

Policies to Advance Health, Well-being and Equity in 2021

The year 2020 may be in our rear view, but its impacts will last far beyond the page turn of the calendar. There has been much talk of “going back to normal.” At The Colorado Health Foundation, we believe that we can't simply “go back to normal” when that left health and well-being out of reach for many of us.

Policymakers throughout Colorado must work toward a new normal, a better normal, and a more equitable normal. The agenda below provides a roadmap of steps your administration can take to do just that.

- **Explicitly prioritize communities of color** in COVID-19 vaccine distribution plans by resourcing trusted community organizations to partner in outreach and distribution.
- Execute a communications campaign to **address COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among people of color** that is based on research and responds to their concerns.
- Collect and publicly report data on Colorado's progress with racial equity in vaccine access and uptake and **take actions to reduce any inequities that exist**.
- **Develop an accessible, mobile-friendly and Spanish-language website** with all of the state's COVID-19 information and increase the amount of COVID-19 information available in other commonly spoken languages in Colorado.
- **Apply feedback** gathered through Colorado Department of Local Affairs' community listening efforts to make investments of housing funds authorized under Ballot Measure EE more equitable.
- Support cities in stopping homeless camp sweeps by **providing assistance to maintain safe outdoor spaces** in local municipalities, possibly on state-owned land if helpful.
- **Relieve hunger among Coloradans** by increasing cross-enrollment in federal nutrition programs and supporting implementation of the Pandemic-EBT program.
- Prioritize staff time and resources to **fully implement the Governor's 2020 executive order requiring diversity, equity and inclusion training** for all state employees.
- **Integrate processes developed for the Governor's COVID relief fund and the Energize Colorado Gap Fund** that elevated community voices and increased the focus on racial equity into other competitive grant programs administered by state agencies.
- Develop means to **assess and improve racial equity in access to behavioral health supports** as Colorado transforms how these services are resourced and organized.
- **Create public transparency and accountability** in the ongoing implementation of policing reforms signed into Colorado law in 2020.
- **Establish a permanent structure within state government** that aligns, strengthens and builds accountability for efforts to advance health equity spanning across state agencies.

