



2024-2026

TACOMA-PIERCE COUNTY BLACK COLLECTIVE'S WORK PLAN 2024-2026

Working Until Equity, Inclusion
and Fairness are a Reality

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THE HISTORY BEHIND THE BLACK COLLECTIVE

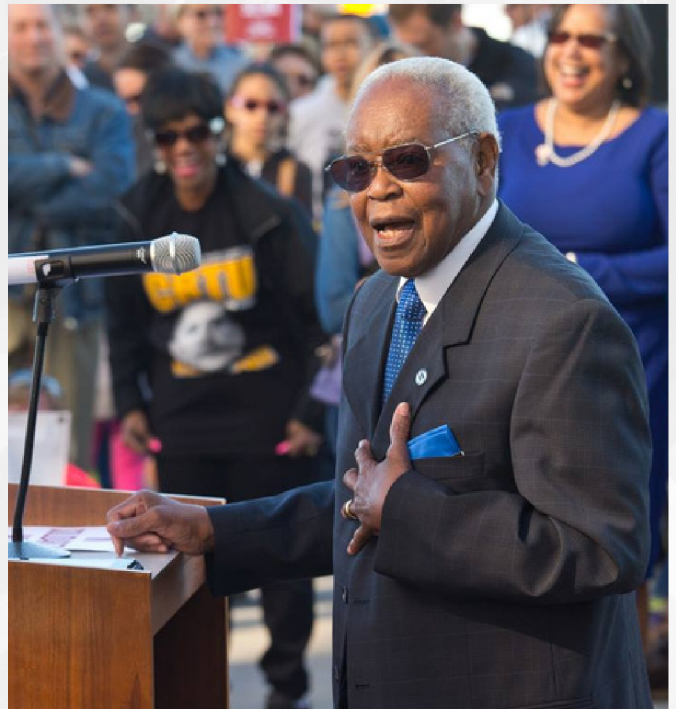
The history of the Black Collective is a powerful testament to the resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment of the Black community in Tacoma, Washington, and beyond. Born out of the struggle for civil rights in the 1960s, the Black Collective has its roots in the tumultuous events of the Mother's Day Disturbance of May 11, 1969. That night, as violence erupted in the Hilltop neighborhood, the heart of Tacoma's Black community, a group of courageous Black leaders stepped forward to restore peace and demand change.

These visionary individuals, including Thomas Dixon, Harold Moss, James L. Walton, Reverend Earnest S. Brazill, and Joseph A. Boles, united to form the Concerned Black Citizens, which would later evolve into the Black Collective. Through their skillful negotiations with the City Council, they secured Black representation on the police force and fought for improved services in the Hilltop neighborhood. This pivotal moment marked the beginning of a movement that would go on to shape the course of history for Black people in Washington state.

For over five decades, the Black Collective has convened every Saturday morning, 52 weeks a year, unwavering in its commitment to empowering and uplifting the black community. As Harold Moss, Tacoma's first black city council member, mayor, and Pierce County council member, eloquently stated in

2008, "The great strength, endurance, and influence of the Black Collective is not its structure or lack thereof, but it is in its autonomy and commitment to the mission of empowering and bettering the conditions of the black community."

From championing initiatives in education and youth development to advocating for fair housing and employment practices, the organization has been at the forefront of the struggle for racial justice and equality. As we look to the future, the Black Collective's work remains as vital and relevant as ever, a beacon of hope in the ongoing struggle for justice and equity.



Former Mayor Harold Moss (1929-2020)

ABOUT THE BLACK COLLECTIVE

The Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective is a volunteer-led organization dedicated to empowering the Black community through civic engagement and service. Our weekly meetings, held every Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., provide a platform for Black individuals to come together, share their experiences, and work towards creating positive change. While we have traditionally met in person at the City Association of Colored Women's Clubhouse, the COVID-19 pandemic led us to adopt a hybrid format, with in-person meetings occurring during the first week of the month and all other meetings conducted via Zoom. As we continue to adapt and evolve, our commitment to addressing the unique challenges and opportunities faced by the Black community remains at the heart of our mission.

The Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective provides a safe, supportive space for Black individuals. For this reason, membership is exclusively for individuals who are Black.

Mission

To promote the interests of Black people.

Objectives

- To advance the political interests of Black people.
- To improve the educational outcomes of Black students.
- To provide social justice advocacy to Black individuals and communities.
- To increase Black economic development.
- To encourage activities that result in better health outcomes for Black individuals and communities



A Black Collective meeting at the Colored Womens Clubhouse

REVIEWING PAST SUCCESSES & CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

During our March 2024 retreat, members reflected on their experiences with past meetings within The Black Collective.

