

United Way of Pennsylvania's Equity Agenda is an ongoing commitment to address racism and inequity that is present in Pennsylvania communities and to challenge practices based on racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, religion practiced, languages spoken and other historical, systemic, and current forms of discrimination. We are committed to confronting the legacy of inequities and its ongoing effects and to using this equity lens in all our plans, policies, practices, and other work. In early 2023, UWP's Board of Directors and Membership voted to embed their commitment to DEI into the bylaws of the organization.

Through these commitments – and with the support of the Board of Directors and the larger United Way and PA 211 network – we will learn and begin to advance our efforts to create a Pennsylvania where all people can thrive.

IMPLEMENTING AN EQUITY AGENDA

United Way of Pennsylvania recognizes and acknowledges the role that plans and policies have played in creating and perpetuating inequity across the Commonwealth. We are committed to transforming how we work even as we seek to address, mitigate, and eliminate past and persistent inequities and to develop solutions that create equitable communities in the future.

While United Way of Pennsylvania works towards an equitable future for all Pennsylvanians, we cannot delay in applying an equity lens to our work now. This initiative provides direction, tools, and strategies to support the staff in incorporating equity considerations in each project and program.

United Way of Pennsylvania is committed to leading with equity, engaging with diverse communities, improving accessibility to programs and resources, creating a culture of belonging and inclusion, and advocating for leaders at our state and national level to adopt policies that reduce burdens on ALICE families.

ONGOING EFFORTS

- 211 Chat Translation Tool – This tool provides opportunity for individuals who have preferred language other than English to chat with and interact with PA 211 Resource Navigators in to get referrals and identify resources that are available in their communities. The 211 Chat Translation Tool utilizes software to seamlessly translate 75 different languages to foster a conversation between individuals speaking different languages. UWP and PA 211 are committed to exploring how this tool can broaden its scope to connect individuals with their community resources with these same translation services.
- ALICE Data Report Refresh – On May 2, 2023, United Way of Pennsylvania launched the new data which includes the most up to date and accurate data that is available in order to support ALICE individuals and families and provide opportunities to continue to highlight disparities based on race, ethnicity, disabilities, and LGBTQ+ identity, as well as a way for United Way and our partners to measure progress on closing disparity gaps.
- BIPOC Marketing Initiative – The PA 211 Marketing Committee has approved a work plan to retain a BIPOC-led consultant to improve our marketing strategy to reach and engage with more diverse communities.

- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Advocacy – UWP’s Policy Work includes advocating for an Earned Income Tax Credit to support working families in Pennsylvania. Based on data provided from other states who have a refundable EITC, we know that this policy would have a higher proportionate impact on Black and Hispanic individuals and families.
- Listen4Good – This program was introduced to PA 211 in April 2023 and is intended to create a more meaningful customer feedback loop, including helping our team members to better understand the populations we serve in order to analyze our marketing strategy to reach and engage with more diverse communities.
- Local Innovations in Vaccine Equity (LIVE) PA Grant – Local nonprofits and faith-based organizations are eligible to apply for and receive mini-grants in order to reduce vaccine hesitancy and ensure an equitable vaccine distribution throughout the commonwealth. Many of these organizations are hyper-local, grassroots organizations that serve as trusted partners to traditionally marginalized communities and to help the populations they serve overcome barriers to vaccination. Many of the partner organizations are BIPOC led and are members of the communities they serve and are recognized for the impact that they are making for health equity.
- Resilient PA – Resilient PA promotes trauma aware systems and trauma informed care across all sectors across Pennsylvania. By raising awareness about the effects of trauma and promoting efforts to reduce risk factors and community trauma for all Pennsylvanians. Resilient PA has, and will continue to, host speakers who come from historically marginalized communities and can speak of the way these communities have, and are continuing to, experience trauma.
- UWP Board of Directors Nominating Committee – The Nominating Committee is committed to keeping diversity centered in the nominating process for open seats on the Board of Directors. This committee continues to ask for ideas and suggestions from the DEI Committee to advise them on good strategies to surface diverse candidates who also have expertise related to UWP’s mission and supporting the strategic plan.
- UWP Board of Directors Structure – The DEI Committee is committed to have one member serve and attend each of the Board Committees to provide support and focus on DEI during each conversation, meeting, and project discussion. This structure ensures that every new initiative is viewed through the DEI lens during all stages, including planning, implementing, and analyzing.
- Digital Equity- The DEI committee sees it as a priority to advance the work of digital equity which seeks to uplift initiatives that are aimed at broadband expansion, provide equal access to information, education, job opportunities, healthcare services and the tools necessary to provide these with a degree of digital literacy. UWP is committed to partnering with local community-based agencies to help promote, educate, and disseminate the tools necessary to bridge the digital divide. Through PA 211, we can gather information about what digital equity and digital services exist and connect community members to those resources.