



## Members of the Seattle Human Services Coalition share a vision of a Just and Thriving Community!

We choose to work together to build, nurture, and sustain a community where all people have access to the basic necessities, opportunities, resources, and respect to reach their full potential.

In the world we know today, **racism and other systemic inequities hold us back from equality of opportunity and freedom for all to thrive.** Economic, educational, and health systems are among those systems structured in favor of those with wealth and power. These systems also undervalue the assets and resources in middle and low income families and communities.

We also share the understanding that freedom and justice for all includes both equal support and opportunity as well as personal initiative and mutual accountability.

The vision of a Just and Thriving Community serves as a catalyst and inspiration to bring us together to act on this vision.

### Motivation comes from the changes we will see as we all make progress in becoming a just and thriving community, including:

- economic, environmental, and social sustainability;
- freedom from inequity based on race, color, national origin, age, income, veteran status, education level, gender, physical, intellectual, or mental disability, religious belief or practice, sexual orientation, or by language or cultural practices;
- safe and affordable housing;
- adequate nutritious food;
- access to quality physical, mental, and behavioral health care;
- living wage jobs to support self and family;
- affordable and available community activities;
- universal, transformative, empowering quality education;
- high quality, affordable child care that is conveniently located and meets the needs of working parents;
- freedom from physical harm as well as mental and emotional coercion; and
- a sense of being included and connected, with the value of each individual recognized and honored.

*We want our children to  
inherit a better world.*



## Tenets for Change

**We believe adoption of the following principles is critical to moving forward together:**

- Every person is valuable.
- It is an essential human right for every person to have access to the basic necessities and resources for human survival *and advancement*.
- Human services must be operated, staffed, and fully funded in a manner that is humane, holistic and emphasizes physical and cultural accessibility. People who are in need must not be devalued for having needs, nor should they be devalued in the delivery of services.
- Collaborative partnerships must be established between funders, government, educators, human service providers, media, police, the criminal justice system, and the community at large to reach our shared goals.
- Public Finance reform is essential to build and maintain healthy communities and community services. This includes both moving to a progressive public revenue structure and funders paying the full cost of services.
- Ongoing assessment and evaluation of basic beliefs and practices is a critical responsibility for every individual in our society to ensure that we do not endorse policies or practices limiting access to crucial resources.

## Framework for moving forward

Understanding of the context of our current environment will play a role in how we move forward toward our shared vision of a Just and Thriving Community.

### 1. Structural Racism

Disparities in outcomes exist relative to race in a wide variety of economic, social, and health outcomes. All of these are connected to social institutions such as education, criminal justice, medical care, banking, housing, and employment. Identifying and dismantling the ways that racism influences the value sets within those systems is necessary to reaching our vision of a just and thriving community.

### 2. Economic Trends

Macro-economic trends like increasing income inequality and globalization policies that favor capital over labor undermine our goals. Micro-economic trends of funding the full cost to provide human services are also necessary. Both of these levels must be addressed in order to see sustainable change in our communities.

### 3. Social Determinants of Health

The greater the ratio of spending on human services relative to medical services, the better the *health* outcomes achieved. While the U.S. spends far more on medical care than other nations, the U.S. also allocates proportionately less to supports for health like human services and prevention, with the result of life expectancy lagging behind other developed nations. We must build a sustainable network of life cycle services needed to support strong, healthy communities, including both services needed in a crisis and ongoing service that provide the building blocks to success.

#### 4. Measuring Success

This speaks directly to the question of who are human service providers accountable to and how do we honor the role of program participants in determining what success is and how to measure it. We all want our work to produce the most successful results possible and we want to measure those results. We also want to make sure that data collected by human service providers is useful to reaching our shared goals and worth the cost to collect it.

#### 5. Regional Roles

It is decreasingly effective for any of the players in the region to “go it alone.” Not only will the work of individual players be less effective than it could be, but the whole will be less able to reach our shared goals. We need to come together as providers, communities, unions, governments, and other funders to determine our roles and create a true partnership.

*We can accomplish more together  
than we all can separately!*

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