

Family Separation Rapid Response Task Force Report — APRIL 30, 2025



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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BACKGROUND

During the first Trump Administration, aggressive immigration policies and enforcement resulted in thousands of families being separated due to the detainment or deportation of parents and guardians. In response, Washington state agencies worked quickly to improve state policies to increase protections for children and families with mixed-immigration status residing in our state.

One such major policy was the Keep Washington Working Act (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=43.17.425>), which aims to ensure that Washington state remains a welcoming place for all residents, including immigrants, by promoting fairness and safeguarding their privacy and civil rights. This law restricts the extent to which any state agency, including the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and local law enforcement, can “investigate, enforce, cooperate with, or assist” in the enforcement of federal immigration laws.

As we face a second Trump administration, Washington state is once again seeking to improve its policies and practices that protect our most vulnerable residents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 27, 2025, Governor Bob Ferguson signed Executive Order 25-04 (https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/EO%2025-04.pdf) to establish a Family Separation Rapid Response Task Force (“Task Force”) to support children whose parents or caregivers are detained or deported due to immigration status. The overarching purpose of the Task Force is to mitigate—to the extent possible—the harm, trauma, and other lasting effects on children who experience family separation through the deportation or detention of their parents or primary caregivers.

Mission

The mission of the Task Force is to explore and recommend policies and actions for mitigating—to the extent possible—the harm, trauma, and other lasting effects on children who experience family separation through the deportation or immigration-related detention of their parents or primary caregivers.

Values

- **Children and Youth First:** Ensuring the safety and ongoing wellbeing of children or youth experiencing family separation is our number one priority.
- **Humanity at the Core:** ALL children and families deserve dignity, care, a voice, equality under the law, and an understanding of their rights.
- **Participant Privacy:** Our priority is to protect the privacy and personal information of children, youth, and families who engage with the Task Force, and we will not share this information unless required to do so by state and federal law.

While the issue impacts policies and services across state government, the Task Force is led by the Secretary of DCYF. The Task Force brings together state agencies that serve and support immigrant communities. This includes the Washington State Patrol, the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, the Attorney General’s Office, the Governor’s Office, and other state partners. *See Appendix A for a full list.*

The Task Force also collaborates with community-based organizations that provide more immediate response to individual cases of family separation. These organizations are trusted partners serving refugee and immigrant communities across our state. *See Appendix B for a full list.*

By sharing resources, discussing ideas for policy and process improvements, and building more robust networks and connections, the Task Force can serve as a gathering place for solutions in this critical issue.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY

Tana Senn



Since taking office in January, President Trump has signed several executive orders related to immigration and citizenship, which have led to increased detentions and deportations of immigrants across the country. These actions have created immense anxiety for immigrant communities and families.

Families with mixed immigration status are not only concerned about potential deportation but also fear that their children will face the trauma of navigating these situations alone, without an advocate or caregiver. When children and youth are separated from their families, particularly from their parents, it is a traumatic experience that can have lasting effects on their mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

Minimizing unnecessary family separations and keeping kids safe is at the core of the work we do as an agency. It is DCYF's goal to keep children with their families. We first seek to reunify parents and children if safe. If that is not possible, our next step is to identify kin for placement. Only after that is foster care considered. We will take the same approach when working with children separated from their parents or primary caregivers due to immigration-related detentions or deportations.

As DCYF's Secretary, I was proud to join Governor Ferguson as he signed Executive Order 25-04, which created this Task Force. DCYF is ready and dedicated to the task at hand. We are convening state agencies and community partners as we identify and fine-tune policies and procedures to ease the way for children separated from their parents or caregivers. At the same time, we are keeping staff, providers, partners and communities informed about the best ways to help support our state's children.

I want to recognize that we are responding to an emergent situation and a rapidly changing political landscape. While we may not have all the answers right now, we will continue to share updates and guidance on this issue, and we remain committed to the safety and protection of our diverse communities.

I want to thank Governor Ferguson for proactively initiating the Task Force to explore ways to minimize harm to children and youth in Washington state. I look forward to collaborating with our state agencies, Governor's Office staff, and community partners to ensure that we do everything possible to keep families together and children safe.

Take care of each other,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tana Senn".

