



How do the 2020 Top Democratic Presidential Candidates Promote Racial Equity to End Hunger?

JOBS

As you consider the Democratic Presidential Primary candidates in the 2020 election, we urge you to consider the importance of promoting racial equity to end hunger in the United States. There are many factors that contribute to hunger, including lack of jobs that pay enough to make ends meet. Millions of Americans work more than one job and still struggle to pay for necessities. Many low-wage jobs pay the federal hourly minimum wage of \$7.25, with many tip-based workers receiving the even lower “tipped minimum wage” of only \$2.13 an hour.¹ Many low-wage jobs do not include health insurance and other benefits that help workers and families stretch their paychecks and put food on the table. For these reasons, Bread for the World believes that the many U.S. jobs that pay less than a livable wage drive hunger.²

Following is an explanation of how the policies outlined by the top Democratic presidential primary candidates promote racial equity, as well as recommendations for strengthening their proposals.

Note: Review the “key terms” box to the right for these terms: racial equity lens, co-develop, equitable engagement, historical trauma, how/process, experts of color, and racial equity core principles.

KEY TERMS

Racial Equity Lens: A concept and practice that focuses on achieving equality for people of color. This lens helps people respond to structural racism and its consequences.

Co-develop: A practice that ensures that experts of color are invited at the beginning of a program planning process to help design, implement, and evaluate a project or policy. Co-developing means that experts of color are equitably engaged (see below).

Equitable Engagement: Equitable engagement is different from participation. It means involving experts of color from the beginning and empowering them to drive the conversation at each stage of the project or policy. They must have real decision-making power in shaping the narrative and determining who should be at the table—and they are given the appropriate credit and compensation for their ideas and time.

Historical Trauma: Multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural, racial, or ethnic group, such as the colonization and attempted genocide of Indigenous people, enslavement of people of African descent (and racially targeted discrimination thereafter) and forced migration. Historical trauma impacts economic empowerment, mental health, and other factors that impact hunger.

How/Process: Racial equity is also a practice. So determining how a decision is made or a policy is designed matters. People of color should have equal power and representation in each process.

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Overall Recommendations for How Each Candidate Can Strengthen Racial Equity in Their Policy Proposals

Each of the proposed policy recommendations could be strengthened by:

- **Applying a racial equity lens to every facet of their immigration plans, including the design, implementation, and evaluation stages of each proposal.**

This is perhaps the most important recommendation.

Generally, candidates have not applied this lens in a concerted way in each proposal throughout their policy recommendations. Doing so will ensure that every facet promotes racial equity. During this process, Bread encourages candidates to also outline how the processes within each policy will promote racial equity. This could include the process for how decisions are made or for how a policy is enforced, for example. In addition, the design and implementation, the checks and balances process, and the evaluation of each proposal must be racially equitable.

- **Applying a racial equity lens to proposals addressing pay disparities.** Currently, all candidates, except for former Vice President Joe Biden, focus on pay disparities between women and men. Bread recommends applying a racial equity lens to these proposals to ensure that women of color no longer experience racial disparities within the gender pay divide. Bread also recommends that each candidate expand their scope to include the pay divide by race, so that pay disparities between men of color and their white counterparts is eliminated. Any proposal should provide details of how this will take place, be based on the impact of historical trauma, and be co-developed with experts of color.
- **Including a proposal that outlines how to end job segregation by race and gender.** Currently, no candidate has a plan that outlines how they will address job segregation³ by race and gender. Due to the historical trauma of racial segregation post-slavery, people of color are over-represented in the 10 lowest-paying occupations in the country.⁴ Ending job segregation⁵ will reduce hunger and promote racial and gender equity. Any plan to undo job segregation should be co-developed with experts of color and apply the racial equity core principles (see key terms).
- **Including a proposal for how to enforce laws against employment discrimination based on race.** Currently, no candidate has a plan that outlines how they will eliminate employment discrimination at the hiring and promotion stages as well as in the general climate for workers of color. These proposals should be co-developed with experts of color. Each proposal should also account for ways in which employers discriminate against workers of color using proxies of race, such as surnames and criminal record history. Each proposal should also include robust funding for the Department of Justice, as well as the civil rights branches within each federal agency, to enforce workforce nondiscrimination laws.

KEY TERMS, continued

Experts of Color: Experts of color are defined by experience, whether it is lived experience with a topic (being a low-wage worker or entrepreneur), experience practicing in the field (as an advocate or service provider), or experience conducting research and analysis in the field. Co-developing a proposal with experts of color means inviting people from all three categories of expertise.

Racial Equity Core Principles: These principles are: (1) the policy is co-developed with experts of color who have decision making power in the design, implementation, and evaluation stages; (2) the implementation of the policy is racially equitable in “who” is enforcing “what” and “how” it is being enforced or implemented; (3) the processes are racially equitable in each stage for “how” decisions are made; (4) policy plans are deeply rooted in and adequately respond to the historical trauma and racism that each community of color experiences; (5) the policy has adequate funding, checks and balances, and other resources to eliminate racial inequities.

To read more about these terms, review the glossary of the [Racial Equity and Nutrition Report](#).

