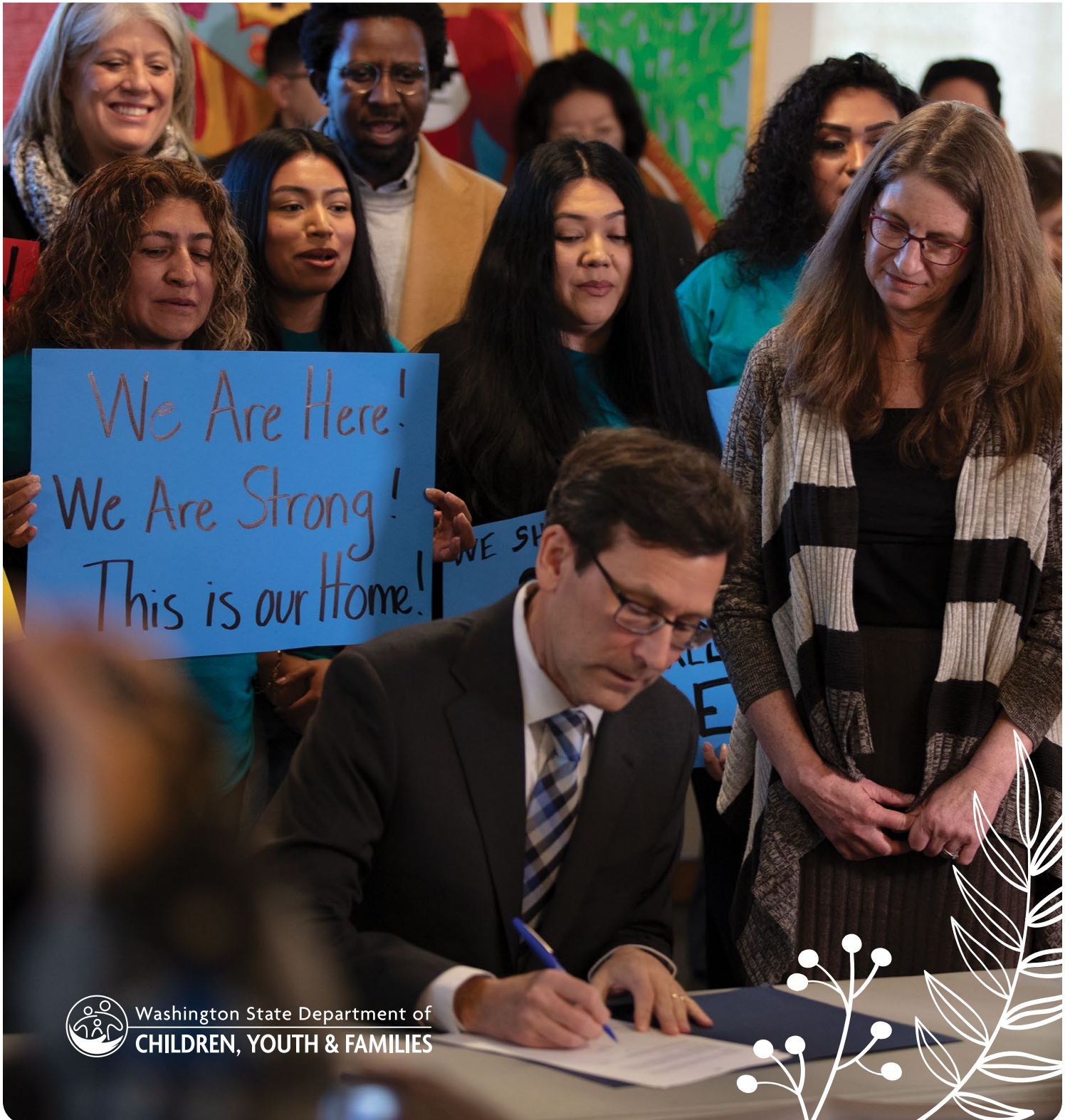


Family Separation Rapid Response Team Report — JULY 2025 INTERIM REPORT



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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INTRODUCTION

On Jan. 27, 2025, Governor Bob Ferguson signed Executive Order 25-04 (https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/EO%2025-04.pdf) which established the Family Separation Rapid Response Team (Rapid Response Team), to be led by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). The overarching purpose of the Rapid Response Team is to make policy improvement recommendations for how Washington state can be more responsive to the harm, trauma, and other lasting effects on children who experience family separation through the deportation or detention of their parents or primary caregivers.

