



# Beyond the Ballot

Building a Healthier, More Equitable Colorado Together

As we turn the page on a charged election season, let's pause, take a deep breath, and find a moment for reflection and resolve. For many, this time has been filled with passion, hope and a fair share of stress. The months leading up to election day tested our resilience and, at times, our sense of security. As you're reading this, you might be filled with anxiety, fear, exhaustion and anger. Yet even amid these challenges, hope remains. We are powerful and together, we can strengthen our communities and work toward a healthier, more equitable future for all Coloradans, especially for those who have long faced the greatest barriers to good health.

At the Colorado Health Foundation, our commitment to advancing health equity and racial justice is unshakable. We will continue to stand in solidarity with historically excluded communities, especially those facing disadvantage because of race, LGBTQIA+ identities, income and/or immigration status. Elections may come and go, but our dedication to this work remains steadfast. Real progress demands a consistent focus on what truly matters: ensuring that every Coloradan has the resources and opportunities needed to live healthy lives. Regardless of the political landscape, our mission to improve the health of Coloradans endures as does our focus on health equity and racial justice.

We know that no single organization can achieve these aims on its own. We also know that many of you are doing the hard work to create change, day in and day out. And I am so grateful for you and your inspirational work. Achieving a more equitable and just future requires us all to engage actively in addressing the health challenges confronting our communities. Whether it's advocating for policies that

create economic opportunities, volunteering our time and resources, or listening to and amplifying the voices of those who have been historically marginalized, every action counts. Your voice, your involvement, your building community and connection with others—these are powerful tools that will continue to drive change. The road to a healthier Colorado may be complex, but it is one we must keep navigating together.

## **Beyond Elections**

Elections can feel like defining moments, and it's easy to perceive their outcomes as the ultimate measure of the change we can achieve. However, some of the most meaningful opportunities to make a difference often begin with what happens after Election Day, right where you live. That's when ballot measures and other policy changes are implemented, when elected officials and public agencies are held accountable, and where exercising community voice remains essential. When you're ready, consider the personal and collective changes you want to pursue in 2025, think about ways to engage with others in your community:

- Organize around specific needs or concerns. If you notice something that needs fixing, reach out to your neighbors. Invite them to join you in creating solutions.
- Connect with other community groups or coalitions doing impactful work and lend your support to amplify and strengthen their efforts. Remember there is safety and strength in numbers.
- Use your voice to advocate for policies that advance health and well-being for you and your neighbors. Engage with local leaders and keep an eye on the Colorado legislative session starting in January. Stay informed and share your perspectives with the elected officials serving your community.

This isn't to diminish the importance of voting. On the contrary, we should celebrate Colorado's high voter turnout as one signal of the strength of our civic engagement. Voting is crucial to creating change. This year, Coloradans resoundingly supported state and local ballot measures that improved access to critical healthcare services, tackled local housing challenges, and changed how our local and state governments operate.

## **Continue to Take Deep Breaths**

Today, as we reflect on this election season, let's honor the strength, resilience and hope within our communities and recognize our shared responsibility to build a healthier, more just Colorado. Let us also hold space for the anxiety, fear, exhaustion and anger many are feeling today and take care of one another. Most importantly, take another deep breath and exhale. The sun will rise again tomorrow. And so will we.

Together, we can create a state where everyone has what they need to live healthy lives.

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