

Legislative Agenda

2024

Open Arms firmly believes that equity is a birthright and that healing solutions comes from within communities.

Each year, we prioritize legislation to reduce racial disparities in perinatal and infant health, improve essential support for families, and increase equitable access to healthcare.

We work alongside partner organizations and community members to advance birth equity and health justice at the local, state, and federal levels.

MATERNAL & INFANT HEALTH

HB 2350 (SB 6172): Birth Doulas: Adopt rules establishing the competency-based requirements a birth doula must meet to obtain certification.

SB 6178: Midwives' Prescriptive Authority: Aligning the Legend Drug Act to reflect the prescriptive authority for licensed midwives.

SB 6148: Quality of Care Metrics: Establishing maternal and perinatal quality of care metrics for Washingtonians on Medicaid.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE

SB 5241 "Keep Our Care Act": Safeguards would be put in place to ensure healthcare access is not reduced by health entity mergers and acquisitions.

RACIAL JUSTICE

2SSB 5477 Murdered Indigenous Women: Implementing the recommendations of the Washington state missing and murdered Indigenous women and people task force.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

HB 1895 (SB 5839) Working Families' Tax Credit: Modifying the working families' tax credit by clarifying the refundable nature of the credit, the application requirements, and the eligibility verification process.

HB 2230 Economic Security Grants: Promoting economic inclusion by creating economic security for all grant programs.

HB 2007 Time Limits Extensions: Allows families to access TANF when they still qualify by creating a broad hardship extension for TANF time limits.

ESHB 1652 Child Support Pass Through: Passes through 100% of child support to families receiving TANF instead of withholding all but \$50/\$100.

SSB 6135 Reinstating Post-TANF Supports: Reinstates 12 months of post-TANF support services (instead of the current 3), provides a one-time bonus for families leaving TANF voluntarily when employed, and gives the department the option to distribute funds through EBT.

EARLY CHILDHOOD & EARLY LEARNING

HB 1916 (SB 5933) Infants and Toddlers Program: Concerning funding for the early support for infants and toddlers program.

SHB 2124 Child Care Program Eligibility: Supporting and expanding access to child care and early learning programs.

SB 5870 Early Learning Programs: Expanding and streamlining eligibility for early learning programs.

HB 2195 Early Learning Facilities: Strengthening the early learning facilities grant and loan program by revising criteria and providing resources to the Ruth LeCocq Kagi early learning facilities development account.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

HB 1902 (SB 6004) Firearms Purchase and Transfer: Enhancing requirements for the purchase or transfer of firearms.

BUDGET ITEMS

- Conduct an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) workforce strategic planning process.
- Establish new birth centers in underserved areas, mitigating the impact of recent labor and delivery unit closures, particularly in rural communities, and addressing maternal health disparities.
- Continue funding the Pediatric Community Health Workers grant program at the Health Care Authority for two years to support children and teens' timely receipt of mental health care and primary care's ability to help support families' health-related social needs.