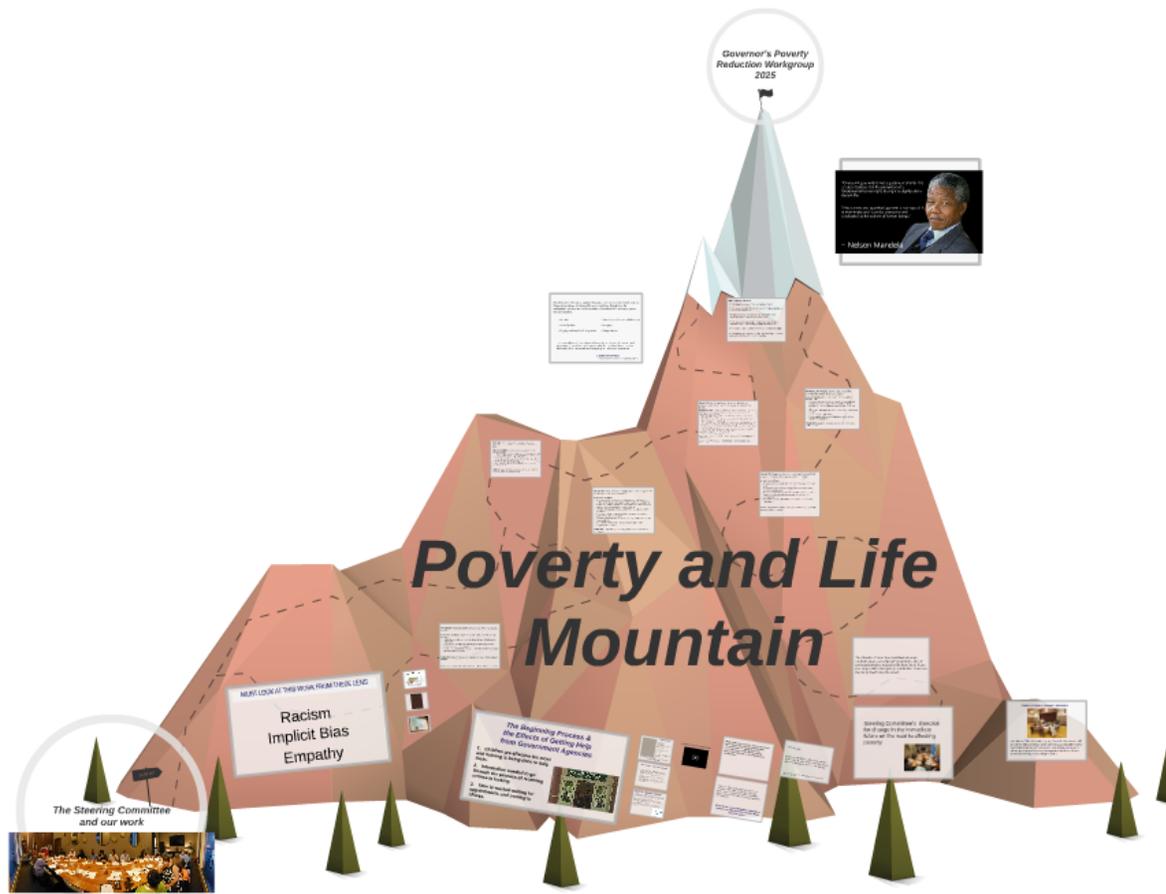


Steering Committee

The Poverty Mountain





SUMMIT

The Steering Committee and our work



MUST LOOK AT THIS WORK FROM THESE LENS

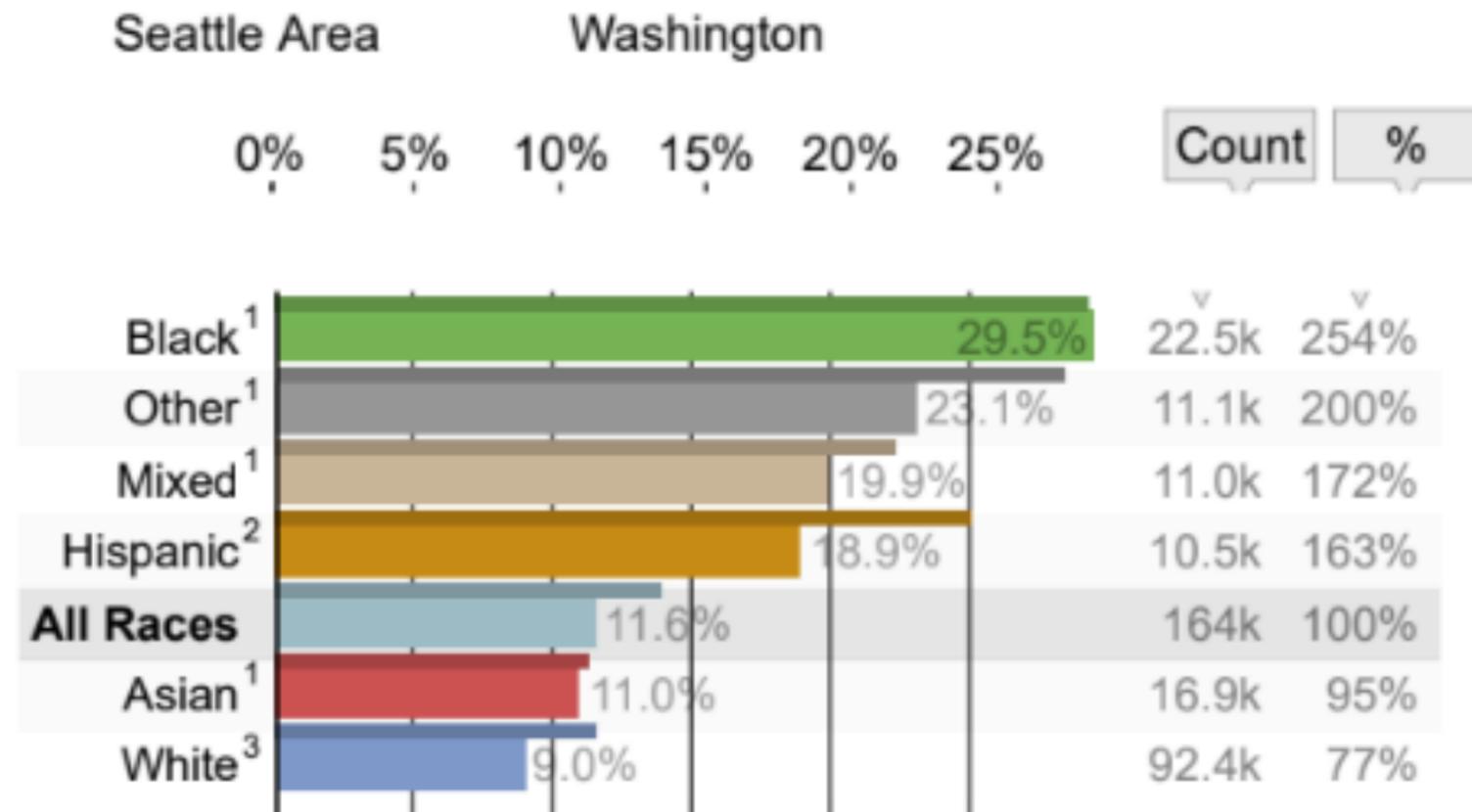
Racism
Implicit Bias
Empathy

On Food Stamps by Race

#4

Percentage of given ethno-racial group on food stamps.

Scope: households in Washington and the Seattle Area



Count number of households on food stamps in given ethno-racial group

% percentage more or less than the population at large

¹ including Hispanic

² white Hispanic

³ non-Hispanic white

Racism drives perceptions of welfare recipients willingness to work

	Think Most Welfare Recipients Are Black	Think Most Welfare Recipients Are White
In your opinion, what is more to blame when people are on welfare?		
Lack of effort on their own part	63%	47%
Circumstances beyond their control	26	50
Do most people on welfare want to work?		
Yes	31	35
No	69	45
Do most people on welfare really need it?		
Yes	36	50
No	64	50