DCYF Secretary Tana Senn
Department of Children, Youth, and Families

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Winter Meetings Summary

The Task Force began in February 2025, welcoming all agencies, the Governor's office, state judicial bodies, tribal partners, and state ethnic commission representatives. The goals of the first two months were to create a shared understanding of complex policies around family separation and determine what the scope of work would be to explore together improvements to these policies and practices. Task Force members met every three weeks to learn from one another, investigate policy, and build a common vision of support for families.

The Task Force has received substantive briefings from state agencies on the policies, resources and practices they have in place to support immigrant families. The following agencies offered presentations:

- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
- Washington State Patrol
- Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, Department of Social and Human Services
- DCYF Child Welfare Division
- DCYF Early Learning Division
- Office of Homeless Youth, Department of Commerce

The Task Force learned not only about the policies of the various agencies, but how they connect to larger systems of accountability, law, funding, and policy. This policy understanding and curiosity is guided by the values of the Task Force, the highest being:



“Children and Youth First: We ensure the safety and ongoing wellbeing of children or youth experiencing family separation as our number one priority.”

Task Force values like this have been woven into the collaborative, thoughtful culture of the Task Force, clarified in its goals and values. *See Appendix E.* The Task Force uses the information learned from those meetings to inform policy recommendations and better share informational resources for Washington families.

It was important for the Task Force members to learn about the processes of family separation and come up with early

policy avenues and solutions, so the body would be ready to collaborate with the experts in community partner organizations. In April, DCYF Secretary Senn began meeting with key experts from organizations to introduce the Task Force's work and discuss how we could work together to accomplish the shared goal of safe, healthy Washington families. We invited these organizations to present to the Task Force throughout April and May, and ongoing collaboration is detailed in the Community Collaboration section. Learning from our partners during the April meeting is summarized below, and available in our minutes on the website.

FACT: Family Separation Rapid Response Task Force has **over 50 active members.**

FEB. 11, 2025

- **DCYF** shared information about the child welfare process, from how a child comes into DCYF custody to how we work to reunify families. Our website hosts the PowerPoint slides (<https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/CW-Immigration-Slides.pdf>) and a video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyRF4m7BXMU) summarizing the information.
- **OSPI** shared protections for immigrant students (<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/equity-and-civil-rights/immigrant-students-rights-attend-public-schools>) and other resources available for students in Washington state.
- **Washington State Patrol** emphasized their protocols to not coordinate or assist with federal immigration matters. They provided context for their limited engagement in family separation, which occurs mainly if a parent is arrested for violating state law.
- **Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance** shared their role of serving refugee and immigrant families, including those who are ineligible for federal services.
- **The Task Force members** had a robust discussion on how to define the duties of the group and how to make quality engagement with community partners and tribal governments across the state.

MARCH 4, 2025

- **The Office of Rep. Pramila Jayapal** gave a federal immigration update, detailing her ongoing efforts in Congress to advocate for the needs of immigrant families. They detailed how casework inquiries to their office have greatly increased, focusing mainly on expedited employment authorizations. Staff offered their assistance in helping locate relatives in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody, if that information is not forthcoming.

FACT: There are **1,222,300 immigrants** in Washington state. That's 15.6% of our population.¹

- **The Attorney General's Office's Civil Rights Division** presented updates related to implementing Keep Washington Working.
- **The Department of Commerce's Office of Homeless Youth** detailed the office's support systems for youth, and fears around immigration that many homeless shelters are facing. The Department also presented on their Legal Aid for Immigrants work, which grants funds to legal representation for low-income immigrants, and their staff-focused effort "SAFE: Support Around Federal Efforts."
- **The Task Force** finalized its scope of work and shared values.

FACT: Across Washington state, **over half a million people** are estimated to have limited English proficiency.²

MARCH 25, 2025

- **The Task Force** conducted a lean process mapping exercise to break down the process and procedures when responding to family separation (*details on page 6*).
- **The Attorney General's Office** presented on the lawsuit against Adams County Sheriff's Office, which argues that they are out of compliance with Keep Washington Working.

- **DCYF** shared their early learning and licensing roles, and that no citizenship/legal residency certification is required to access state childcare subsidies. DCYF also shared the required protocols of childcare centers and family home providers if immigration enforcement arrives.
- **DCYF** posted a video on our child welfare process on our website (<https://dcyf.wa.gov/EOTaskForce>).