The first interim report (ADM_0033) is available on our website at https://dcyf.wa.gov/publications-library/ADM_0033 and covers the first three months of the Rapid Response Team's progress, from January to April 2025. This report covers the second quarter from May to July 2025.

PARTICIPANTS

The Rapid Response Team consists of state agency subject-matter-experts. We also partner with community organizations and legislative representatives to inform our work.

To support this partnership, we launched the new Community Partners Committee. The Committee consists of representatives from the following community-based organizations:

- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP)
- WA Immigrant Solidarity Network
- OneAmerica
- Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
- Legal Counsel for Youth and Children (LCYC)
- Jewish Family Services
- Catholic Community Services
- Asian Counseling and Referral Services

We are honored to have the time and collaboration of hard-working leaders from these organizations. There are many excellent immigrant-serving organizations across our state, and working in a small group with these organizations allows us to maintain an agile working team.

MEETINGS

This quarter, four Rapid Response Team meetings were held, with an average of 30 attendees per meeting representing state agencies and commissions, legislators, other elected officials and community partners from across the state. In addition, several ad-hoc committees have regularly met to discuss policy improvements. Going forward, the main body will meet monthly and other committees will meet as needed to support this concentrated policy work.

The following are high-level summaries of Rapid Response Team meetings held during the second quarter of 2025.

MAY 6, 2025

- The Governor's Office presented a summary of relevant sections of the recently passed state budget, followed by an open discussion about potential implications for Rapid Response Team and related programs.
- The Department of Licensing presented on the types of identification that are compliant with the REAL ID Act, and the challenges for non-residents who are no longer able to use their driver's licenses at the airport. Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) and foreign passports are compliant, but there is a backlog in processing EAD applications.
- A robust discussion was had about airport policies. The Rapid Response Team requested further clarification from the Governor's Office Deputy Federal Policy Director on what areas of the airport have state vs. federal jurisdiction, and how families might access legal support while in the airport.

MAY 27, 2025

- OneAmerica presented to the Rapid Response Team, sharing how they organize with communities—not for them. They have deep community connections and empower local leaders to give Know Your Rights training and share the importance of completing Family Safety Plans. Recommendation details are in the meeting minutes on our webpage.
- The state ethnic Commissions and Agency representatives had a closed-door session to discuss recommendations for the Rapid Response Team.

JUNE 17, 2025

- Numerous changes in the immigration landscape were discussed along with their implications, including the elimination of automatic consideration of deferred action for individuals with Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) status.
- The Rapid Response Team discussed news reports that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services shared Medicaid client data it had received from the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) with the Department of Homeland Security.
- Community Partners discussed and clarified their recommendations, building on previous presentations to the body.
- Agencies discussed potential Decision Packages. The Rapid Response Team discussed collecting recommendations, Decision Package updates, and other immigration-related asks into an “Items To Watch” document for the 2026 legislative session.