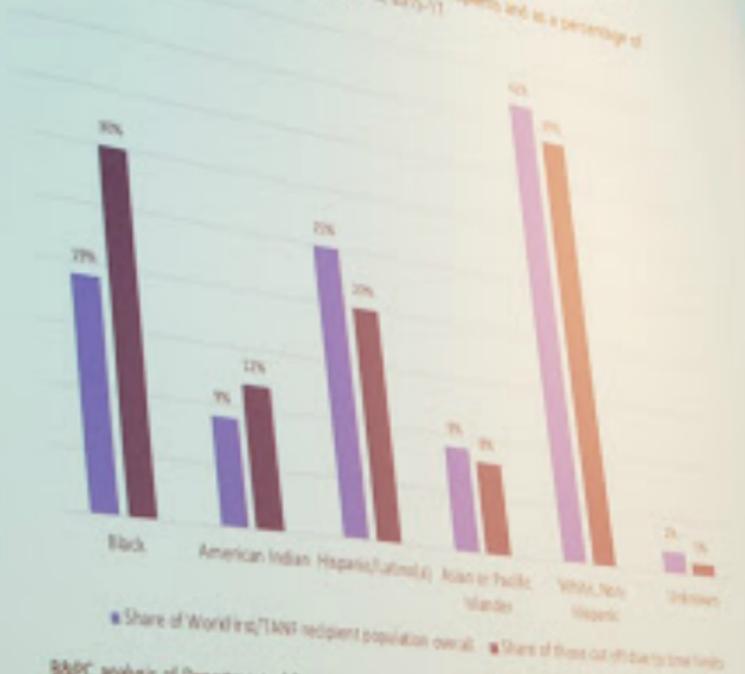
CBS/NY Times Survey, 1994 Martin Gilens, Why Americans Hate Welfare

“These findings are consistent with research done in other states, which reveals that *racism* – in the form of caseworker bias and structural barriers to economic security – is to blame for the disparate rate at which recipients of color (especially those who are Black) are penalized under TANF.”

- Liz Olson, State Priorities Partnership Fellow, B&PC



Black and American Indian families are disproportionately penalized by harsh WorkFirst time limit policy
 Individuals by race/ethnicity as a percentage of all WorkFirst recipients and as a percentage of those removed due to time limits, Washington state, 2015-17



B&PC analysis of Department of Social and Health Services TANF recipient data. Figures are 3-year average of SFY 2015, 2016, and 2017 data.
 WASHINGTON STATE BOARD & POLICY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MUST LOOK AT THIS WORK FROM THESE LENS

Racism
Implicit Bias
Empathy

The Beginning Process & the Effects of Getting Help from Government Agencies

- 1. Children are effective the most and nothing is being done to help them.**
- 2. Information needed to go through the process of receiving service is lacking.**
- 3. Time is wasted waiting for appointments and coming to offices.**





De'Nadre & Xavier

De'Nadre has experience homelessness and has lived in a tent.

Xavier was born into poverty.

Both are currently living in poverty.

What are we doing to help them understand that this is not their normal life?

Here's what we can do for Children?

- Local libraries connect to DSHS center for children to have an outlet to read and learn while their parents go through the process.
- A children's corner showing positive videos and/or movies.
- Open up to the theory of counseling for children on social services.
- Area where children can be children and not be a part of the experience of what their parents are going through in poverty.

WHAT IS ABOUT HAPPEN?