APRIL 16, 2025

- **The Washington Immigration Solidarity Network (WAISN)** shared the many resources they provide, including their Rapid Response teams, Deportation Defense Hotline, Resource Finder, and Accompaniment Program. They emphasized their limited funding and ongoing threats as an organization focused on immigration.
- **Amara** presented on the wrap-around services for families that they provide in Pierce County, such as the Family and Community Connections Program for caregivers. They discussed that 60% of families they serve are Spanish-speaking and that they have been a point of contact on immigration concerns.

FACT: **13% of all students PK-12** (approximately 140,000 students) are multilingual learners. (OSPI, 2023)

- **The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project** presented recent developments in immigration policy, the many legal services they provide to low-income people, and the challenges from federal funding cuts for unaccompanied youth.
- **Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)** detailed their services for legal advice to unaccompanied youth and how devastating 70% funding cuts from the federal government has been. Yet, they will continue to offer legal representation in 400 pending cases for children in Washington.

¹ American Immigration Council, Immigrants in Washington - American Immigration Council (<https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/washington>)

² US American Community Survey (<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.B16003?t=Language+Spoken+at+Home&g=040XX00US53&d=ACS+5-Year+Estimates+Detailed+Tables>), 2023

- **Refugee and Immigrant Connections Spokane** shared how they support Washingtonians in the broader immigrant community and are building a team to support families experiencing separations. They asked the Task Force to push back against illegal threats from immigration enforcement, to help create a safer place for immigrants to live.
- **The Legal Counsel for Youth and Children (LCYC)** presented on their mission of supporting young people in court across the state and inquired about how DCYF can increase the sharing of information related to Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) Visas.
- **The Task Force** had a robust discussion around expanding the way we think about supporting families, modeling after wrap-around supports provided in community organizations.

Community Collaboration

Hearing directly from diverse immigration-related organizations across the state has enriched the conversation and helped shape the direction of the Task Force. Not only have these organizations provided us with an “on-the-ground” perspective on deportation efforts, but they have also informed the work ahead and shared critical resources that we can help distribute across the state as well.

To ensure we build on needs assessments, focus groups and research efforts already completed, the Task Force has begun a literature review of existing reports and other documents that detail stated needs from community organizations alongside these other efforts.

The Task Force will continue strengthening our community connections and outreach. Beginning in May, a monthly community partner meeting will begin, where community-based organizations are invited to share the changing needs of families and community organizations in Washington state. *To see a full list of our engaged community partners, please see Appendix B.*

Building Outreach Structure

Over the first months, we created a clear Task Force structure (see Appendix E) and a shared understanding of the current, and ever-changing, climate on immigration. In April, we engaged one on one with community partners who are subject matter experts in this area and building on our knowledge of policy and practice. We are now moving into the next phase of effective collaboration.

FACT: 250 different languages are spoken in Washington state public schools, with English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese being the most common. (OSPI, 2023)

COMMUNITY PARTNER COMMITTEE

We gather a small team of community organizations monthly who directly provide immigration-related services. The focus of the committee this spring is to identify which information is most important to families now, and to advise on how to best reach targeted communities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The community engagement committee is comprised of Task Force members who meet on an ad-hoc basis to review engagement plans and share existing resources for outreach to Washington families. Our goal is to relay important information to families across the geographic and demographic diversity in our state. We will coordinate using existing relationships of trust and resources across government and non-government entities.



POLICY AREAS

One of our main goals as a Task Force is to explore policy improvements that can support families at risk of deportation. Since the Task Force began, we have explored several policies based on the expertise of Task Force members and community partners. Below are some of the policies we continue to explore.

Process mapping

Task force members discussed four scenarios of family separation:

- **SCENARIO 1:** A family is packing up their car after shopping for groceries when immigration officials detain both parents.
- **SCENARIO 2:** Immigration officials raid a neighborhood and family members are detained from many families. Multiple children are left without guardians, they are known in the neighborhood, but neighbors do not have contact information for anyone related to the child.
- **SCENARIO 3:** It is a Friday at 5 p.m. and a 4th grade student was released from school at 3 p.m. and has yet to have been picked up. This student lives with their single mother and does not have any other family members in their house. Their mother usually picks them up from school but did not come to get them. It is suspected that the mother may have been detained by immigration officials as there were reports of raids earlier that afternoon. The school does not have any additional contact information for the child, other than the mother who is unreachable by phone.
- **SCENARIO 4:** There was a raid on a poultry farm in rural Eastern Washington by immigration officials. Many of the individuals who have been detained are parental guardians. There is a childcare center near the farm where many of these families send their children.

