



AT A GLANCE

Washington, D.C.'s Commission on Poverty Policy Recommendations

The following pages are the 2024 Poverty Commission recommendations 'at a glance' summaries. These provide quick highlights for the challenges, solutions, and impact of each of the 10 recommendations. To read the full report go to does.dc.gov.

1. H-SPLOST (Housing - Special Local Option Sales Tax)



CHALLENGE

Improved housing conditions for those in poverty are needed. There are many buildings in the District that are not up to code. Rent burden is among the top issues that keep people in poverty.



SOLUTION

Add a half-penny general sales tax dedicated to funding the rehab and repair of existing housing. This would allow residents to stay in their communities and have safer, more stable living conditions.



IMPACT

This would help bring 9,975 residents out of poverty within two years. It will focus on residents in Wards 7 and 8 and will support Medicare coverage. Approximately 3,500 households would be impacted by the program.



2. TWO MILES TO WELLNESS



CHALLENGE

49% of Black D.C. residents live in medically underserved areas. In some parts of the city there is one full-time physician for every 262 residents. In Ward 7, the ratio is one physician for every 4,358 residents.



SOLUTION

Partner with the healthcare industry to build hubs of hospitals, urgent care centers, and home care providers across the city that support pre-acute care, hospitalization, and recovery care.



IMPACT

This has the potential to bring 1,106 residents out of poverty within two years. It will focus on residents in Wards 7 and 8, and supporting Medicare coverage.



3. UBI



CHALLENGE

Wards 7 & 8 have been, in many ways, left behind by the District's infrastructure shift over the past 25 years. Between the concentration of poverty and the geographic isolation, these wards face many of the same inequities they faced 25 years ago.



SOLUTION

D.C. Resident Income Support Effort (D.C. RISE). This program would provide a basic income for all residents ages 18 and up of \$500 monthly for the next three years (\$1,000 for those collecting SNAP benefits).



IMPACT

This recommendation has the potential to bring 33,000 residents out of poverty. It will impact an estimated 127,000 people. Other UBI programs have seen a 35% increase in savings and a 30% decrease in child poverty.



4. AMAZON CAREER CHOICE



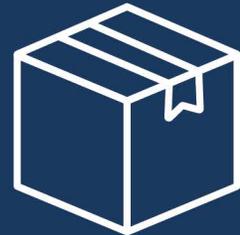
CHALLENGE

Lower-wage District residents are overrepresented in low paying jobs. On average, a Bachelor's degree holder will earn \$1.2M more over the course of their lifetime than someone whose highest educational attainment is a high school diploma.



SOLUTION

Partner with Amazon to create more job opportunities for District residents, to encourage more residents to earn an associate degree or higher, and to explore new options for student loan relief. For participants, provide a \$5K annual housing voucher to current D.C. residents and \$10K for participants who move to the District.



IMPACT

More than 350 District residents could be removed from poverty, primarily in Wards 7 and 8, where many residents do not have a college degree or high school diploma.



5. BLACK TECH HUB



CHALLENGE

The D.C. region is the number one place in the country for women in tech and a top 10 city for tech related venture capital, but less than 1% of venture-backed companies are owned by Black and Brown entrepreneurs.



SOLUTION

Fund the conversion of 10K square feet of vacant downtown office space into a tech hub that focuses on connecting Black and Brown tech startups with Black-led VC capital firms.



IMPACT

Remove up to 270 District residents from poverty by creating new jobs, improving wealth and income and helping the overall economy.

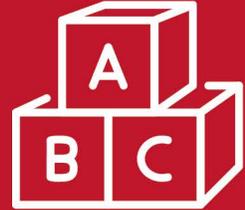


6. HOME-BASED DAYCARE



CHALLENGE

D.C.'s childcare supply is disproportionately spotty in Wards 7 and 8 for home-based daycares serving 1-6 children. This creates more challenges for parents in those wards.



SOLUTION

Develop a 3-year pilot program to help remove barriers from those hoping to open a small home-based daycare business. Ensure operators are supported in making a living wage and incentivize landlords to allow small in-home daycare facilities on their properties.



