

## Advisory Group Application

### Step 1

#### Application for Appointment to Whatcom County Advisory Groups

##### Public Statement

**THIS IS A PUBLIC DOCUMENT:** As a candidate for a public advisory group, the information provided will be available to the County Council, County Executive, and the public. All advisory group members are expected to be fair, impartial, and respectful of the public, County staff, and each other. Failure to abide by these expectations may result in revocation of appointment and removal from the appointive position.

Title	Field not completed.
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First Name	Jennifer
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Last Name	Wright
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Today's Date	12/30/2024
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Street Address	
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City	
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Zip	
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Do you live in Whatcom County?	Yes
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Do you have a different mailing address?	Field not completed.
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Primary Telephone	
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Secondary Telephone	Field not completed.
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Email Address	
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### Step 2

1. Name of Advisory	Child & Family Well-Being Task Force
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## Group

Child & Family Well-Being Task Force

Yes

2. Do you meet the residency, employment, and/or affiliation requirements of the position for which you're applying?

Yes

3. Which Council district do you live in?

District 3

4. Have you ever been a member of this Advisory Group

Yes

If yes, please list dates:

2020 to present

5. Do you or your spouse have a financial interest in or are you an employee or officer of any business or agency that does business with Whatcom County?

No

6. Have you declared candidacy (as defined by RCW 42.17A.055) for a paid elected office in any jurisdiction within the county?

No

You may attach a resume or detailed summary of experience, qualifications, & interest in response to the following questions

Attached

7. Please describe your occupation (or former occupation if retired), qualifications,

I am a public school teacher in Blaine, WA, since 2005, with a background in biology (B.S.) and teaching (M.A.) from WWU. I've served as Co-Chair of the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force, leading efforts like ARPA fund allocation, childcare fiscal

professional and/or  
community activities,  
and education

mapping, and fostering inclusive community collaboration. As a mom of two, a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and an advocate, I've led flood relief efforts, civic leadership initiatives, and community responses to hate. My science background ensures data-driven decisions, and my leadership reflects a commitment to creating a government that works for all. See attached for details.

8. Please describe why  
you're interested in  
serving on this  
Advisory Group.

I am passionate about the council's dedication to creating a government that prioritizes children, families, and future generations. As a mother, educator, and advocate, I've seen firsthand the importance of centering community voices and fostering collaboration to address systemic inequities. My experience as Co-Chair of the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force has allowed me to co-lead impactful efforts, such as, at council's request, suggesting ARPA fund allocation and childcare affordability solutions, and the implementation plan for the Healthy Children's Fund. I'm dedicated to continuing this work to build stronger, more equitable systems that support all families in Whatcom County. Serving on this Advisory Group aligns with my commitment to community well-being.

References (please  
include daytime  
telephone number):

Colton Kaltenfeldt, Task Force Co-Chair in 2024, 509-580-0172

Appointment  
Requirements

I understand and agree

Signature of applicant:

Jennifer Wright

Place Signed /  
Submitted



(Section Break)

## **Subject: Renewal Request for Membership on the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force**

Dear Members of the County Council,

I am writing to express my interest in continuing my service on the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force. As a mother of two young children who have attended school in three districts and experienced homeschooling, I have a deep personal investment in creating a community that works for everyone and prioritizes the next generation. As a lifelong Whatcom resident, my experiences as both a parent and a professional have reinforced my commitment to making data-driven decisions that center community voices while fostering collaboration between diverse groups and government leaders.

### **Leadership in Education and Civic Engagement**

As a public school teacher in Blaine, WA, since 2005, I have dedicated my career to educating and empowering children. Most recently, I taught civic leadership to middle school students, encouraging them to become active participants in shaping their communities. This effort culminated in a statewide achievement: my students successfully advocated for the designation of *Suciasaurus rex* as Washington State's official dinosaur. Their testimonies before lawmakers, their invitation to be present during the signing of the bill by Governor Jay Inslee in 2023, and the statewide media coverage mentioning my students underscored how fostering youth leadership can drive meaningful change.