With each scenario, members went step-by-step, recording the role of state and federal staff at every stage, and any potential challenges and gaps in policy. This process map exercise will be iterative and used as a tool to create proactive lines of communication and shared understanding of processes.

Guardianship and other long-term caregiving arrangements

Having clear, advanced plans for their children's care if deported or detained is a primary recommendation of immigration-related groups. There are multiple types of guardianship and other legal options a parent can designate that have various timeframes, legal permissions, and benefits for the children. Providing clear options and their pros and cons for families will be valuable, as well as identifying ways state programs and community groups can support and work with these newly created family arrangements.

SIJ Visa and immigration referrals

Over the last two years, DCYF has been engaging with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Kids in Need of Defense, the Office of Civil Legal Aid, and the Office of Public Defense on referrals for youth with immigration needs in the care of DCYF. This year, the process was formalized for children who are legally free and those in extended foster care to be referred to immigration legal support. DCYF and our community partners will continue to discuss if and when it is appropriate to refer children under 18 to immigration legal supports.



Keep Washington Working in after-school settings

OSPI has created clear guidance for school officials on how to respond if federal immigration officials come on campus and how to comply with Keep Washington Working. However, it was identified that there is a gap in guidance and training for other school-related activities and personnel in situations like parents supervising field trips, after-school activities, off-campus sporting events, and summer programs. We are working actively with OSPI to craft such policy guidance, with examples from existing programs in and outside of Washington.

Court-granted custody for separated families

We have recently been made aware of a gap in custody options for families in Washington state. DCYF deals with families at risk of deportation who are already in a custody case due to abuse or neglect and supports these families with resources and reunification processes. In these cases, the courts decide on a custody option that is best for the child. For families who have one parent that is unavailable due to deportation, it is very difficult for immigration attorneys to seek sole guardianship for the remaining parent, when there is no abuse or neglect. The Task Force is forming a small team to clarify the issue and make recommendations, based in part on similar legal options from other states.

RESOURCE SHARING

Identifying, coordinating, and sharing information and resources from across Washington to serve families at risk of separation is a key goal of the Task Force. With our broad coalition, ongoing outreach, and committee meetings, we are identifying existing resources and information most important for supporting our Washington families in this stressful and difficult time. Our Task Force webpage houses many of these resources, and as we develop our communications plan, we will use it as a hub to keep people updated on what they need to know in the rapidly changing federal landscape.

Resource Hub

A dedicated webpage (www.dcyf.wa.gov/EOTaskForce) has been developed on DCYF's website to house information about the Task Force, as well as resources that Washington families, DCYF staff, service providers, and the public can reference.

On the website, we list the goals of the Task Force:

- Recommend improvements to statewide policies and practices.
- Develop and share resources with families at risk of separation.
- Collaborate with trusted community-based organizations.

Integrated throughout the website are community partner organization resources for families to access. In keeping with a “hub” model, we want the website to highlight and uplift resources from across the state. For example, on our website you can learn how to report immigration activity to WAISN, create an Immigrant Safety Plan for your family, and get support from the Rapid Response Hub by the WA State Commission on Hispanic Affairs. We are constantly improving on how to make the webpage and other materials more accessible. The webpage is translated and available in English, Spanish, and Somali. As we move forward, we will be working to make the website more accessible, with more translation options and more types of media.

Another goal of our website is to bring transparency to the work of the Task Force. We not only list our agendas and meeting minutes but work regularly to create content to make it accessible for families who want to learn more. For example, we have received many questions about what happens to children in DCYF's care if they are separated from their families. This video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyRF4m7BXMU) provides information about how immigration plays a role in DCYF's child welfare process. This effort towards making sure our families are well informed will continue in multiple media formats as we move forward.

Frequently Asked Questions

We have developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on our webpage. Questions have been compiled from those that we have received via email (dcyfimmigrationEO@dcyf.wa.gov), from the media, and from Task Force members and community partners.

CURRENT FAQs:

Q How can parents/guardians be prepared in case they are detained or deported unexpectedly?

