



We should build systems based on trust, respect, and dignity, and eradicate policies that create harm. Benefits should offer help and support instead of fear and punishments.

Increase Transparency of Fraud Investigations

Support SB 6226 (Trudeau)

Over the past few years, we have heard reports from community members of color that they felt targeted for fraud investigations related to public benefits because of their race.

DSHS has confirmed that you are more likely to be investigated if you are Black, Hispanic, Native, Pacific Islander, or a Spanish speaker. Additionally, dollars recuperated through OFA's efforts only account for about 15% of what they spend.

These investigations can be invasive and intimidating, often prompting families to leave benefits, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

More transparency about OFA's spending and investigations is needed to hold the office accountable

Increased transparency would help OFA build confidence and trust, foster collaboration with community partners, and identify ways to streamline and improve OFA policies and procedures to decrease departmental spending and increase efficacy.

SB 6226 asks OFA to present a regular report to the legislature including:

- The demographics of everyone investigated
- Financial data about money spent on investigations, money recovered, and programs most impacted.
- Findings regarding internal patterns of referrals which may be contributing to disparities



To build effective systems based on support, not suspicion, we need to understand the ways that systems are (or aren't) working.