

# INVESTING IN THE HOME VISITING WORKFORCE

**State Budget Request: Invest \$16.05 million to support the Home Visiting workforce (\$9.3 million) and expand access to voluntary Home Visiting services (\$6.75 million)**

## What is Home Visiting?

Home Visiting is a voluntary, proven program where trained Home Visitors and parents work together to strengthen and support families in a child's first years of life.

**Research shows the benefits of Home Visiting including:**



Improved Birth Outcomes and Maternal/Infant Health



Strengthened Parenting Skills



Improved School Readiness



Improved Coordination and Referrals to Other Community Services

## HOME VISITING WORKFORCE STUDY<sup>1</sup> FINDINGS:

### Washington State

The average Home Visiting salary is \$22.65 an hour, with 49% of Home Visitors earning less than \$20 an hour.

80% of Home Visitors and 90% of Supervisors hold at least a bachelor's degree.

### Region X\*

BIPOC Home Visitors and Supervisors earn \$1.35 an hour less than white peers.

23.4% of Home Visitors and 17.4% of Supervisors receive public assistance and use an average of 2.2 and 1.6 public assistance services, respectively.

\*Region X: Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington

<sup>1</sup> Data source: Franko, M., Schaack, D., Roberts, A., Molieri, A. Wacker, A., Estrada, M., & Gann, H. (2019). *The Region X Home Visiting Workforce Study: Introduction*. Denver, CO: Butler Institute for Families, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver.



## Ensuring a Skilled and Sustainable Workforce

The 2021 adopted state budget directed the Home Visiting Advisory Committee to develop recommendations containing strategies to ensure a skilled and sustainable workforce in order to serve additional families.

The recommendations focused on strategies to sustain the Home Visiting workforce and adjust contracts to reflect the true cost of service.

***Supporting a Workforce Reflective of Communities Served.*** Funding is needed to strengthen the infrastructure to recruit and retain a workforce that is reflective of the communities and families served within Home Visiting. Given that BIPOC Home Visitors earn, on average, less than their white Home Visiting peers in our region, funding must be directed to redress the racial wage inequities in the system.

***Stabilize the Current Workforce.*** Contract adjustments would help stabilize the existing provider base by providing funding to support wage enhancements and address the increasing costs of doing business (e.g., rising mileage costs due to gas prices).

Many Home Visiting programs face recruitment and retention challenges due to low compensation. Like other sectors, Home Visiting has faced pandemic-related workforce attrition with current field reporting suggesting 30% of the field is new within the last year.

Finally, Home Visiting contracts have largely been static. Limited funding adjustments since 2014 have not allowed programs to keep pace with inflation nor offer consistent compensation increases.