A Parents may wish to begin preparing now by identifying a replacement guardian for their child or children. One helpful resource is the LCYC's Immigrant Safety Plan (<https://lcyowa.org/resources/immigration>), currently available in English, Spanish, and Arabic. Parents may also wish to review other legal resources or speak to a private attorney for what should happen in the event they are deported. LCYC provides other resources on their website (<https://lcyowa.org/resources/immigration>) and offers training to help parents plan for the care of their children in the event that they are detained or deported.



Q Do I have to be a licensed foster/kin care provider to care for a child whose parents appointed me their caregiver? What do I need to do to be prepared for caring for this child? Is there support?

A You may take care of a child left in your care by a parent without becoming a licensed foster parent. To prepare for this, you may review the Immigrant Safety Plan (<https://lcyowa.org/resources/immigration>) and training video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHIAj2JMTQc&feature=youtu.be), the Nomination of Standby and Minor Guardianship Form, and other resources on the Know Your Rights OAG (www.atg.wa.gov/know-your-rights-civil-immigration-enforcement-washington) webpage, or LCYC website. We also recommend the following resources:

- WAISN Resource Finder (<https://resources.waisn.org>)
- ORIA Resource Tool (<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=8e7e2fd0641f4f1e90bbaa36a0bc232d>)
- Rapid Response Hub — Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs (www.cha.wa.gov/rapid-response-hub)

Q How are school districts supporting children and families at this time?

A The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has put out guidance related to the protections offered for immigrant students (<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/equity-and-civil-rights/immigrant-students-rights-attend-public-schools>) in Washington state. As we move forward on the Task Force, we continue to partner with school districts and support the education of all youth regardless of immigration status.



Q What is DCYF’s role when dealing with children whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are detained or deported due to immigration status?

A When ICE detains a parent, they first check with the family to determine if there is a relative or friend who can care for the child. ICE only contacts DCYF if:

- The parents cannot find a safe person to care for the child.
- There are concerns about the person who is chosen to care for the child.

In these cases, ICE will notify local law enforcement, and the child will be placed into protective custody and then transferred to DCYF. If a child is not with their parent when deported and is in the care of community or other childcare, we rely on community partners to notify law enforcement or DCYF.

It is DCYF’s goal to keep children with their families. As DCYF is working to help reunify the child with their parent, DCYF will work to locate family members or kin. If one cannot be located, the child would enter into foster care while the caseworker is attempting to reunify the family.

Q Can DCYF assist with reunification if the child requests to be reunited with a deported parent?

A Yes. When DCYF receives placement and care authority of a child, DCYF works to reunify a child with a safe parent – even if they are outside of the country.

Q Does DCYF share info with ICE?

A In keeping with Keep Washington Working (KWW), DCYF does not provide information to ICE without a court order or judicial warrant, or a signed release of information from the parents. All Washington state agencies comply with KWW, which states: “No state agency, including law enforcement, may use agency [resources] to investigate, enforce, cooperate with, or assist in the investigation or enforcement of any federal ... programs or any other laws, rules, or policies that target Washington residents solely on the basis of race, religion, immigration, or citizenship status, or national or ethnic origin.”



FAQs IN DEVELOPMENT:

Throughout our conversations, we take note of key questions that arise. Our goal is to quickly get complete and accurate answers to them. Many of these questions have legal and policy implications, so we are working closely with our legal team, Task Force members, and state agency staff. We will regularly update our website as we answer questions we receive. If you would like to submit a question to the Task Force, please email us at dcyfImmigrationEO@dcyf.wa.gov.

Facts/Statistics

- Q How many children in Washington state have been impacted by the detention or deportation of a parent due to immigration status?

Family Preparation

- Q What happens if I leave the country unexpectedly? How do I secure the guardianship of my child? Is verbal identification of guardianship enough?

Family Reunification

- Q How can the Task Force ensure detained parents are able to participate in the dependency process?



Guardianship

- Q If a Power of Attorney does not exist, can DCYF help find parents or identify a third party without Voluntary Placement Agreements and background checks?
- Q How is the person who is left as the emergency contact legally permitted to care for the child especially if there wasn't formal documentation to transfer guardianship?

ICE

- Q How do you find out when a parent has been taken/held at an immigration processing facility/deported leaving a child behind?
- Q How does ICE determine where a child should go if they are with their parent when being detained?
- Q What is the ICE process for "unaccompanied minors"? Is there a policy or law?

