

## **Washington Youth & Families Fund Memorandum of Understanding**

We come together in celebration of the 10-year anniversary of Washington Families Fund and of the substantial collective progress we have made preventing and ending family homelessness in Washington State. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signifies both new and renewed commitments to work together on a complex issue that requires collaborative, multi-system solutions. Through continuous shared learning, testing promising new ideas, and focusing our collective resources on what works, we can make youth, young adult and family homelessness a rare event. And we can ensure that when it does happen, it is a brief and one-time occurrence.

This MOU articulates our intention to continue and expand the public-private partnership, as further described below. This MOU replaces the Washington Families Fund MOUs executed in 2004 and 2009 and changes the name to the Washington Youth and Families Fund.

### **RECITALS**

The Washington Families Fund (WFF) was created in 2004 as a public-private partnership focused on providing services for homeless families across the state. Building Changes was selected to administer the Fund.

A new MOU was signed in 2009 to expand WFF, adding a cross-systems approach and launching pilots to test innovative new strategies in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.

Much has been accomplished since 2004:

- We have, by one measure, achieved a 35% reduction in family homelessness in Washington State.<sup>1</sup>
- The State has allocated \$17 million to the Washington Families Fund, which has leveraged \$38.5 million in investments from 25 different private funders.
- Mainstream systems—such as public housing authorities, workforce development, K-12 education, community colleges and primary and behavioral healthcare—are now working together to create housing stability for homeless families.
- WFF has supported 80 organizations in 21 counties across the state and has:
  - Developed and funded a new model of supportive housing for families with multiple barriers to stability, which is generating significant learnings about what works to support high-needs families.
  - Advanced the implementation of Rapid Re-Housing strategies in communities across Washington State.
  - Focused on employment as a key strategy for ending family homelessness.
  - Piloted new approaches to improving the way families are served, by focusing on the performance of the entire system, not just individual programs.

---

<sup>1</sup> Family homelessness was reduced by 35% in Washington between 2006 and 2014, according to the annual point in time counts as reported to the Washington State Department of Commerce. The more robust data source of Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) will be used going forward.

## **We have made progress, but there's more work to do.**

As our understanding of homelessness and its solutions evolves, WYFF must also evolve to:

- Expand systems work statewide, building on successful pilot projects and adding new mainstream partners;
- Focus on racial disproportionality in the youth, young adult and family homelessness systems; and LGBTQ disproportionality among homeless youth;
- Improve how we capture, share and use data to guide system changes, sharpen investment decision-making and drive continuous improvements.
- Set new goals in response to improved data that more accurately tell us how we are doing in making youth, young adult and family homelessness rare, brief, and one-time;
- Add a focus on youth and young adults because:
  - Youth and young adults have unique developmental needs not being met by either the adult or family homeless systems;
  - The full extent of youth and young adult homelessness is hidden;
  - A significant portion of the 30,609 homeless students<sup>2</sup> in Washington are unaccompanied youth;
  - Addressing youth and young adult homelessness in the first place may prevent involvement in other systems such as foster care and criminal justice, and lead to cost savings in the long term;
  - Interventions to end youth and young adult homelessness may stop the cycle of homelessness as they become adults;
  - Better data is needed to understand the unique needs of homeless youth and young adults.

## **GOALS**

The undersigned partners agree to pursue the following goals of the Washington Youth and Families Fund (WYFF):

1. By 2020 make youth, young adult and family homelessness in Washington State a rare, brief, and one-time occurrence. We believe this can be accomplished by developing a data-driven, high-performing system built on promising and proven practices that leverage multiple systems.
2. Better understand the full scope of youth, young adult and family homelessness in Washington State by developing data systems to support the work, with specific focus on the impacts of disproportionality for youth and families of color and for LGBTQ youth.
3. Assure public and private resources are used as effectively as possible to serve homeless youth, young adults and families or those at risk of becoming homeless.

---

<sup>2</sup> The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act defines homeless children as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and unaccompanied youth who are living “doubled up” with other family or friends. This is a broader definition than that of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, which does not include children and youth living doubled up.

4. Align our efforts for youth and young adults with the United States Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Framework to End Youth Homelessness core outcomes: stable housing, increased permanent connections, access to education and employment opportunities, and support of social and emotional well-being.

### Measurement of Progress

In alignment with the federal Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH) measures, we will measure our progress by tracking:

1. The number of youth, young adults and families who are homeless;
2. The length of time youth, young adults and families spend homeless;
3. The rate at which youth, young adults and families return to homelessness.

These goals will be measured by reporting on the annual number of youth, young adults and families who have received services as reported through the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS), and will use the following statewide data from 2013 as a baseline:

Number of Homeless	Families	8,648
	Unaccompanied Youth under 18	975
	Young adults 18 to 24	4,105
Length of Time Homeless	Families	116 days
	Unaccompanied Youth under 18	36 days
	Young adults 18 to 24	74 days
Rate of returns to Homelessness	Families	9%
	Unaccompanied Youth under 18	19%
	Young adults 18 to 24	22%

The data sources will be updated as the homeless system's ability to measure the full extent of youth, young adults and families experiencing homelessness improves. HMIS data only captures youth, young adults and families who have been served by the homelessness system. Complete statewide data for youth and young adults in particular is not currently available.<sup>3</sup>

### TERMS

#### Partner Roles

This public-private partnership relies on the unique strengths and contributions of its partners. Each partner agrees to:

- Collaborate with other funders and systems to contribute and align resources to meet the goals of the Washington Youth and Families Fund.
- Collect relevant data and evaluate the impact of promising practices to continually improve the work of systems serving homeless youth, young adults and families.