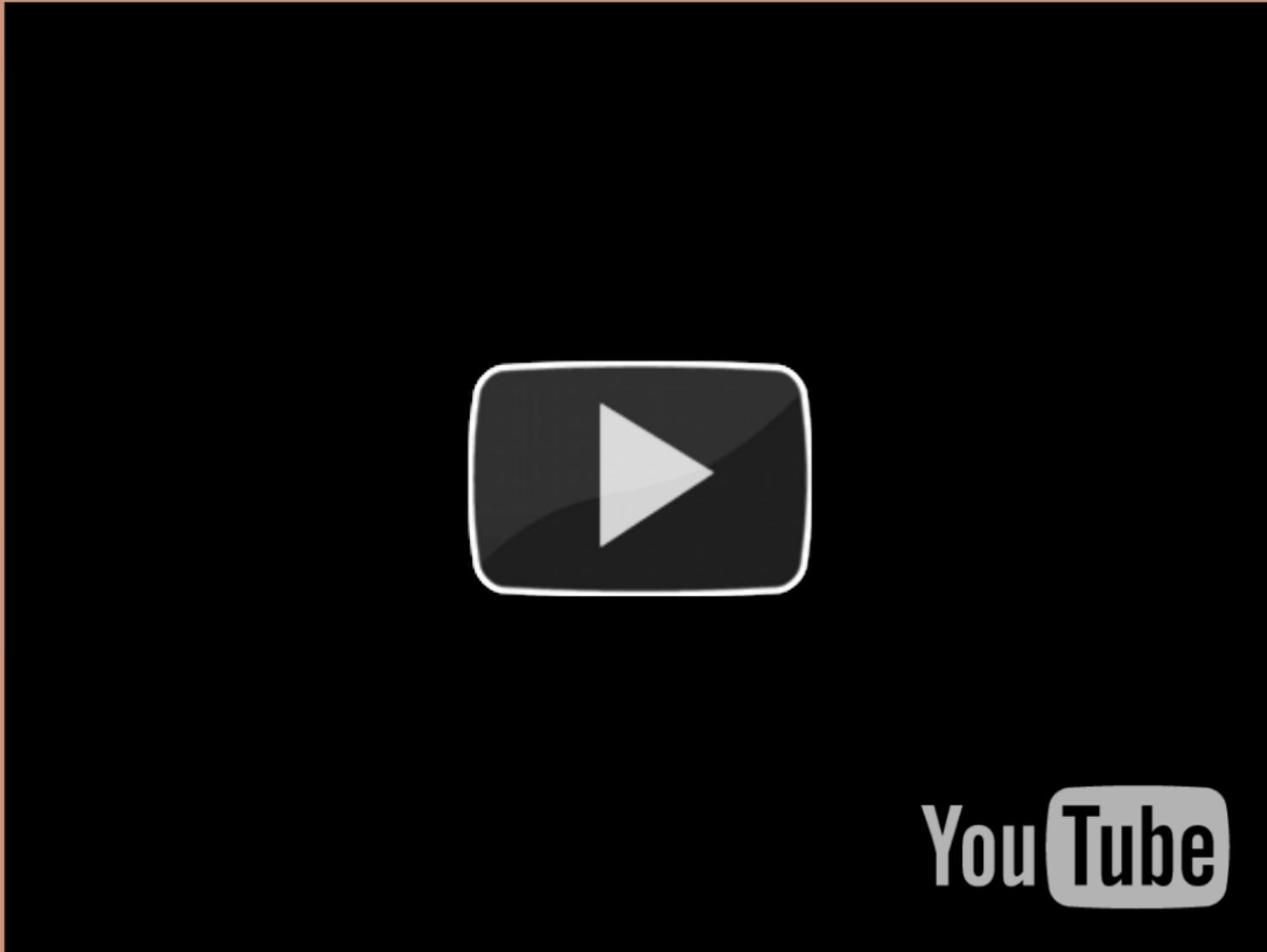
Many people get/receive TANF & food stamps and other services but are never given a clear outline of the experience, rules, regulation and outcomes they are about to go through.

Accessible Instructional video library for all platforms (i.e. phone, tablets, website) is needed when a person/family is approved for any program. Training Video should provide:

Terminology explanation: What does RCW, WAC, TANF, and fair hearing. Video should be simple and explanatory for all levels of education?

**Orientation
Video**

An Example of an Orientation Video



***Many of the social service offices that clients go to do not have engaging information
The information is mainly long form
comprehension. Unfortunately, a large
percentage of people in Washington state
can not read.***

The time people spend waiting for their case manager, information can be given through videos, kiosk, internet connections that allows them to watch information pertaining to services and programs.

Most offices have information running on screens, so why shouldn't DSHS offices have the same?

Pro Literacy

More than 30 million adults in the United States cannot read, write, or do basic math above a third-grade level. — ProLiteracy

<https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/education-news-roundup/illiteracy-in-america/>

Steering Committee's direction for change in the immediate future on the road to affecting poverty.



CHILD & FAMILY LEGACY COUNCIL



Establish a Child & Family Legacy Council. The council will be tasked with providing oversight and accountability during the implementation of the 10-year comprehensive plan to reduce poverty and increase intergenerational social and economic mobility in Washington state.

The Steering Committee identified six major problem areas, accompanying solutions, and an estimated timeline related to the Benefits Cliff and challenges with interagency coordination. Here are the six problems we discussed:

PROBLEM: Public benefit levels are too low to meet basic needs.