In-State Care

- Q What mental health resources are available for young people whose parents are deported or detained?
- Q What legal services are available for youth? Does this apply to incarcerated youth?
- Q Are there services offered to youth in DCYF care that immigrant children cannot access due to immigration status, and how can the department help them access those services?
- Q What does the Task Force envision its role to be if family separation results in a child/youth being re-detained in ORR custody (e.g. sponsor is detained and youth returned to ORR custody)? Are there plans for alternatives to detention, such as placement with other family members, or foster care before the child/youth is detained?

In-State Care Services

- Q If the state does not have a resource at hand that families need, how can they connect families with a community resource?

Keep Washington Working

- Q How do we train afterschool programs in Keep Washington Working? Does it apply?

Know Your Rights

- Q I have heard that there are different kinds of search warrants, one needs to be adhered to and the other does not necessarily demand we comply. Is this true? How do I tell the difference?

Policy Failure

- Q What happens when cities or counties cooperate with ICE? What resources do families have?

Reunification

- Q How can the Task Force assist with reunification if the child requests to be reunited with a deported parent?

Schools

- Q Does ICE contact schools for information when families are separated?

Schools, Childcare

- Q How does DCYF collaborate with OSPI and licensed care facilities to develop processes and procedures when students are left at school or childcare?

DCYF Policy

- Q Is there a different process for children in DCYF care who are undocumented?



LOOKING AHEAD

Monthly Themes and Deliverables

We developed a chart of activities, topics, and themes to coordinate and focus the Task Force for the months ahead. It takes into consideration:

- Growing relationships with community organizations at the speed of trust.
- Organizing the tasks at hand from least to most complex.
- Building up knowledge and understanding within the Task Force members.
- Creating sustainable policy that will last beyond the year which the Task Force has been given.
- Leaving space for innovation and responsiveness to the changing federal landscape.

These are the early plans, and we look forward to seeing them refined in collaboration with state agencies and community organizations, and responsive to the times we are in.

**Monthly themes and deliverables are subject to change.*



	Topics and Themes	Activities
 WINTER 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Order signed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying state agency leads. • Building Task Force structure and goals. • Presentations from state agencies.
 SPRING 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kickoff engagement with community partners and government-to-government relations with tribes • Family preparation • Proactive lines of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations from community partners. • First report due. • Identifying and sharing handouts and presentations to help families prepare for potential separation. • Developing a list of FAQs and updating answers regularly on the website. • Discuss different summer dynamics with no school, limited childcare. • Creating proactive lines of communication with state agencies and commissions, school districts, courts, Consulates, congressional leaders, and community partners to ensure consistent cooperation and coordination.
 SUMMER 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and translation resources • Trauma Informed Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and discuss interagency resources and policies. • Second report due. • Discuss training and best practices for trauma-informed care in immigration-related family separation. • Literature review.
 FALL 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interconnected resilience building/wrap-around resource sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen networks and foster relationship-building forums between community-led organizations. • Third report due.
 WINTER 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report due.

How to Stay in Touch

Community partners, state agencies, and families are encouraged to sign up at www.dcyf.wa.gov/EOTaskForce to receive email updates on the work of the Task Force. Updates are currently provided in English, Spanish, and Somali. As we build out communications for a larger audience across Washington, we will point people to this listserv to receive news and updates. Listserv announcements will include guidance for community partners organizations on how to distribute information we provide, such as announcements in multiple languages, and the information presented in multiple media formats.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Current Task Force Members

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
State Agency

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE
State Judicial

COMMISSION OF HISPANIC AFFAIRS
State Agency

COMMISSION ON ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS
State Commission

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES
State Agency

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
State Agency

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
State Agency

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
State Agency

DSHS - OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE
State Agency

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
Gubernatorial

HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY
State Agency

OFFICE OF CIVIL LEGAL AID
State Judicial

OFFICE OF EQUITY
State Agency

OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
State Agency

OFFICE OF PUBLIC DEFENSE
State Judicial

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
State Agency

OFFICE OF THE EDUCATION OMBUDS
Gubernatorial

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR STANDARDS BOARD
State Agency