Strengths:

- The Black Collective excels at creating an inclusive and welcoming environment, where everyone has a voice and is recognized, appreciated, and valued.
- The Collective provides a wealth of information and resources that are shared and made digestible for all members to utilize.
- The meetings are structured, consistent, and start and end on time.
- The Collective has a functioning culture that supports its members, with rituals and habits that reinforce this culture.
- The Collective demonstrates excellent leadership and the ability to mobilize and apply pressure to effect change when needed.
- The Black Collective serves as a marketplace for Black intelligence, where members can learn from experienced elders and engage in ongoing conversations.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Dive deeper into discussion topics, moving beyond surface-level conversations to have more solution-based discussions and address root causes.
- Dedicate one meeting per month to less agenda items and create opportunities for deep dives.
- Improve the process for attracting and integrating new members, making them feel appreciated from the beginning and ensuring they are not forgotten.
- Attract and engage more younger people in the Collective.
- Architect the intersection of the priorities of the committees, finding the nexus between them.
- Create opportunities for quarterly deep dives and public events to expose others to the Collective's work.
- Ensure that all members, not just the leadership, have a voice and opportunity to contribute.
- Assign mentors to new members to facilitate their integration and connection outside of meetings.
- Establish clear objectives and systemic outcomes for each committee's projects.
- Capture root causes, with a focus on holistic Black well-being.

2024-2026 PROPOSED WORK PLAN

Executive Summary

The Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective's 2024-2026 Proposed Work Plan outlines our organization's commitment to empowering the Black community through collective action, advocacy, and volunteer service. Building upon the insights and recommendations gathered during our recent retreat, this plan serves as a roadmap for our future direction and decision-making.

Our Mission

To uplift and empower the Black community in Tacoma, Pierce County, and beyond through civic engagement, advocacy, and volunteer service, while addressing systemic barriers and promoting equity and justice.

The Black Collective is a
marketplace for Black intelligence."

-George Zeno

Working Goals and Objectives

- **1. Enhance Community Engagement and Impact**
 - **Objective 1.1:** Implement a comprehensive communication strategy, including a regular newsletter and community calendar, to keep members informed and engaged.
 - **Objective 1.2:** Establish a communications committee to oversee the development and dissemination of the newsletter, website updates, and other communications initiatives.
 - **Objective 1.3:** Create a directory of members, including their names, professional affiliations, and skills, to facilitate connections and support committee work.
- **2. Foster Intergenerational Collaboration and Leadership Development**
 - **Objective 2.1:** Attract and engage more younger people in the Collective through targeted outreach strategies and mentorship opportunities.
 - **Objective 2.2:** Implement leadership development opportunities to cultivate the next generation of Black leaders and ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization.
 - **Objective 2.3:** Create opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and knowledge-sharing through discussions and community events.

2024-2026 PROPOSED WORK PLAN (CONTINUED)

- **3. Strengthen Organizational Capacity and Effectiveness**
 - **Objective 3.1:** Continue to conduct comprehensive reviews of the organization's structure, processes, and procedures to identify areas for improvement and streamline operations.
 - **Objective 3.2:** Create a volunteer support system to effectively recruit, train, and retain volunteers, ensuring the sustainability of our volunteer-based model.
 - **Objective 3.3:** Establish clear performance metrics and evaluation processes to measure the impact of our initiatives and ensure accountability.
- **4. Deepen Community Partnerships and Collaborations**
 - **Objective 4.1:** Identify and cultivate strategic partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and institutions to amplify our impact and leverage shared resources.
 - **Objective 4.2:** Collaborate with community partners to develop and implement holistic, community-driven solutions to the challenges faced by the Black community.
 - **Objective 4.3:** Actively participate in regional and national networks of Black-led organizations to share best practices, advocate for systemic change, and build collective power.

Implementation and Evaluation

The 2024-2026 Proposed Work Plan will be implemented through the strategic actions and collaborative efforts of our committees, volunteer members, and community partners. Progress towards our strategic goals and objectives will be regularly monitored and evaluated by the organization's leadership, with quarterly or annual reports provided to our members and stakeholders.

Conclusion

The Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective's 2024-2026 Proposed Work Plan represents our unwavering commitment to the empowerment and well-being of the Black community. By focusing on community engagement, intergenerational collaboration, organizational effectiveness, and strategic partnerships, we will continue to drive meaningful change and create a brighter, more equitable future for each one of us.





