

# WE'RE MAKING A CHANGE



## FROM PEAR TO IMPACT

The Washington State Office of Equity (EQUITY) believes in clearly communicating what we are doing. We also believe in doing better when we know better. We understand some of the language we use has been confusing and unclear. So, we are transitioning from the phrase 'pro-equity anti-racism (PEAR)' to '**Impact**'. Our office exists to make a positive change (impact) in how state government operates (RCW 43.06D), so we are changing our language so our work is easier to understand.

Our focus is answering the following questions, "Is government making a positive difference in the lives of the people who call our great state home? Do people feel a difference?".

Over the next year, we will update our tools, guidance, consultation, and technical assistance.

**Impact:** Making a positive difference that people can feel.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

'**Impact**' better communicates our goal of improving how state government operates. The term is grounded in **action and data-focused results**.

- Plain language builds trust, transparency, and engagement – especially with communities who have historically been and continue to be excluded from opportunities.
- This is not about "moving away from the hard work" – it's doubling down in a way that clearly communicates what we're doing so we can be held accountable for achieving results.

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

- **Agency Implementation Guidance:** Checklist of key considerations and actions, and more guidance at our agency impact leader workshops. **(Summer - Early Fall 2025)**
- **Language Transition Toolkit:** Glossary, Examples, Crosswalk Guide, Templates **(Fall 2025)**
- **Updates to the Resources, Policies, and Guides, including the Playbook (Fall - Winter 2025)**

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## PLAIN LANGUAGE GUIDE

| Previous Term                                  | Current Term                     | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| -                                              | Impact                           | We use data to evaluate whether or actions are making a real difference in Washingtonian's ability to access and navigate government processes. We also will evaluate whether government decisions are fair.                                                                             |
| Community                                      | Community                        | Every single person who lives, works, or spends time in Washington State—no exceptions - truly everyone.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PEAR Team                                      | Impact Team                      | A core group of workers, local community members, agency leaders, and topic experts who work together to make sure state government practices, processes, and procedures are fair to everyone.                                                                                           |
| Determinant of Equity                          | Statewide Impact Area            | We use outcomes to evaluate whether state government practices, processes, and procedures are fair. Some examples are: access to affordable internet and technology, healthcare, living wage jobs, food, housing, and education.                                                         |
| Indicators, Baseline Indicators                | Community Conditions             | A collection of indicators, or data measurements to assess how Washington's communities, or populations (groups of people) are doing in comparison to the statewide goal.                                                                                                                |
| PEAR Service Lines                             | Impact Service Lines             | We review a state agency's processes, practices, and procedures to understand what changes need to happen to make state government fair for all.                                                                                                                                         |
| Equity Impact Assessment, Equity Impact Review | Organizational Impact Assessment | An internal assessment agencies complete on an annual cadence, working with community members and the Office of Equity. This assessment is a strategic planning tool that helps an agency understand how their processes, practices, and procedures influence state government outcomes. |
| Impact Hub                                     | Impact Hub                       | We evaluate the community conditions using dashboards and other ways of visualizing data.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Agency Goal                                    | Agency Goal                      | The objectives an agency sets to accomplish to make its processes, practices, and procedures fairer and easier to navigate and use.                                                                                                                                                      |



# FAQ



**Q: Are the missions of the Impact teams different from the mission of the PEAR teams?**

A: While our language is changing, our mission is not. Maintain your commitment to delivering effective government services that address the issues and meet the needs of everyone.

**Q: Is this a Federal Mandate? Can we obtain a clear understanding of any replacements for the term “Equity”?**

A: We are not changing the term “equity”. The Office of Equity has been working on describing our work in a way that everyone can understand since late 2023. Equity remains the heart of the Office of Equity (EQUITY), and no changes are needed to the work we do. Washington law enshrines the right to be free from discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, sex, military status, sexual orientation, or disability. (RCW 49.60.030; RCW 49.60.400). Washingtonians are already working hard; their hard work should pay off. In Washington State, equity means having access to opportunities and eliminating obstacles so that all people can have the opportunity, through hard work and access, to thrive and flourish. (RCW 43.06D.020).

**Q: Where can agencies obtain information on implementing necessary changes?**

A: Our office will continue to send guidance to Agency Impact Team Leaders through the Equity Leader Series. Contact us at [info@equity.wa.gov](mailto:info@equity.wa.gov) if you need clarification on implementation.

**Q: When will there be an official legal or policy update to Executive Orders to reflect the shift from PEAR to Impact?**

A: We are working on updates. In the meantime, we can continue to move forward and serve the people of Washington.

**Q: How much flexibility do agencies have in shaping their equity priorities under the Impact language changes?**

A: Agencies are the leaders in their equity work. They create action plans based on the agency's priorities. Agencies can transition to the new language when they are ready.



# FAQ



**Q: Will the Office of Equity provide any resources, funding, staffing support, or toolkits to help implement this shift, particularly in terms of community engagement?**

A: We are developing a media toolkit, including a checklist and resources, to help engage with community members. We are available to provide consultation and support to agencies. As subject matter experts, commissions and agencies are also available to offer specific advice, recommendations, and support to the communities and tribes they work with.

Washington State's People-Focused Commissions and Agencies:

- [Commission on African American Affairs \(CAAA\)](#)
- [Commission on Asian and Pacific American Affairs \(CAPAA\)](#)
- [Commission on Hispanic Affairs \(CHA\)](#)
- [Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment](#)
- [Governor's Office of Indian Affairs](#)
- [LGBTQ Commission](#)
- [Women's Commission](#)

**Q: What are your expectations for agencies in the first year of transition from PEAR to Impact?**

A: Our expectations are to continue doing this critical work, attend the Impact Leader Series, and meet the expectations (as directed by EQUITY staff) under [EO 22-04](#).

**Q: How do you recommend I discuss the change to build trust and minimize confusion?**

A: We hope that this guide will help share the changes and explain why they are happening. We are developing a template email and talking points to communicate the change. We are sending it out via GovDelivery, and then agencies can communicate it to their staff. We are here to create systems change in state government so that we can build a Washington for All, where everyone has access to what they need to thrive. So, while our language is changing, our mission and vision remain unchanged – our purpose unwavering.

EQUITY will be using the new language going forward and will provide resources through the Impact Language Toolkit.

If you have additional questions not answered here, don't hesitate to get in touch with us through [this form](#) or by emailing us at [info@equity.wa.gov](mailto:info@equity.wa.gov)