

# SFY 2023-2025 LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS

*Creating a New Economic Reality for Immigrants and Refugees in Washington*



The Tri-County Refugee Planning Committee with members from King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties requests your support for the following:

## 1. SUPPORT THE PROPOSED DSHS SIX-MONTH 100% INCOME DISREGARD FOR TANF RECIPIENTS WHO FIND JOBS

Support DSHS' proposed income disregard for TANF recipients. We believe this is an excellent approach to reduce the "cliff effect" and create an incentive and a safety net for families as they transition from TANF to employment. As many families exiting TANF are in low wage jobs, the continuing TANF support provides additional economic security and support to vulnerable families during this time as they build economic stability.<sup>1</sup>

[Smoothing the cliff effect by expanding the earnings disregard](#)

## 2. MAINTAIN ORIA FUNDING LEVELS TO SUPPORT NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES

Maintain current levels of support in the 2023 – 2025 biennium for the DSHS LEP Pathway and Naturalization Services and continue to support the \$28.4 million added to the DSHS budget proviso to provide services to recently arrived refugees and immigrants that include emergency, temporary and long-term housing, food assistance, transportation to access education services and other social services. Due to the war and conflicts worldwide, unprecedented numbers of families seek refuge as they continue to come to Washington. For example, Ukrainians (as well as Afghans in the prior year) enter as Humanitarian Parolees or Temporary Protected Status requiring complex legal steps to obtain the necessary immigration status changes to work and live in the US on a permanent basis. Without continued funding at current levels, providers will not have the capacity to meet the needs of the newly arrived in Washington State. Please maintain current levels of funding for LEP Pathway, Naturalization Services and new refugee social service funding for new arrivals in the next biennium.

## 3. INCREASE FUNDING FOR NATURALIZATION PROGRAMS

Significantly expand the State's investment in three programs that provide immigrant and refugee communities with the assistance they need to attain U.S. citizenship. The Washington New Americans program and the DSHS Naturalization program support people who are lawful permanent residents to obtain U.S. citizenship; and the Legal Support and Community Safety program supports immigration legal assistance to individuals who are not lawful permanent residents but can obtain permanent immigration status in the U.S.

Thank you for your past support of our programs and for considering our requests for SFY 2023-25.



For more information, please contact Vicki Asakura, Tri-County Refugee Planning Committee, at (206) 251-3079 or [vasakura@comcast.net](mailto:vasakura@comcast.net)

<sup>1</sup> As of July 2020, 27 US states allow for a higher Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) earned income disregard than Washington, including six states using some variation of a 100 percent earnings disregard. Current state law only allows an earned income disregard for half for all cash assistance programs, meaning 50 percent of the household's earned income is budgeted towards their eligibility limit.