JULY 8, 2025

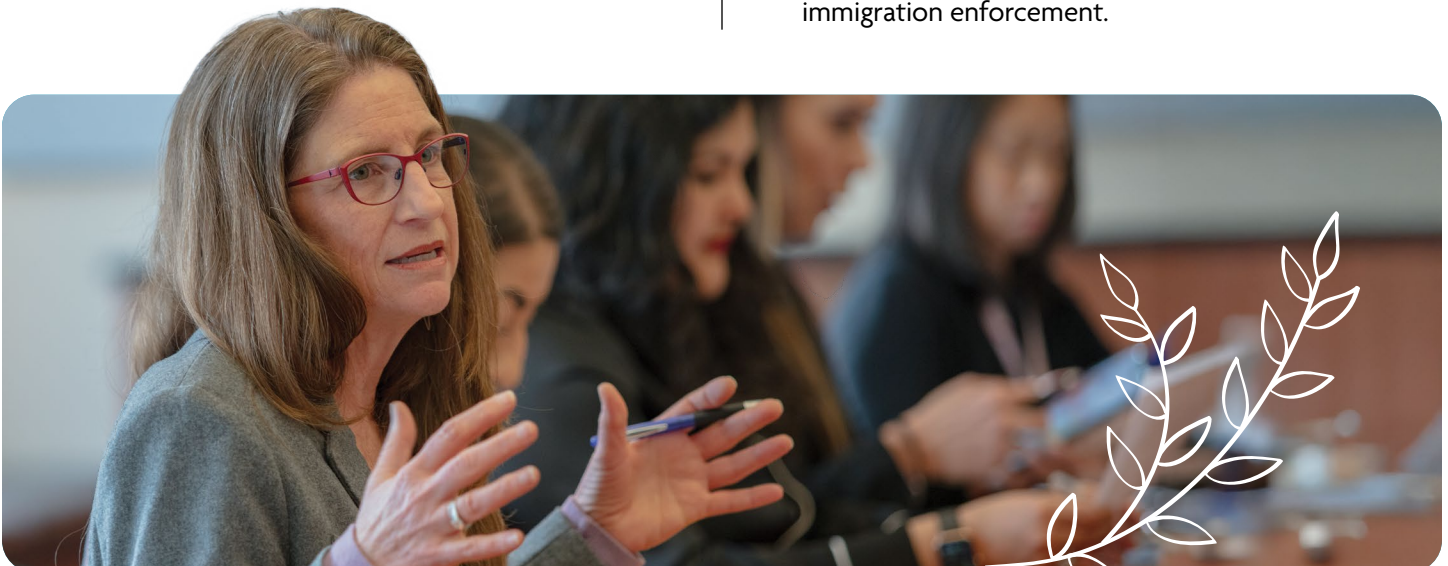
- The Rapid Response Team Administrator provided a summary of the recent Community Partners meeting, where upcoming deliverables were reviewed for guidance and recommendations were brought out. The need for mental health services for separated children and for immigration service providers was emphasized.
- It was shared that there is a new federal policy, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Directive 11064.4 (issued July 2, 2025), *Detention and Removal of Alien Parents and Legal Guardians of Minor Children*. Further guidance regarding its potential impacts was requested by many at the meeting.

- The inclusion in HR 1 of a \$300 million increase to federal Office of Refugee Resettlement, including to vet sponsors of unaccompanied children, was discussed.
- Recommendations for this report were discussed.
- We reviewed and discussed Appendix A: Six Month Review of the Family Separation Rapid Response Team. We evaluated what aspects of the Executive Order 25-04 have been completed, and what activities should take place over the next six months. This project review will be completed in the beginning of August with a six-month project plan for all policies that are remaining in review.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Outside of meetings, the Rapid Response Team is active in creating resources, working in small ad-hoc teams, and engaging with community partners. Below are some examples of recent activities from the second quarter.

- Reviewing immigration referral needs for youth in state care in partnership with immigration legal experts, community partners, the Office of Civil Legal Aid, and the Office of Public Defense. This review will be ongoing to ensure that best practices are followed in the referral process, especially given the changing federal policy landscape
- Reviewing all DCYF immigration-related policies in partnership with the AGO to ensure compliance with Keep Washington Working.
- Developing a flowchart to effectively convey how children might come under the care of DCYF in case a parent or guardian is detained or deported by federal immigration enforcement.



- Conducting a six-month review of the work of the Rapid Response Team and ensuring alignment with Executive Order 25-04 directives. See *Appendix: Six Month Review of the Family Separation Rapid Response Team* (page 5).
- Presentations to multiple committees and collaboration bodies across the state, such as the Commission on Hispanic Affairs and DCYF's State Interagency Coordinating Council. These discussions with other state-wide teams have resulted in real-time feedback on developing priorities and deliverables for the Rapid Response Team to review.
- Developing a draft process for the Rapid Response Team to facilitate effective communication with affected businesses, schools, partners, local law enforcement, and other community partners following a possible mass raid event.
- Monitoring and discussing changing federal policies, challenges in providing services for mixed status families, and legal challenges for youth without citizenship status.
- Monitoring federal policy changes that impact the immigration legal framework for children. To date, this has included:
 - Changes to parental guardianship rights (July 14, 2025)
 - Updates to Special Immigrant Juvenile Status VISA (July 15, 2025)
 - US Health & Human Services changes to service provision guidance

Our community partners (NWIRP, KIND, OneAmerica, WAISN, and LCYC) have been integral to alerting us to this work and supporting our policy response. We are grateful for their ongoing leadership.

