meals and full funding across all food systems.
- Expand access to wraparound supports for college students, including transportation, housing assistance, and campus-based food benefits.
- Auto-qualify unaccompanied and foster youth for the Washington College Grant and Passport programs to streamline access to higher education.
- Codify the McKinney-Vento act at the state level to protect the education rights and services for children and youth experiencing homelessness.