POLICY SOLUTION: Implement a Standard of Need for public benefits.

- Take into account real costs that people need to be healthy and thrive.
- Account for variations in costs by geographic region and family size and composition.
- Should be updated annually, and public benefit levels should be tied to this standard.

TIMELINE: Short-term (3-5 years); requires new way of thinking about benefits.

Also referenced in PRWG Policy Concepts/Recommendations from Lori Pfingst under Adopt A New Need Standard.

PROBLEM: Public assistance eligibility is too low so people phase out before they can afford the basics.

POLICY SOLUTION:

- Ensure broad-based access to low/no-cost healthcare and childcare for households significantly above the poverty line.
- Universal health care with \$0 premiums for families up to 200 percent of the federal poverty line or higher.
- And/or allow people at these eligibility thresholds to enroll in Medicaid.
- Increase childcare eligibility to 300 percent of the federal poverty line and cap co-pays.
- Additional income deductions for Working Connections Child Care eligibility.
- Expand eligibility and flexibility of SNAP with a state supplement program.

TIMELINE: Long-term (5-10 years); requires substantial fiscal investment



PROBLEM: Public assistance does not provide integrated connection to effective education and training to support families' goals.

POLICY SOLUTION: Implement a career pathway program for public assistance recipients.

- Integrate a statewide evidence-based career pathway program for public assistance recipients into the state's community and technical college system and other systems of higher education.
- Have many entry and exit points, recognizing that individuals' path to degree completion is not always linear.
- Ensure time for credential/degree completion.
- Waive WorkFirst requirements/hours tracking for half- or full-time student participants.

TIMELINE: Long-term (5-10 years); some recommendations are faster, but system overhaul will take several years

PROBLEM: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is not accessible for thousands of families in poverty.

POLICY SOLUTION:

- Ensure access to TANF by restoring recession-era program cuts.
- Prioritize family stability and well-being over the current system of compliance.
- Ease sanction policy so families can always receive a basic level of assistance and have more time to come into compliance.
- Enact broad-based time limit extensions to ensure family well-being.

TIMELINE: Short-term (3-5 years); work underway now, multiple policies still need to pass.

PROBLEM: People are not getting all the benefits for which they are eligible.

POLICY SOLUTION: Conduct a comprehensive public benefits audit.

- Hire an outside group with an in-depth understanding of poverty to conduct a comprehensive audit to review whether people are getting the benefits they are eligible for.
- Use audit to redesign systems to ensure ease of access of benefits
- Create an auto-eligibility tool.
- Create a public assistance Ombudsman office to be a resource for recipients.

TIMELINE: Near-term (1-3 years); an audit could begin as early as 2020.

PROBLEM: Public benefits, reporting, and eligibility are confusing and there is poor communication about rules and policies.

POLICY SOLUTION: Use human centered-design to create systems that allow for ease of communication, ensure people have access to clear information, and encourage peer support models.

- Make information related to eligibility, benefit levels, and recertification easily accessible in clear language.
- Give people access to the same tools as caseworkers so they can cross check benefits and make informed decisions
- Use technology, such as streamed videos or infographics to supplement or replace long, complicated written materials and help explain information about benefits.
- Remake systems for reporting and communication with caseworkers using human centered-design practices
- Allow for communication that is not dependent on the caseworkers' availability
- Allow people to upload documents and information
- Ensure auto-eligibility of all available benefits.

TIMELINE: Mixed; information could be more accessible in the near term, while reconfiguring systems will take several years

Also referenced in PRWG Policy Concepts/Recommendations from Lori Pfingst under Create A Continuum of Care.

Here are the six problems:

Public benefit levels are too low to meet basic needs.

Public assistance eligibility is too low so people phase out before they can afford the basics.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is not accessible for thousands of families in poverty.

Public assistance does not provide integrated connection to effective education and training to support families' goals.

People are not getting all the benefits for which they are eligible.

Public benefits, reporting, and eligibility are confusing and there is poor communication about rules and policies.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective.