This experience demonstrates my ability to inspire the next generation of leaders, connect with diverse groups, and champion policies that bring visibility and pride to our community.

### **Community Advocacy and Inclusivity**

As a single mother and a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I understand the challenges and needs faced by families across a wide spectrum of experiences. My lived experience drives my passion for inclusivity and advocacy for uplifting a variety of voices.

In 2019, I led "Not in Our Community! No Hate Ferndale" and in 2020, "Show Up for Love," community-driven efforts to combat hate speech and white supremacist activities. These initiatives fostered a sense of safety, belonging, and unity for families and children in Whatcom County. Standing up for inclusivity is fundamental to ensuring that every child and family feels supported in our community.

### **Supporting Families in Crisis**

In 2021, during devastating floods in northern and eastern Whatcom County, I initiated, led, and coordinated a large-scale relief effort to support families who had lost everything. By raising over \$8,000 and organizing meals for more than 2,500 individuals, that also supported the

economies of impacted communities, I provided tangible aid to children and families during one of their greatest times of need. This experience reinforced my belief in the power of collective action and the importance of swift, compassionate responses to crises affecting families.

## **Leadership on the Task Force**

As an original member of the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force, I have demonstrated my commitment to ensuring that families in Whatcom County thrive. I was unanimously elected as one of the Task Force's first Co-Chairs, serving two consecutive terms. In this role, I have worked to center community voices while collaborating with impacted groups and government leaders to create solutions that reflect diverse perspectives.

Key contributions include:

- Serving as Co-Chair of the Task Force since its inception, where I have led with integrity, inclusivity, and a focus on community voice and positive results.
- Co-chairing the Resources and Funding Subgroup, leading research and community outreach to inform recommendations for allocating over \$13 million in ARPA funds.
- Overseeing the conducting of a fiscal analysis of childcare spending, providing a roadmap for improving access and affordability for families.
- Playing a pivotal role in drafting foundational governance documents, such as the *Roles and Responsibilities of Task Force Members* and the *Task Force Leadership: Chairs Selection, Responsibilities, and Qualifications*—both unanimously adopted in 2022.

These contributions reflect my ability to lead with integrity, engage in complex problem-solving, and advocate for transparent and inclusive decision-making processes.

## **Advocacy for Policy and Systemic Change**

As a trained scientist, I bring a strong background in data analysis and evidence-based decision-making to all of my work. My previous career as a scientist studying human impacts on ecosystems has instilled in me the importance of relying on facts and research to shape policy.

Throughout my tenure, I have consistently championed policies that enhance the well-being of children and families. As a primary author of key reports—such as the *Child and Family Well-Being Task Force Phase II Report* (March 2022) and *Permanent Solutions to Child Care Affordability in Whatcom County* (October 2021)—I have provided actionable insights to guide county decision-making.

Additionally, in 2020, I worked with the Attorney General's Office to correct inconsistencies in the Open Public Meetings Act training materials, ensuring greater inclusion while working for transparency and accountability of public bodies.

## **Bridging Communities and Public Service**

I was recently elected to an unpaid position on the Whatcom County Charter Review Commission representing District 3, further demonstrating my commitment to shaping a government that reflects the needs of its constituents. My leadership in this role will focus on building bridges between communities and advocating for policies that promote equity, participation, and family well-being.

In every facet of my work—whether as an educator, scientist, advocate, or Task Force leader—I have prioritized fostering inclusive communities, addressing systemic inequities, and championing the voices of children and families. By centering community input, collaborating across diverse groups, and working with government entities, I have helped create a government that works for everyone and takes care of the next generation. I am deeply proud of what we have accomplished together on the Task Force and remain committed to building on this progress.

Thank you for considering my renewal request. I look forward to continuing to serve our community through this important work.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wright