

eliminating racism  
empowering women

**ywca**

Delaware

# **YWCA IS ON A MISSION**

**YWCA DELAWARE POLICY PILLARS AND  
ADVOCACY ISSUES 2023**

**YWCA Delaware's mission is to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. We advocate for community action, public policies, and practices that improve economic security, health, safety, and social equity for women and their families, with attention to the issues that affect people of color.**

## **RACIAL JUSTICE**

Advance equity, safety, and racial justice for people of color with a focus on the criminal justice system, accessible voting and elections, environmental justice, and other systems with structural racial disparities. Priorities include:

- Law Enforcement Reform: increasing police transparency and accountability, such as making misconduct records available to the public and providing additional support, such as social workers for situations where police are not domestic and mental health experts.
- Prison and Probation Reform: policies that reduce incarceration rates and high recidivism rates, such as eliminating fines and fees for those unable to pay. Reforming probation by ending incarceration for technical violations, enabling the customization of probation conditions to individual needs, requiring the collection and publication of data on probation and people on probation, investing in community-based reentry programs, and eliminating probation for minor convictions.
- Equal Access to Voting: policies that make voting easy and accessible for all citizens, including mail-in voting and no-excuse absentee voting.
- Fines and Fees: YWCA Delaware does not support policies that continue to increase fines and fees and create new tiered laws for stacking against individuals, which contributes to mass incarceration.

## **Health & Safety**

Support survivors and work to prevent domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of gender-based violence as demand for services continues to rise. Work towards closing the gap in health disparities between People of Color and white people. Priorities include:

- Victim rights: Policies that protect and educate women on their rights as victims; policies that reduce the power that a perpetrator of domestic/sexual violence has over the victim.
- Equitable healthcare: policies that make healthcare equitable by increasing access and affordability to traditionally underserved communities.
- Maternal health: supporting policy efforts to have doula services covered by Medicaid and any policy addressing maternal health with particular attention to Black maternal health.
- Schools: policies for providing health services on a school level, such as providing an oral health exam in kindergarten for students who have not seen a dentist at no cost and increasing the availability of mental health professionals in schools.

## Economic Empowerment & Opportunities

Ensure safe, fair, and inclusive workplaces that expand opportunities for women, particularly women of color, LGBTQ+ people, and historically marginalized communities. This includes addressing childcare needs and providing services that support women's success in entrepreneurship and workforce development. Priorities include:

- Pay equity: policies that reduce the pay equity gap for women and people of color.
- Childcare: support policies that increase access to childcare by increasing funding, availability, and Purchase of Care reimbursement amounts
- MWOBs: Increase support for women and people of color-owned businesses.

## Housing Security for Women & Families

Provide services to keep women and children in safe and affordable housing. Serve those who are going through the experience of being unhoused by providing safe and affordable housing for families. Priorities include:

- Tenant rights: policies protecting tenants from unfair treatment by their landlord, such as establishing a right to counsel for tenants, a rent escrow program, and a homeless bill of rights.
- Funding for Affordable Housing: policies and budgets that create more safe and affordable housing, such as a consistent stream of funding for building affordable housing.
- Establishing a right to counsel for indigent parents in custody cases.

## Non-Profit Sector

The non-profit sector is the backbone of our community and continues to provide programs and human services for families in Delaware. We support efforts to strengthen these organizations. Priorities include:

- Strengthen the sector's ability to help the state and the broader social service sector work together more effectively to serve communities.
- Advocate for increased Grants in Aid to cover rising costs across the non-profit sector.
- Support policies that decrease costs for non-profit organizations, such as a community or state-supported healthcare model.