---

<sup>3</sup> Data from 2013 is the most recent available. Information provided by the WA State Department of Commerce using data from their Homeless Management Information System. Data sources not included in this MOU may be used at WYFF Leadership Committee meetings to measure progress and provide information about homeless youth, young adults and families.

- Share their learning and experiences so that successful efforts may be replicated in other communities throughout the State.
- Foster connections to mainstream community systems and all resources that work to increase housing stability.
- Act as an ambassador for this collaborative effort by communicating with stakeholders and contributing to the broader community's understanding of efforts to reduce youth, young adult and family homelessness.

#### State of Washington

- Shall be represented by the Governor or his/her designee and supported by the State departments that most directly support homeless youth, young adults and families.
- Shall serve as the lead entity to provide best available data through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Integrated Client Database (ICDB) and other state-owned systems to evaluate progress toward meeting the statewide homeless goals articulated within.

#### Building Changes

- Serve as the lead administrator for the public-private partnership known as the Washington Youth and Families Fund.
- Provide capacity building and make meaning of results with grantees, private philanthropy and public entities.
- Pool, grant, and administer those resources invested directly in the Washington Youth and Families Fund to benefit communities throughout the State.

#### **Leadership Committee**

- The Leadership Committee's purpose shall be to champion the goals of the Washington Youth and Families Fund, share learning and best practices, and understand data and evaluation findings and progress toward meeting stated goals.
- Shall be co-chaired by the Governor or his/her designee and a committee member from a private philanthropy partner organization.
- Each of the signers of the MOU agree to designate one board or executive staff member to represent their organization on the Leadership Committee.
- The Governor will appoint an executive level representative from each state department that serves homeless youth, young adults and families experiencing homelessness.
- Membership adjustments may be made to the Committee provided they align with the intent and approach articulated in this MOU.
- Building Changes shall convene and provide staffing to the Leadership Committee as needed to meet the goals of the Washington Youth and Families Fund.
- The Leadership Committee shall meet up to two (2) times per year.

This MOU is a statement of intent only, and is not binding upon the parties. The parties will not be liable to each other for any damages or losses arising from or relating to this MOU. Additional partners may be added to the MOU upon majority agreement by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have signed and made effective this MOU on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of December 2014.

Jay Inslee, Governor, State of Washington  
David Bley, Director, Pacific Northwest Initiative, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Alice Shobe, Executive Director, Building Changes  
Kelli Linville, Mayor, City of Bellingham  
Sonya Campion, Trustee, The Campion Foundation  
Ray Stephanson, Mayor, City of Everett  
Ashley Lommers-Johnson, Executive Director, Everett Housing Authority  
Carol Anderson, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Grant County  
Stephen Norman, Executive Director, King County Housing Authority  
Dow Constantine, Executive, King County  
Jon Fine, President & CEO, United Way of King County  
Marléna Sessions, CEO, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County  
Piper Henry-Keller, Trustee, Medina Foundation  
Jane Broom, Community Affairs Manager, Puget Sound, Microsoft Corporation  
Gay Dubigk, Executive Director, Northwest Workforce Development Council  
Stephen Buxbaum, Mayor, City of Olympia  
Kay Kassinger, Executive Director, Peninsula Housing Authority  
Pat McCarthy, Executive, Pierce County  
Karen Hull, Executive Director, Pierce County Housing Authority  
Dona Ponepinto, President & CEO, United Way of Pierce County  
Kris Hermanns, Executive Director, Pride Foundation  
Tricia Raikes, Co-Founder, Raikes Foundation  
Ed Murray, Mayor, City of Seattle  
Andrew Lofton, Executive Director, Seattle Housing Authority  
Father Stephen V. Sundborg, President, Seattle University  
John Lovick, Executive, Snohomish County  
Bob Davis, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Snohomish County  
Dennis Smith, President and CEO, United Way of Snohomish County  
Erin Monroe, Chief Executive Officer, Workforce Snohomish County  
Patrick Baldoz, Executive Director, South Central Workforce Development Council  
David Condon, Mayor, City of Spokane  
Pam Tietz, Executive Director, Spokane Housing Authority  
Marilyn Strickland, Mayor, City of Tacoma  
Dr. Pamela Transue, President, Tacoma Community College  
Rose Lincoln Hamilton, President, Greater Tacoma Community Foundation  
Michael Mirra, Executive Director, Tacoma Housing Authority  
Paul Knox, Executive Director, United Way of Thurston County  
Linda Nguyen, CEO, WorkForce Central  
Lowel Krueger, Executive Director, Yakima Housing Authority  
Dr. Susan Enfield, Superintendent, Highline Public Schools