

RCW 43.18A.020 Statutory entity membership requirements—
Appointment of members. (Effective January 1, 2025.) (1) The membership of any statutory entity must:

(a) Include at least three individuals from underrepresented populations who have direct lived experience with the identified policy or issue that the statutory entity is tasked with examining; and

(b) Reflect, to the greatest extent possible, the diversity of people with direct lived experience with the identified issue or issues, including members who reside in urban and rural communities, and with differing cultural and economic circumstances.

(2) If compliance with subsection (1) of this section requires that additional members be appointed to statutory entities created on or after January 1, 2025, the identified appointing authority for the statutory entity must be the appointing authority for the additional members. If there are multiple appointing authorities for one statutory entity, they may collectively defer to one of the appointing authorities, a statutory state commission, board, or committee, or the office of equity, to appoint any additional members as needed. The additional members shall be voting members of the statutory entity.

(3) When making appointments to a statutory entity, appointing authorities:

(a) May consult with the office of equity; and

(b) Must consult with the relevant state entities identified in the toolkit created by the office of equity pursuant to section 117, chapter 475, Laws of 2023, except for appointing authorities from the legislative branch.

(4) The statute law committee must include in any published bill drafting guide reference to the requirements in subsection (1) of this section.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to restrict additional membership of statutory entities. [2024 c 283 s 3.]

Effective date—2024 c 283 ss 3 and 4: "Sections 3 and 4 of this act take effect January 1, 2025." [2024 c 283 s 9.]

Findings—Intent—2024 c 283: "(1) The legislature recognizes that underrepresented populations are often left out of the policy decisions that affect them most. People with direct lived experience with a particular issue are experts in their own lives and experience and are best equipped to find solutions to those issues. The legislature finds that when underrepresented populations are included in policy decision making around issues that directly affect them, the solutions put forward make a greater positive impact on those it seeks to help. As such, the legislature finds that people with direct lived experience should be included in policy decision making around issues that directly impact them.

(2) The legislature finds that certain populations are almost entirely unrepresented in policy making yet are disproportionately impacted by government decisions. For example, self-advocates with developmental disabilities and other marginalized groups are routinely left out of decision making about policies that directly impact them and frequently have their voices substituted for others. The adverse impacts of injustices perpetrated based on race, color, gender, religion, disability, immigration status, language, culture, and other categories are not distinct and isolated, but instead overlap and

accumulate and therefore have a cumulative effect on an individual. Access is an equity issue and by addressing barriers to participation for underrepresented populations, the public will also benefit. A governing body that makes decisions about these communities cannot do so effectively and equitably without the participation and contribution of those from these underrepresented populations who have direct lived experience with the issues being addressed in the policy-making decisions.

(3) The legislature recognizes the importance of allies and finds that advocacy efforts should be led by people with direct lived experience. It is not the intention of the legislature to restrict the membership of statutory entities. Instead, the intent is to create space for those historically excluded from policy decision making.

(4) Therefore, the legislature intends to ensure meaningful participation from people with direct lived experience on each statutorily created or statutorily mandated multimember task force, work group, or advisory committee, tasked with examining and reporting to the legislature on policies or issues that directly and tangibly affect historically underrepresented communities. When people with direct lived experience have a seat at the table, Washington thrives." [2024 c 283 s 1.]