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGES
State Agency

STATE EDUCATION BOARD (SBE)
State Agency

WASHINGTON STATE PATROL
State Agency

WASHINGTON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL
State Agency

WOMEN'S COMMISSION
State Commission



APPENDIX B: Current Community Partners

Community Partners - In Collaboration

Amara
Kids in Need of Defense
Legal Counsel for Youth and Children
NW Immigrant Rights Project
Office of Congresswoman Jayapal
Office of Senator Patty Murray
OneAmerica
Refugee and Immigrant Connections Spokane
Taylor Tots Childcare Centers Inc. in Yakima
WA Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN)

Community Partners Engaged

Akin
Be the Way Home
Catholic Community Services
Community Health Care
Equity In Education Center

ESD 123
Family Education & Support Services (FESS)
Guatemalan Consulate
Inatai
Jewish Family Service
King County Early Learning Coalition
Latina Educational Training Institute
Latino Leadership NW
Little Scholars Childcare
Lutheran Community Services Northwest
Nuestra Casa (Yakima)
NW Justice Project
Office of Congressman Smith
Pacific County Immigrant Support
Satsuma Designs LLC
Tacoma Community Member
VOCA- WA
Whatcom County Health and Community Services

APPENDIX C: Notes and Presentations from Task Force Meetings

All meeting agendas and meeting minutes can be found on the Task Force webpage (<https://dcyf.wa.gov/EOTaskForce>).

Feb. 11, 2025

Agenda: www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/2.11.25_EOTaskForce_Agenda.pdf

Meeting Minutes: <https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/021125-EOTaskForce-Minutes.pdf>

March 4, 2025

Agenda: https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/3.4.25_EOTaskForce_Agenda.pdf

Meeting Minutes: https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/030425_EOTaskForce_Minutes.pdf

March 25, 2025

Agenda: https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/3.25.25_EOTaskForce_Agenda.pdf

Meeting Minutes: https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/032525_EOTaskForce_Minutes.pdf

April 16, 2025

Agenda: https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/04.16.25_EOTaskForce_Agenda.pdf

Meeting Minutes: https://dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/041625_EOTaskForce_Minutes.pdf

APPENDIX D: Executive Order 25-04

Protecting immigrant families and responding to family separation.

WHEREAS, Washington is an inclusive and welcoming state that embraces the diversity of all its residents, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Washington families of all backgrounds and cultures contribute greatly to the well-being and richness of our State and local communities; and

WHEREAS, Washington values the bonds within families and between family members, especially between children and their parents or primary caregivers; and

WHEREAS, the separation of immigrant families through forced deportation or detention causes harm and instability in our communities, school, workplaces, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, the deportation or detention of a child's parents or primary caregivers may result in the child facing significant challenges in completing their education, and may also have deeply harmful effects on the child's general health and welfare; and

WHEREAS, when a child's parents or primary caregivers are deported or detained, the child may experience unique hardships in temporary or long-term out-of-home care, including in relation to their culture, heritage, language, and the lasting trauma of family separation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Ferguson, Governor of the state of Washington, by the power vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes of the state of Washington, do hereby order and direct the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to immediately form a Family Separation Rapid Response Team to explore recommended policies and actions for mitigating—to the extent possible—the harm, trauma, and other lasting effects on children who experience family separation through the deportation or detention of their parents or primary caregivers.

DCYF shall consult with the Governor's Office on promptly identifying the members of the Rapid Response Team, which shall consist of professionals from within DCYF; at least one representative from each of the Washington State Patrol, the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, and the Governor's Office; and members of other state agencies as appropriate.

The Rapid Response Team shall hold its first meeting no later than February 14, 2025, and shall meet with urgency and as frequently as necessary to develop effective strategies for addressing these harms.

The Rapid Response Team's duties shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reviewing agency policies and procedures to identify any suggested changes in practice that may assist in responding specifically to instances of family separation, including situations in which a large number of children in a specific geographic area may experience family separation at the same time;
- Consulting with immigration and child welfare experts to discuss potential policies or procedures specific to children of deported or detained parents or primary caregivers, with a focus on helping to support the child's unique circumstances and lessening to the extent possible the lasting harm resulting from the separation of immigrant families;
- Meeting with representatives of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and local school districts to develop strategies for mitigating disruption to the education and development of children whose parents or primary caregivers have been deported or detained;
- Creating proactive lines of communication between DCYF, OSPI, and local school districts to permit quick and responsive action if, for example, and child's parents or primary caregivers are taken for deportation or detention while the child is present at school, or other circumstances exist warranting prompt agency intervention and cooperations to support the child;
- Working with state universities, colleges, community colleges, and Running Start to ensure and support robust pathways to higher education for children who experience the trauma of having their parents or primary caregivers deported or detained;

