

# THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

## Pathways to Housing Security in Washington State Applying Guiding Principles

In 2021, recognizing the many challenges related to homelessness and housing instability, the Washington State Legislature directed the William D. Ruckelshaus Center to conduct a multi-year process of gathering information and facilitating discussions to inform recommendations for a long-term strategy to create pathways to housing security.

*Pathways to Housing Security: Final Report of Facilitated Discussions and Recommendations*, released in December 2023, provides a cumulative summary of discussions and recommendations that were developed and informed by the participation of hundreds of individuals with knowledge or experience related to homelessness and housing instability.

In developing a statewide, long-term strategy for something as complex as housing security, it is not possible to identify every situation that exists or that may arise and then specify exactly what actions to take in response. It is also often not effective to prescribe top-down solutions because context is so important and because there can often be a wide range of views about the issue.

To help with this, a strategy needs a scaffold to create enough consistency in the response across the state and over time while also facilitating the flexibility, adaptation, and innovation that will be needed in different places, for different people, and as the context changes.

To this end, the Center identified 11 guiding principles that, taken together, help align decisions and actions to a comprehensive approach to advancing housing security. These principles serve to:

- guide ongoing decision-making about actions;
- facilitate alignment across all parts of the response—strategy, policy, program design, service provision, and at the local, regional, and state levels;
- help navigate aspects that can seem contradictory and reduce adversarial approaches to finding solutions; and
- create conditions that balance flexibility for different parts of the complex response to housing insecurity with consistency for the response as a whole.

The principles are an enduring tool for choosing or designing a wide range of actions, for different types of actors to work towards a consistent purpose, and for assessing progress at a level of strategic accountability. The recommendations in the report offer options for actions that will align with these principles and contribute to sustained progress towards housing security.

This worksheet offers a tool to assess alignment to these principles followed by prompts to explore opportunities to deepen that alignment. It can be used in any context, such as a department, committee, organization, or community. It can be used for any type of current or proposed action or scope of work, such as policies, strategies, plans, programs, services, or communications.

## Assess Alignment to Guiding Principles for Advancing Housing Security

*For each guiding principle, select the description that best fits the context and actions you are assessing.*

**A. Foster productive narratives around housing security and homelessness.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**B. Mobilize a multi-sector response to advance housing security.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**C. Respond to the holistic and interdependent nature of housing security.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**D. Design the response to housing insecurity around what people and communities need to thrive.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**E. Undo the harm of structural racism and other forms of systemic disadvantage that produce housing inequity.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**F. Employ a sense of urgency about both meeting immediate needs and initiating steps for long-term progress.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**G. Amplify the influence of those most affected by homelessness and housing instability.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**H. Create conditions that reduce competition and facilitate cooperation.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**I. Address the inability of the housing market to meet housing needs.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**J. Sustain the response to housing insecurity through stability in infrastructure, relationships, and appropriately scaled resources.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

**K. Prepare to adapt to changing circumstances, unanticipated disruptions, and new knowledge.**

NOT RECOGNIZED AS IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT BUT DONE BY OTHERS	SOMEWHAT REFLECTED	PARTIALLY ALIGNED	FULLY ALIGNED
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	------------------

## **Reflect**

Pick a principle you would like to align more with: \_\_\_\_\_

***What internal factors affect how aligned you can be to this principle?***

***What assumptions underlie how aligned you are to this principle?***

***What external factors affect how aligned you are to this principle?***

***What else caused you to assign the descriptor that you chose?***

***Identify Actions – To help you align more deeply with this principle...***

***What could change in how you carry out your core functions?***

***What could change in your internal policies, practices, and structures?***

***What could change in how you communicate?***

***What could change in how you track and assess what you do?***

***What else could you change?***

***Commit to a First Step – In the next 3 weeks, I will...***