- Service
- Social justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

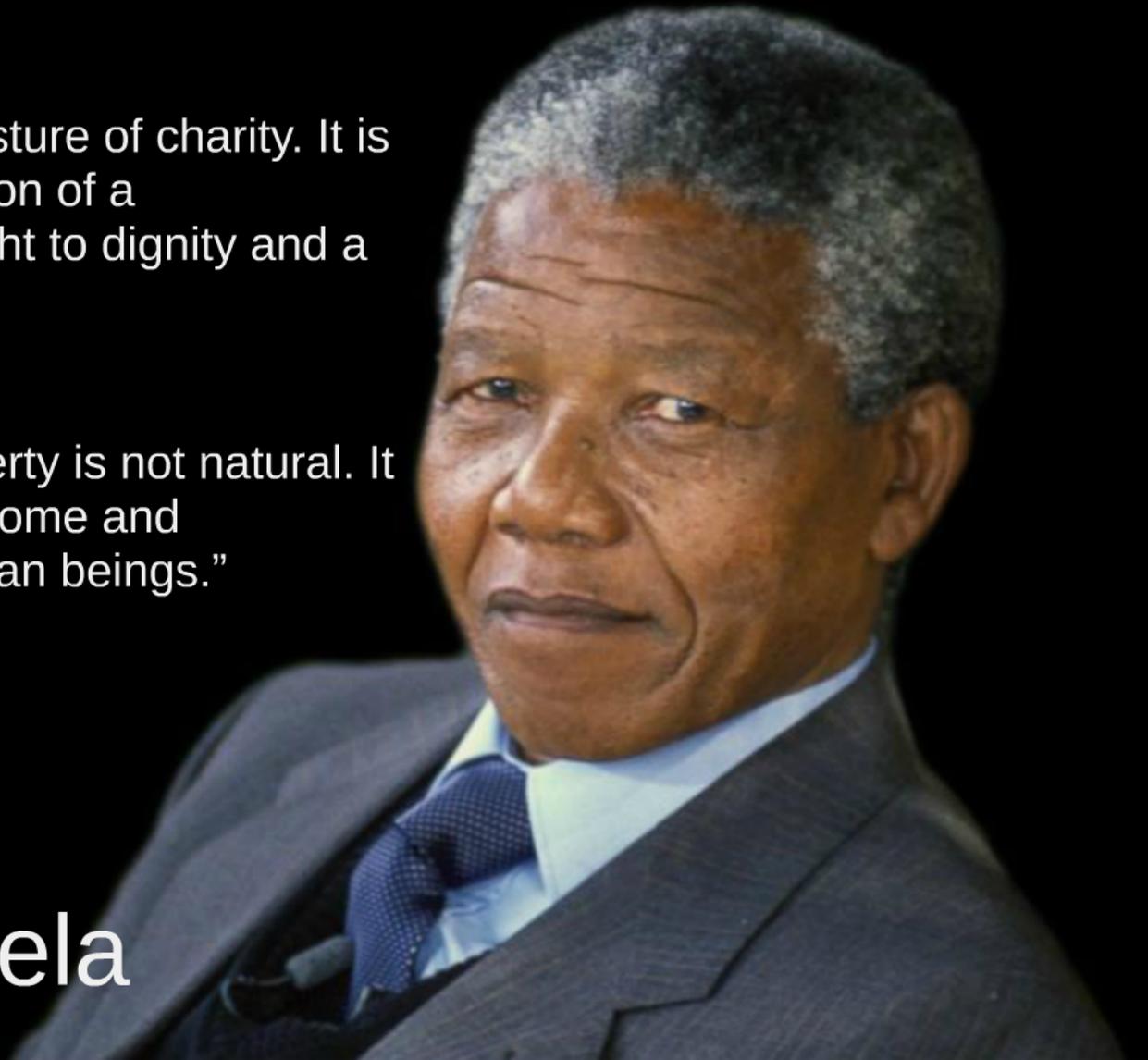
CODE OF ETHICS

National Association of Social Workers

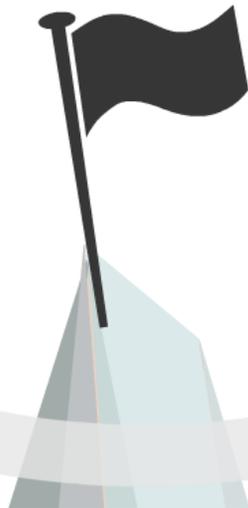
“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life.

“Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”

~ Nelson Mandela



***Governor's Poverty
Reduction Workgroup
2025***



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