- Developing a resource flyer to help families prepare in advance for separation due to immigration-related detention or deportation. This flyer, which includes information and links to helpful resources, will be available in multiple languages on our website, and will be shared with our community partners to ensure access by the public.

Links to the following information is included in the flyer:

- Legal Counsel for Youth and Children's Immigrant Safety Plan <https://lccycwa.org/isp>
- Appleseed Network's Resource for Planning for Assets and Business <https://appleseednetwork.org/planningmanual>
- Real ID Document Updates <https://realidwa.com>
- WA State Commission on Hispanic Affairs Rapid Response Hub www.cha.wa.gov/rapid-response-hub
- Washington Immigration Solidarity Network Resource Finder <https://resources.waisn.org>
- Dept. of Social and Health Services, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Resource Tool <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=8e7e2fd0641f4f1e90bbaa36a0bc232d>
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction guidance for immigrant families <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/equity-and-civil-rights/immigrant-students-rights-attend-public-schools>
- NW Immigrant Rights Project and ACLU Know Your Rights information www.nwirp.org/resources/kyr
- Legal support resources
- A summary of Keep Washington Working <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=43.17.425>



ADDITIONAL AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

The Rapid Response Team has worked to identify policy gaps in affected state agencies. We have identified the following challenges that are beyond the scope or authorization of the Rapid Response Team.

1. Privacy and data protection of personal identifying information. Washington state agencies receive, maintain, and control access to a substantial amount of personal information concerning Washington residents, including immigrant families. Lawful sharing of this information is often necessary to serve children and families working with multiple state agencies and nonprofit partners; however, ensuring that this information is only available to authorized individuals for lawful and limited purposes is essential.

2. Concerns about state and federal grant and contract requirements. The state receives federal funds that have terms and conditions that often conflict with state law obligations. The Washington State Attorney General's Office (AGO) is reviewing the legal responsibilities and risks.

Agencies are awaiting clear, consistent guidance and training on identification, measuring impacts, and mitigating negative impacts of these conflicting obligations, as well as direction for contracted service providers.



LOOKING AHEAD

During the next six months, we will review the following policies, work collaboratively with our community partners, and tackle issues outlined in the Executive Order, including but not limited to:

- Coordinating with K-12 and higher education partners on policies that impact families and students of mixed-immigration status.
- Compiling and distributing resources for families preparing for potential separation, as well as those who have already been impacted by immigration-related separation.
- Providing status updates and recommendations to the Governor's Office through an interim report in October 2025 and a final report in January 2026.
- Developing guidance for Off School Grounds Policy which addresses how Keep Washington Working functions off school property.
- Coordinating efforts across state agencies and nonprofit partners to address meeting the basic needs of families after an immigration-related separation, including ways to support sibling guardians.
- Ongoing interpretation and sharing of changes to federal immigration policy with state and local partners.

For more details, review Appendix: Six Month Review of the Family Separation Rapid Response Team on page 5.

IN CLOSING

Immense changes to federal policy this quarter have required this team to be flexible in our work. We are incredibly appreciative of our Rapid Response Team members and our community partners who have proven time and time again that they are dedicated to working through such challenges. In anticipation of – and despite – future obstacles, we will continue to investigate ways to improve the policies that impact the families we serve. We will continue to seek ways to support and protect immigrant families in Washington state.

How to Stay in Touch

Community partners, state agencies, and families are encouraged to sign up at dcyf.wa.gov/FamilySeparationRapidResponseTeam to receive email news updates on the work of the Rapid Response Team. Updates are currently provided in English, Spanish, and Somali.