- Providing regular updates to the Governor’s Office on the Rapid Response Team’s progress and policy recommendations; the effect of deportations on DCYF’s work; and any proposals for additional partnerships or inter-agency collaboration that may help to support children who experience family separation through the deportation or detention of their parents or primary caregivers; and
- Delivering its first report to the Governor’s Office no later than April 30, 2025, with subsequent reports provided every three months or at other intervals agreed upon with the Governor’s Office. The Rapid Response Team shall work to ensure its reports are made accessible and available to members of the public in multiple different languages.

The Rapid Response Team members shall meet and carry out their duties for a period of at least one year, or until February 1, 2026, with the duration and scope of the Rapid Response Team being subject to extension and amendment as necessary by agreement of the Governor’s Office and DCYF.

This Executive Order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law. Provisions of this Order are not intended to alter any existing collective bargaining agreements. This Order is not intended to confer and does not confer any legal right or entitlement and shall not be used as a basis for legal challenges to any rule or any other action or inaction of the governmental entities and employees subject to it.

This Order shall take effect immediately. Signed and seals with the official seal of the state of Washington on this 27th day of January, AD, Two Thousand and Twenty-Five, at Olympia, Washington.

APPENDIX E: Task Force Mission and Scope

MISSION

The mission of the Task Force is to explore and recommend policies and actions for mitigating—to the extent possible—the harm, trauma, and other lasting effects on children who experience family separation through the deportation or immigration-related detention of their parents or primary caregivers.

VALUE STATEMENT

- **Children and Youth First:** Ensuring the safety and ongoing wellbeing of children or youth experiencing family separation is our number one priority.
- **Humanity at the Core:** ALL children and families deserve dignity, care, a voice, equality under the law, and an understanding of their rights.
- **Participant Privacy:** Our priority is to protect the privacy and personal information of children, youth, and families who engage with the Task Force, and we will not share this information unless required to do so by state and federal law.

SHARED AGREEMENTS

- **Respect:** Always assume best intentions. Recognize that those around us have valuable experiences, ideas, qualities, and opinions.
- **Collaborate:** We cannot do this work alone. We must work together as state agencies, community partners, and subject matter experts, leveraging our collective experiences, knowledge, and resources.
- **Transparency:** Be honest and share what you know. It is okay not to have the answer to everything; we are learning as we are going.



SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE TASK FORCE

- Creating proactive lines of communication with state agencies and commissions, school districts, local municipalities courts, Consulates, congressional leaders, and community partners to ensure consistent cooperation and coordination.
- Identifying changes to state agency policies and procedures to better support families impacted by separation.
- Identifying, developing, and sharing model policies that would be helpful/are needed for local governments and/or community partners.
- Ensuring policies are clear and available, as well as reviewing and, if need be, establishing trainings for state agency staff on the policies and procedures.
- Developing and sharing actionable steps and processes for state and local governments to respond to and address long-term needs of children left without a caregiver.
- Building shared understanding of process and procedures, roles, and responsibilities.
- Providing internal and external resource lists and recommendations of where children and families can find planning and family preparedness resources, legal assistance, mental health services, translation and interpretation services, and other state and community-based resources before or after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or other federal immigration enforcement involvement or interactions.

OUT OF SCOPE FOR THE TASK FORCE

- Act as a forum for complaints about ICE
- Respond to all immigration-related questions
- Provide financial support to reunify families
- Discuss specific families or children*
- Provide legal advice about specific cases

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force is comprised of representatives from state agencies and commissions. We welcome legislators, community partners, and other invited guests to participate. The Task Force currently consists of over 25 state agencies, which are listed in Appendix A.

Task Force will complete these goals while adhering to state and federal law. Importantly, adhering to state law, DCYF does not provide information to federal immigration enforcement without a court order or judicial warrant, or unless the parent has signed a release of information that states what information can be shared.

**While the Task Force does not directly discuss or respond to specific cases, DCYF and other state partners do, as appropriate.*





Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

www.dcyf.wa.gov

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