**Yakima County**

Community Provides: Undocumented Communities in Washington State during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In Yakima County, the living wage for an adult with no children is $25,838 and for a family of two adults and two children, it is $59,520. Most undocumented households make less than the living wage threshold. (Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator)

### REQUESTED VS UNMET NEEDS

**Yakima County**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REQUESTED</th>
<th>$303,550</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNMET NEEDS</td>
<td>$18,775,700</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Recommendations

**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

While undocumented immigrants have always needed access to such a program, this need was further highlighted by the pandemic. Such a program would need to avoid public charge implications, protect the data of undocumented individuals, be accessible to diverse undocumented communities, and be administered by state governments.

**HEALTHCARE INSURANCE**

Research has long shown that undocumented immigrants too often forgo preventative care and access medical care for costly life saving treatment. States and local governments have the opportunity to implement a health program subsidized or fully funded by said jurisdictions that can provide healthcare access to individuals not able to purchase healthcare through the marketplace.

**CASH ASSISTANCE WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS**

Our focus groups and survey responses demonstrate that targeted programs (i.e. rental relief programs) were often too high barrier to be accessed by undocumented workers and too constraining to provide substantial relief. Undocumented workers best understand their own lived reality, their budget, and how assistance can be best used.

**LISTEN TO COMMUNITY**

Undocumented individuals face a reality distinct from any other. As such, any program designed to benefit this community should be co-created with undocumented stakeholders to ensure it will actually be accessible and helpful to said community.

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When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, my family and I felt invisible. We saw the rest of the country obtain benefits we knew we deserved to have as well. We were considered essential workers. We served the community. We put in the time and effort. Yet, we were left in the dark. We do not need short-term solutions or temporary plans, but rather permanent and promising legislative action. The hours we punch in, the food we serve and pick, the taxes we pay, and the constant labor we continue to provide should all be the true markers for the seat we need in this country, not our immigration status."

*Ana, applicant to COVID-19 Relief Fund for Undocumented Individuals in WA*