The Colorado Health Foundation™

Uniting to Support the Nonprofit Sector

Human service nonprofits have long existed to fill gaps in the social safety net and work toward creating a more just society to ensure people's basic needs are met, including access to food, housing and health care. Without them, thousands of people in Colorado stand to lose access to life-saving programs, putting health, well-being and stability out of reach for many. When these types of nonprofits lose funding, it's not just an organization that suffers – it's a family losing essential services, a young person losing a safe place to turn and an aging neighbor left without care.

Yet today, some nonprofits, particularly groups serving communities of color, immigrants, and members of LGBTQ+ communities are under direct assault. From executive orders targeting initiatives designed to address historic injustices to demands for alignment with the federal administration's goals and financially devastating funding suspensions, the sweeping attacks on these indispensable organizations are more than just a routine policy shift. The people who work at and who are served by these organizations are facing political suppression, financial instability, and threats to their safety. It's as if cruelty is the point.

The harm of these attacks has far-reaching impacts on the health and well-being of many Coloradans. Organizations like The Trevor Project have reported a staggering increase in crisis hotline calls, and immigrant-serving organizations are experiencing overwhelming demand. Moreover, studies suggest that the attacks will worsen health disparities among people of color and will complicate efforts to address these disparities.

This is not normal in a democratic society. By restricting services, cutting funding and censoring expression, these policies diminish the visibility of people of color, immigrants and LGBTQ+ Coloradans, especially those who are transgender, disregarding their identities, histories and contributions. This is part of a broader effort to reshape and restrict who in our communities is worthy of health and well-being and who is recognized as American. In doing so, those in power reinforce a false narrative, one that tries to erase millions of people who help make Colorado the vibrant state that it is.

But we don't have to accept this false narrative or decisions that have no legal or moral authority. Each of us can share the stories of those most affected by these actions and advocate for policies that protect both the rights of individuals and the nonprofit infrastructure so many rely on. Whether through community organizing, supporting inclusive initiatives or challenging harmful narratives, we have the power to make a difference.

At The Colorado Health Foundation, we remain committed to our mission and stand by our cornerstones. We know that many of our nonprofit partners and the communities they serve are impacted by the federal administration's actions, and we are making efforts to support, protect and fortify this important work. Right now, this includes internal changes to reduce administrative burdens related to our grants and to deploy additional funding and emergency supports to groups working with targeted populations. Our staff are available to grantees and community partners in a range of ways and will continue to step in where it matters most. Lastly, we have sent a survey to all grantees to assess how best to offer ongoing support during this chaotic time. We look forward to sharing themes that arise from the responses.

Together, we can ensure that health is in reach for all Coloradans and that no one is written out of the story of our state or our nation!

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