**OUR STRATEGIC
COMMITTEES**

POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Committee Goal:

- To advance the political interests of Black people by focusing on:
 - Establishing political priorities of the Black Collective
 - Interviewing political candidates to determine alignment with Black Collective Priorities
 - Making candidate recommendations to the Black Collective
 - Reviewing legislation and initiatives, and make recommendations to the Black Collective

Leadership:

Political Committee Chair: Chana Lawson, Co-Chair for the Political Committee: Candice Wheeler

Political Focus:

- To ensure that there is a fair and equitable process of determining the best candidates to address issues in the Black Community.
- To evaluate initiatives and proposed legislation that impact the Black Community, focusing on bills related to Education, Police Accountability, Black Culture, Community Services, Budget Resources, and Sustainability/Climate Commitment.
- To develop follow-up engagement with elected officials.
- To work with subcommittees, groups, and organizations in our community that align with the Black Collective's goals.
- To provide updates and information to the community and the Black Collective.
- To plan at least one community gathering to build community and increase election and voter registration awareness.
- To invite representatives and legislators to report out, share information, and update the Black Collective about their work and efforts and any resources.

Outcomes: The Political Committee will establish an equitable and non-partisan process for political recommendations and endorsements, collaborating with other committees to develop interview questions. The committee will review and select initiatives and bills for the Legislative Session that align with the goals of the Black Collective and impact the Black community, supporting and endorsing selected Senate and House Legislative Bills. They will also recommend and endorse eligible and qualified candidates within the General Election Endorsement Process, refreshing the process as needed. Additionally, the committee will provide assistance in preparing for African American Legislative Day and the Legislative Session.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Committee Goal:

- The Black Collective Education Committee (BCEC) aims to secure excellent educational outcomes for Black students by focusing on:
 - Promoting Black student engagement and academic achievement
 - Pressing districts to recruit and retain effective teachers
 - Engaging with school administration on policy and operations
 - Working with local school boards on policy
 - Promoting parent engagement and building community support for BCEC strategic priorities

Leadership:

Education Committee Chair: David Scott

Priority/Strategic Actions:

- Expand math education and English/Reading/Language Arts education
- Benchmark and track the increase in STEM after school offerings at each grade band, focusing on schools with higher Black student enrollment
- Benchmark and increase Black enrollment in expanded learning opportunities (ELO)
- Engage Rainier Scholars and Tacoma STEAM on after school programs
- Review college/vocational preparedness, Black student unions, career and technical education, and graduation rates
- Recruit and retain Black teachers
- Encourage districts to form teacher support networks
- Analyze graduation rates and methods for measuring student attainment
- Examine school funding, how teachers and staff are evaluated, restorative justice, and how schools engage communities
- Evaluate school boards and engage them on key policies
- Inform the community on BCEC's strategic priorities and mobilize community advocacy centering Black student achievement
- Engage Black Parents Alliance as a convener of Black parents and get feedback on education priorities from Black parents

Scheduled/Proposed Activities:

- E Wesley student and alumni panel
- Math and English workshops
- OSPI Superintendent presentations/Q&A
- Black Collective Education Committee presentation to the Black Collective



HEALTH COMMITTEE

Committee Goal:

- To empower the Black community with the knowledge and resources to achieve optimal health outcomes and address systemic health disparities.

Leadership:

Health Committee Chair: Leah Ford

Understanding Health Determinants:

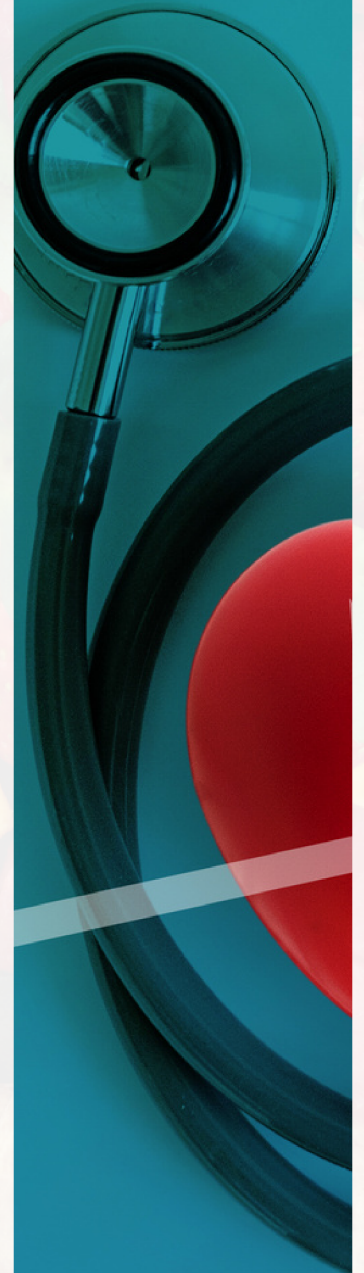
The health of the Black population is significantly impacted by social determinants such as poverty, limited access to quality education, unemployment, inadequate housing, unsafe neighborhoods, and cultural barriers. These factors influence health outcomes and contribute to higher rates of mortality among Blacks individuals compared to other racial and ethnic groups.