APPENDIX

Six Month Review of the Family Separation Rapid Response Team

The following is a chart of our progress during the first six months toward completing the policy review activities set by Governor Ferguson through Executive Order 25-04 (https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/EO%2025-04.pdf). As part of our six-month review and in response to collaborative discussion with community partners, the Rapid Response Team recognizes the need to

also add a body of work centered around social supports, which is summarized in the last section.

On the left side are the directives listed in order (bolded), and on the right are summative descriptions of activities that are accomplishing these goals.

KEY: ● Completed ● In Progress ● Not Started	
Executive Order	Activities
Reviewing agency policies and procedures to identify any suggested changes in practice that may assist in responding specifically to instances of family separation, including situations in which many children in a specific geographic area may experience family separation at the same time.	● Presentations on related policies from partner agencies ● Submitted recommendations for data protection policies related to immigration status across the enterprise ● Reviewing Keep Washington Working with AGO Civil Rights Unit ● Developing non-citizen state staff support policies ● Developing policies for enforcement and public access to Keep Washington Working and Courts Open to All ● Ensuring access to language supports in all state agency services
Consulting with immigration and child welfare experts to discuss potential policies or procedures specific to children of deported or detained parents or primary caregivers, with a focus on helping to support the child's unique circumstances and lessening to the extent possible the lasting harm resulting from the separation of immigrant families.	● Presentations and regular engagement with leading immigration organizations and DCYF child welfare experts ● Solicited recommendations from immigration organizations ● Developing child welfare best practices around trauma after separation ● Compiling mental health resources for affected families and providers
Meeting with representatives of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and local school districts to develop strategies for mitigating disruption to the education and development of children whose parents or primary caregivers have been deported or detained; Creating proactive lines of communication between DCYF, OSPI, and local school districts.	● Collected and distributed existing guidance on our website ● Presentation from OSPI to our team ● Distributing resource flyers to schools ● Developing Off School Grounds policy ● Reaching out to, and collaborating with, school districts ● Preparing guidance for schools in collaboration with OSPI

Creating proactive lines of communication between DCYF, OSPI, and local school districts to permit **quick and responsive action** if, for example, and child's parents or primary caregivers are taken for deportation or detention while the child is present at school, or other circumstances exist warranting prompt agency intervention and cooperations to support the child.

Working with state universities, colleges, community colleges, and Running Start to **ensure and support robust pathways to higher education** for children who experience the trauma of having their parents or primary caregivers deported or detained.

Providing **regular updates** to the Governor's Office on the Rapid Response Team's progress and policy recommendations; the effect of deportations on DCYF's work; and any proposals for additional partnerships or inter-agency collaboration that may help to support children who experience family separation through the deportation or detention of their parents or primary caregivers.

Delivering its first report to the Governor's Office no later than April 30, 2025, with subsequent reports provided every three months or at other intervals agreed upon with the Governor's Office. The Rapid Response Team shall work to ensure its reports are made accessible and available to members of the public in multiple different languages.

Providing **internal and external resource lists and recommendations** of where children and families can find planning and family preparedness resources, legal assistance, mental health services, translation and interpretation services, and other state and community-based resources before or after ICE or other federal immigration enforcement involvement or interactions.

- Creating a procedure for state agency resource outreach

- Coordinating a presentation from higher education representatives

- Developing supports for older siblings who become guardians

- Reviewing changes to federal regulations from HR 1

- Governor's Office policy expert participation in the Rapid Response Team and Steering Committee

- Collaborating with the Governor's Office on possible Decision Package

- Creating procedures for communication approval between offices

- Delivered report to the Governor's Office and made it available on our website in English, Korean, Somali, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese, as well as a one-pager with information about the Rapid Response Team

- Submitting the July Interim Report

- Submitting the October Interim Report

- Submitting the January Final Report

- Provided guidance to DCYF caregivers and OSPI

- Made resources available online via the Commission on Hispanic Affairs and DCYF

- Creating the Before Separation Resource Flyer

- Creating the After Separation Resource Flyer

- Developing internal resource lists for state staff

- Creating specialized policy response for separated families in housing disruption, and other social supports







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