



Pathways to Prosperity for All

Low income Ohioans should have the appropriate skills and supports to be competitive in the new economy and job market. This requires an investment in education from early childhood through secondary education, job training and skill development, work support services and programming for at risk individuals to divert involvement with the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

The following public policies support working families, promote the dignity of work and move more Ohioans towards a path to self-sufficiency.

- **Build and strengthen Ohio's direct service workforce** by continuing reform efforts to better outcomes of care, improve the health of the general population, and encourage more efficient use of resources in order to achieve a sustainable average wage of 200% of FPL for a direct service worker with a family of four to decrease high staff turnover.
- **Increase investment in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)** to support voluntary employment and training activities that increase self-sufficiency for SNAP participants. Investing \$4 million in General Revenue Funds per year to spur development of SNAP 50-50 eligible training initiatives could encourage development of local partnerships (counties, community colleges, workforce development community based-organizations) to provide education, training, and wrap-around services such as child care support, transportation assistance, career and college coaching to SNAP eligible trainees.
- **Increase the Ohio Works First benefit level by \$100 per month for all family sizes** using TANF dollars intended to help poor families.
- **Increase the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), remove the cap and make it refundable** to reward work and make a difference for low-income families. A 20% refundable state EITC with no cap would mean an additional 35% of the poorest working families would see a tax cut and likely additional income support and would send more than \$427.5 million back to families and local economies.
- **Fund school safety initiatives that are research-based and support students.** This funding would support improving school climate, establishing threat training and protocol, and providing effective student supports to prevent school violence altogether, while having emergency plans with outside law enforcement agencies in place when a rare incident does occur.
- **Improve the process to obtain a Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE)** to better meet the needs of applicants and employers by establishing a uniform filing fee set at \$50, cover federal and out-of-state convictions, and create a presumption of rehabilitation after a specified number of years without any convictions.
- **Invest in publicly funded child care and preschool programs** by expanding eligibility for publicly funded child care from 130% FPL to 200% FPL, support all providers serving children in publicly funded child care in achieving 1-star by 2020 and 3-stars by 2025 in Ohio's Step Up to Quality rating and improvement system, and support the development of a coordinated early childhood system that eliminates silos between publicly funded child care, public preschool, evidence-based home visiting and other child serving programs.
- **Reinvest funding spent on youth prisons on effective, community-based alternatives to incarceration.** Each year Ohio spends over \$90 million on holding 500 youth in youth prisons, a cost of \$195,000 per youth per year; the majority of youth incarcerated are Black. Research indicates that many of these youth could be served safely in their communities through more effective, less expensive community-based programs.

Advocates for Ohio's Future

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