



Midwestern Legislative Conference
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Forum on Social Justice
Webinar Series

Racial Disparities in Public Health

Friday, April 29, 2022

Presented by the
Midwestern Legislative Conference
Forum on Social Justice

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN PUBLIC HEALTH

CASE STUDY: KANSAS



MIDWEST



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Governor's Commission on Racial Equity and Justice

*Presentation to Midwestern Legislative Conference Social Justice
Forum*

April 29, 2022

History and Background

About the Commission

- The Governor signed Executive Order 20-48 on June 24, 2020, forming the Governor's Commission on Racial Equity and Justice.
- She asked the Commission to study issues of racial equity and justice across systems in Kansas, focusing first on policing and law enforcement.
- The Commission includes perspectives from the criminal justice system, education, healthcare, and advocacy organizations.
- This is **not** a commission on criminal justice reform – it is focused on broad issues of racial equity in Kansas, which includes some elements of the criminal justice system but is not tasked with a comprehensive study of that system.
- In 2021, the Commission focused on studying racial equity within economic systems, education, and healthcare.

2020 Report

- The Commission submitted its first report to the Governor on law enforcement and policing on December 1, 2020.
- The report included over 60 recommendations to state agencies, the legislature, and local governments on how to improve racial equity in Kansas around policing.

2021 Report

- In studying the initial topic, the Commission heard repeatedly about overlapping and connecting issues in communities of color across the state.
- These issues all connected to the Social Determinants of Health, which became the Commission's focus in 2021.
- Specifically, the Commission broke out into three subcommittees, studying and making recommendations on racial equity and justice in Kansas in:
 - *Economic Systems*
 - *Education*
 - *Healthcare*

Process and Timeline

The Commission's Work

- The Commission met every other week from July 2020 through December 2021, hearing from state and national experts, local leaders, and community members about topics important to Kansans.
- Meetings included learning sessions, presentations, and discussion.
- The Commission took information from these meetings and developed recommendations on improving racial equity for state agencies, the legislature, and local governments.
- The Commission also solicited feedback from Kansans via social media.

The Governor's
Commission on
Racial Equity and
Justice wants to
hear from

YOU!

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Recommendations

Initial Report: Policing and Law Enforcement

Behavioral Health

Expand Medicaid to provide mental health and other health care coverage to populations currently not covered.

Law enforcement, community members, and leaders agree access to behavioral health care is a criminal justice issue. Many law enforcement encounters are the result of substance use or mental health issues. Increasing access to early intervention options by expanding Medicaid in Kansas would result in improved policing outcomes. Expanding Medicaid would also reduce state general fund spending on law enforcement and behavioral health.

Support and finance the use of mobile crisis response models, including co-responder and virtual co-responder models to assist law enforcement in responding to behavioral health calls and stops.

Mental health professionals who ride with and work alongside law enforcement officers can contribute to positive outcomes and promote treatment over incarceration for individuals experiencing mental health crisis. Kansas communities should implement appropriate co-responder programs where possible.

Universal Equity Policies

Encourage government policies and enact legislation that requires bias and equity analysis of policy decisions and legislation at all levels.

Similar to the process of reviewing fiscal notes that inform policymakers about the financial impact of proposed legislation, or requesting economic impact statements on relevant bills, the legislature should adopt a procedure for developing and considering equity analysis and impacts of any policy change).

Maternal and Child Health

Develop payment policies to reimburse community-based providers such as community health workers, home visitors, doulas, and lactation consultants.

KDHE should adopt programs and payment policies that prioritize infant-early childhood mental health by paying for evidence-based dyadic care or family therapy and parenting programs. Additionally, KDHE should explore team-based primary care, high-performing medical homes, and comprehensive home visiting as strategies to support “two-generation” care.

Maximizing Federal Funding

Consider the perspectives of people of color and people from groups impacted by COVID-19 in the process of distributing federal relief funds.

As entities look at implementing direct relief and allocating discretionary funds, they should create structures that bring people of color and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 to the table where decisions are being made and consider their perspectives.

Direct federal funds using a broad interpretation of “health” that includes social determinants of health and considers health equity.

Significant funds from ARPA and other federal relief packages are directed to improving health outcomes. Kansas should consider the definition of “health” to include aspects of the social determinants of health and allocate those funds accordingly. Additionally, health equity should be a primary consideration in the distribution of funds.

Behavioral Health

Expand telehealth access and codify regulations that expanded telehealth for mental health.

Kansas, like many states, expanded access to telehealth services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These policy changes, including payment parity, use of personal devices, and ability to initiate services at distant sites, make it easier for patients to access services and for providers to provide services, and should be made permanent.

ACEs and Interfamily Violence

Improve coordination and partnerships to increase prevention services and guard against ACEs.

Promote and fund partnerships between early childhood sector, behavioral health professionals, private sector, and law enforcement to improve access to services, use of preventive services, and reduce interaction with justice and child welfare system. This should include payment policies and funding for care coordination services, pediatric care coordinators, community health workers (CHWs) and other culturally competent professionals to coordinate services for young children and their caretakers.



GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION
ON
RACIAL EQUITY & JUSTICE

2021 REPORT

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH -
FINAL REPORT

Both commission reports are
available online at

<https://governor.kansas.gov/governors-commission-on-racial-equity-and-justice/>

Along with recordings of
meetings and learning
sessions held by the
Commission, and documents
used in development of the
recommendations.

Progress

2022 Budget

On April 20, 2022, the Governor signed a budget bill for Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 that included the following CREJ recommendations and interest areas:

- Restores Higher Education funding and makes significant one-time investments in need-based aid, deferred maintenance, and workforce development through community and tech college funding.
- Increases the state's funding for housing by \$65 million over two years. This funding will be dedicated to the development and renovation of moderate-income housing and the creation of a state revolving loan program to support the state's workforce needs and close the financing gap in rural communities.
- Increases funding for the Office of Broadband Development, Kansas Tourism, small business research and development grants, work-based learning, registered apprenticeships, agricultural economic development, and the Job Creation Fund.
- Provides \$3 million in scholarships for aspiring teachers attending Kansas universities and who are committed to teaching in Kansas upon graduation.
- Provides \$35 million in matching funds over 5 years for workforce and economic development through the NIAR/WERX aircraft conversion program at Wichita State University.

2022 Budget Cont'd

- Increases coverage for post-partum mothers from 60 days to 12 months after birth and funds the Maternal and Child Home Visiting Program.
- Approves additional enhancements for Emergency Medical Services, adult dental services, cancer screening, pediatric primary care, and newborn screening.
- Addresses the state's competency evaluation and restoration backlog.
- Continues funding for Families First Prevention grants and services and includes funding for recruitment and retention incentives for child placing agencies.
- Restores full funding for the state's evidence-based juvenile justice prevention and rehabilitation programs.
- Increases funding for the state's grants to local judicial districts for community corrections grants.
- Funds new geriatric and substance use programs at Lansing and Winfield Correctional Facilities.

Questions?

To contact the Commission:

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