IMPACT

Creating new daycare slots would enable parents to find better employment options. This could remove 700 residents from poverty.



7. REI TRAINING



CHALLENGE

The Black maternal mortality rate in D.C. is more than 2x the rate of Black women nationally. High quality care is correlated with improved mortality rates and implicit bias is directly correlated with lower quality of care.



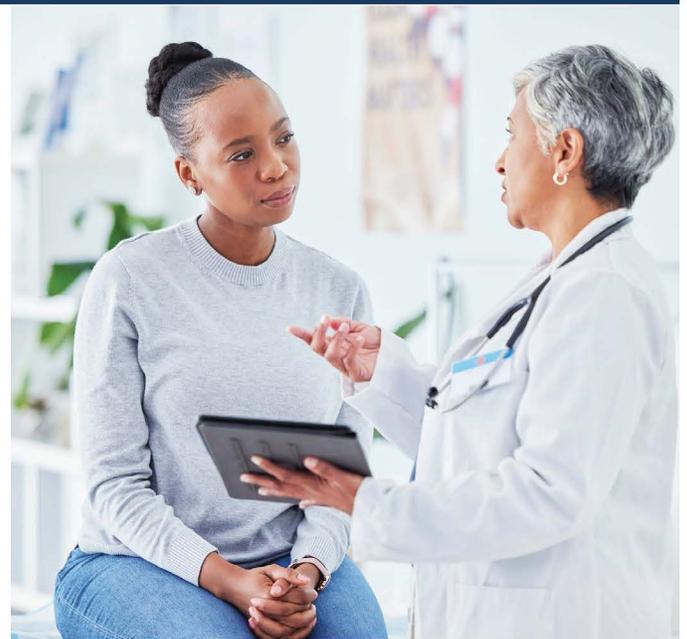
SOLUTION

Require evidence-based implicit bias and cultural competency training as a licensing criterion for all health care professionals licensed by the District's Board of Medicine and the District's Board of Nursing.



IMPACT

REI training could help bring 60 residents out of poverty within two years. The District convened a Maternal Mortality Review Committee. In their 2022 report, the Committee set a goal of a 10% reduction of Black maternal mortality.



8. BZA VARIANCE TEST



CHALLENGE

The District has a shortage of starter for-sale homes. Current zoning allows for one unit for every 900 sq ft on the lot. Most homes are around 1,800 square feet so many developers are converting one row home into two condos and selling them as market rate units.



SOLUTION

Make affordability a fourth prong in the BZA area variance test so the Residential Flat (RF) RF-1 land area requirement can be reduced to 450 square feet. This creates affordable for-sale units with requirements such as minimum two-bedrooms, parking spaces in the rear, and more.



IMPACT

This would help bring 46 residents out of poverty within two years. This estimate assumes 20 single family homes a year being converted, with an average of four condos per rowhouse and 2.3 people per household.



9. CHILD TAX CREDIT



CHALLENGE

Raising children in the District is expensive. It is estimated that annual childcare costs in D.C. are between \$20,410 and \$24,243. This creates a significant burden on families of modest incomes and below.



SOLUTION

Continue the D.C. Child Wealth Building Act of 2021, including the child tax credit for families with no earned income and those with moderate income. Keeping this program funded and operating is an important step for the city to combat poverty.



IMPACT

Up to 4,700 residents could be pulled out of poverty within two years. The continuation of the program would ease the impact of poverty on another 80,000 children.



10. SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PAY



CHALLENGE

In D.C. the number of substitute teachers has decreased from 987 to 501 between 2020 and 2022. Indicators suggest this trend will continue with key reasons being low pay and a lack of benefits. Additionally, schools with higher percentages of Black and Hispanic students, particularly those in Wards 4, 5, 7, and 8, report more difficulty finding substitutes than their peers.



SOLUTION

Create financial incentives for substitute teachers in Wards 7 & 8. Set up a tiered system that rewards substitute teachers for accepting and completing work in priority wards. Incentives may be based on days of service within a certain time period.



IMPACT

With this recommendation, up to 250 people could be removed from poverty in two years. Incentives could lead to higher substitute teacher retention rates and a more stable teaching environment.

