



Washington State Public Health Association's 2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

WSPHA and the Public Health Roundtable's funding and policy priorities for the 2021 Legislative Session are below. The Public Health Roundtable is the advocacy arm of the Washington State Public Health Association. The Roundtable is comprised of health care and public health groups advocating for fully funding Washington's public health system and policies to advance health equity.

Policy Priorities



Increase funding for core public health services to prevent the spread of disease, injuries and premature death:

- Create dedicated funding for core public health services that are sustainable, predictable, and adequate.

Maintain emergency COVID-19 funding allocations at the state and local level:

- Fund COVID-19 testing, investigation, response activities, care coordination, outreach, surveillance and vaccine activities through technology, PPE, infrastructure, and operational investments.
- Invest in improvements to the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIS) and infrastructure to implement effective COVID-19 vaccine distribution particularly among vulnerable and priority populations.

Address Racism as a Public Health Crisis:

- Require schools to teach anti-racist practices and accurate histories of black, indigenous, and people of color.
- Support eliminating systemic racism in the enforcement of commercial tobacco control.
- Support the requirement and availability of anti-racism training.
- Support legislation that promotes and fosters diversity, equity, and inclusion so that all people are treated fairly and respectfully and can attain their full health potential.

Preserve Science-Based Decision Making:

- Support legislation that prioritizes decisions driven by science rather than politics.
- Maintain strong public health regulations and oppose efforts to weaken regulations including those impacting child nutrition and environmental health.
- Support maintaining strong school sex education curricula.

Policy Positions



Immunizations:

Protect policies that ensure the greatest number of children are vaccinated and protected from potential deadly diseases.



Vapor Products:

Support efforts to regulate vapor products that prevent youth access and use through noncriminal enforcement strategies.



Climate Change:

Support efforts to address the health impacts of wildfires, poor air quality, and climate change.



Death Reviews:

Support extending death reviews to people over the age of 18.



Opioids and Substance Use:

Support the expansion of prevention, recovery, and treatment options for substance abuse, including appropriate alternatives for pain management beyond opioids.



Suicide Prevention:

Support resources for suicide prevention, intervention, treatment, and postvention.



Trauma and Resilience:

Support legislation that embraces a public health framework that acknowledges the impacts of historical and intergenerational trauma, reduces trauma exposure, mitigates its effects, and enhances resilience in an equitable and just way.



Gun Violence Prevention:

Support legislation to address the public health epidemic of gun violence.



Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Division Centers:

Support allowing EMT to work in diversion centers.



Digital Equity:

Support equitable, reliable, and affordable high-speed internet with access to supporting technologies for every resident of Washington State.



Public Health Linkages:

Support funding and policies with public health provisions or linkages, especially with key issues like behavioral and mental health, suicide prevention, opioids, climate change, and safe housing.