Focus Areas:

- Addressing the impact of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases on the Black Community
- Enhancing Behavioral Health Services (Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Support)
- Combating Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Proposed Strategies:

- Engage community members and stakeholders to understand their perspectives and experiences related to health disparities.
- Develop a structured framework outlining key areas of concern, root causes, and potential solutions to address health disparities.
- Collaborate with healthcare providers, community organizations, and government agencies to assess existing services and identify gaps in healthcare access and delivery.
- Advocate for policy changes and resource allocation to address systemic barriers to healthcare access and improve the delivery of culturally competent services.
- Coordinate with community groups and service providers to leverage resources and expertise in addressing health disparities.
- Facilitate regular meetings and collaboration sessions to share information, coordinate efforts, and align strategies for improving health outcomes in the Black community.
- Promote community engagement and empowerment through education, outreach, and advocacy initiatives aimed at raising awareness of health disparities and promoting health equity.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Committee Goal:

- To maximize economic opportunities for Black residents of Tacoma/Pierce County through economic education, information, and public-private partnerships.

Leadership:

Economic Development Committee Chair: Bill Dickens, Co-Chair for the Economic Development Committee: Dr. Traci Harrell

Priorities:

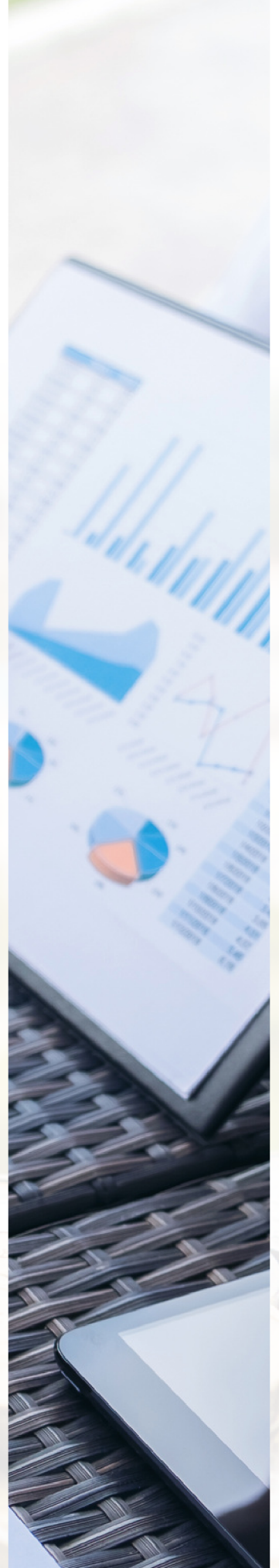
- Business Security
- Financial Security
- Real Estate Security
- Job Security
- Data Security

Projects

- Business Navigator Program
- \$200M Community Reinvestment Act/Plan
- Financial Empowerment Month (April 2024)
- The Living Powerfully Experience (April-June 2024) – Health, Wealth & Wisdom
- Black Business Awards (August 2024)
- Kwanzaa Program (December 2024)

Codes of Operation (2024-2026) - Guiding Principles & Ground Rules:

- Don't discuss problems without exploring their root cause; focus on solution-based discussions.
- Ensure meeting agendas align with meeting and discussion objectives.
- Recognize that effective meetings are driven by participation, not just the facilitator.
- Listening is essential; ask for clarification to gain insight and be concise.
- Create an environment where information flows freely and remains flexible.
- Requests for confidentiality are always honored.
- Mutual respect is shared accountability.
- Define how to measure whether meeting, presentation, and report-out objectives were met.



SOCIAL AND LEGAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Committee Goal:

- To provide social justice advocacy to black individuals and communities by focusing on:
 - Supporting and pushing forth efforts of Law Enforcement Accountability as it relates to the interest of our community.
 - Reviewing and providing information on the Heal Act and how it will benefit our community to be involved with the current groups working on this effort.
 - Following the work on the Climate Commitment Act and how it will benefit our community, providing feedback when needed.
 - Providing Coalition Group Updates & Information.
 - Building a list for support in the upcoming legislative session, focusing on House Bills (HB) and Senate Bills (SB) that align with the work of our committee.
 - Presenting a month-long presentation to the body in June (Stand Your Ground), which will include handouts and take-away materials.

Leadership:

Social and Legal Justice Committee Chair: Sherrilla Bivens

Community Partners: NAACP, Ministerial Alliance, A. Philip Randoff – Tacoma, Tacoma Urban League, Black Parents Alliance, Legally Black, United Way

Planned Activities:

- Q&A sessions with Law enforcement departments to discuss accountability and community interests.
- Provide information and resources on the Heal Act and the Climate Commitment Act to educate the community on their benefits and how to get involved.
- Regular updates on Coalition Group activities and progress.
- Develop a list of HB and SB bills to support during the upcoming legislative session that align with the committee's goals.
- Host a month-long presentation in June (Stand Your Ground) with handouts and take-away materials for attendees.