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Candidate-Specific Plans on Jobs

Note: Most of the proposed plans are broad-based and could strengthen racial equity by (1) applying this lens to each aspect of each policy proposal and (2) basing recommendations on analysis of how to address the deep origins of racial discrimination.

Former Vice President Joe Biden

Overall Rating: 2





While this plan is mainly broad-based, it promotes racial equity in these ways:

- Expanding protections for undocumented immigrants (a majority of whom are people of color) who report labor violations.
- Extending long-denied rights to farmworkers and domestic workers, a majority of whom are people of color.

In addition to the overall recommendations above, this plan could strengthen racial equity in these ways:

- Biden's proposal to end unnecessary occupational licensing requirements has the potential to promote racial equity. Bread recommends that the scope of what is considered unnecessary include licensing requirements that explicitly target people of color. Examples include, but are not limited to, African American hair licensing requirements, which require African American women to attain a cosmetology license to do natural hair braiding (which is not taught in school and is usually passed on intergenerationally as a cultural tradition). Another example of an unnecessary restriction might be the restrictions put on returning citizens in some states that bar them from attaining barbers' licenses⁶ and other licenses.⁷
- Including a proposal to address pay disparities by race. Currently, Biden is the only candidate with no plan to eliminate pay disparities, including racial pay disparities, which are the widest. See additional details on how to apply a racial equity lens in the "Overall Recommendations" section.

To see the full plan, [click here](#) and [here](#).

		JOB
	Joe Biden	2
	Sen. Bernie Sanders	2
	Sen. Elizabeth Warren	4
	Mayor Pete Buttigieg	2.5

Senator Bernie Sanders

Overall Rating: 2

While this plan is mainly broad-based, it promotes racial equity in these ways:

- Strengthening labor protections for farmworkers and domestic workers, the majority of whom are people of color.
- Creating a \$10 billion grant program to provide grants to entrepreneurs of color, which would create more jobs in communities of color.

Please see the overall recommendations above.

To see the full plan, [click here](#) and [here](#).

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Senator Elizabeth Warren

Overall Rating: 4

At least half of this plan targets communities of color in an equitable way:

- Combating racial discrimination by passing legislation that bans discrimination based on traits associated with race, such as hair texture.
- Creating a new Small Business Equity Fund with \$7 billion in funding to provide grants to entrepreneurs of color to support 100,000 businesses and create more than a million jobs, many of which would serve communities of color.
- Denying contracting opportunities to companies with poor track records on diversity and equal pay.
- Making federal government staff and leadership more racially representative by (1) working with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges to increase racial diversity in entry-level positions; (2) reforming recruiting processes for senior-level management positions; (3) creating new paid fellowships for applicants who were formerly incarcerated; (4) creating support networks for black and brown employees; and (5) creating pathways to promotion by requiring federal agencies to incorporate diversity as part of their core strategy.
- Asking the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to issue guidance on how to evaluate claims involving the intersectional discrimination that women of color face from racism and sexism.
- Extending work protections to farm workers and domestic workers, the majority of whom are people of color.
- Using executive authority to help close the pay divide between women of color and everyone else.

Please see the overall recommendations above.

To see the full proposals, [click here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Pete Buttigieg

Overall Rating: 2.5

While this plan is mainly broad-based, it promotes racial equity in these ways:

- Protecting undocumented workers (the majority of whom are people of color) from retaliation when they report labor violations.
- Increasing salaries for domestic workers, the majority of whom are women of color.
- Removing requirements that Indigenous tribes seek federal permission to develop their land, a change that could generate additional jobs in Indigenous communities.

In addition to the overall recommendations above, this plan could strengthen racial equity in these ways:

- Buttigieg's proposal to increase funding to Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs)⁸ has the potential to promote racial equity. Bread recommends that this proposal apply racial equity core principles to ensure that entrepreneurs of color receive support proportionate to the rate of discrimination they have historically confronted and still face in accessing capital and other resources needed to start a business. This proposal should be co-developed with experts of color and ensure that CDFIs apply a racial equity lens in their lending policies and practices.
- Buttigieg's proposal to launch a Walker-Lewis Entrepreneurship Fund, Promise, and Task Force has the potential to promote racial equity. Bread recommends that this proposal apply racial equity core principles, including being co-developed with experts of color and ensuring that the design and development processes are racially equitable. Each community of color should receive targeted support based on the historical trauma and current racism they face that undermines their ability to become entrepreneurs.

To see the full plan, [click here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

¹ 2018 Hunger Report, "The Jobs Challenge," Bread for the World Institute. <http://d1w64so4kzmy9.cloudfront.net/institute/report/2018-hunger-report.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ Read pages 90-91 on job segregation by race and gender in the 2018 Hunger Report, "The Jobs Challenge," Bread for the World Institute. April 2018. <http://d1w64so4kzmy9.cloudfront.net/institute/report/2018-hunger-report.pdf>

⁴ Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation Policy Packet, Policy #6. http://files.bread.org/institute/simulation/Racial-Wealth-Gap-Policy-Packet.pdf?_ga=2.263192260.955046416.1580147563-802301193.1579732440

⁵ Refer to endnote 3. The 2018 Hunger Report, The Jobs Challenge, describes the history of job segregation and ways to address it.

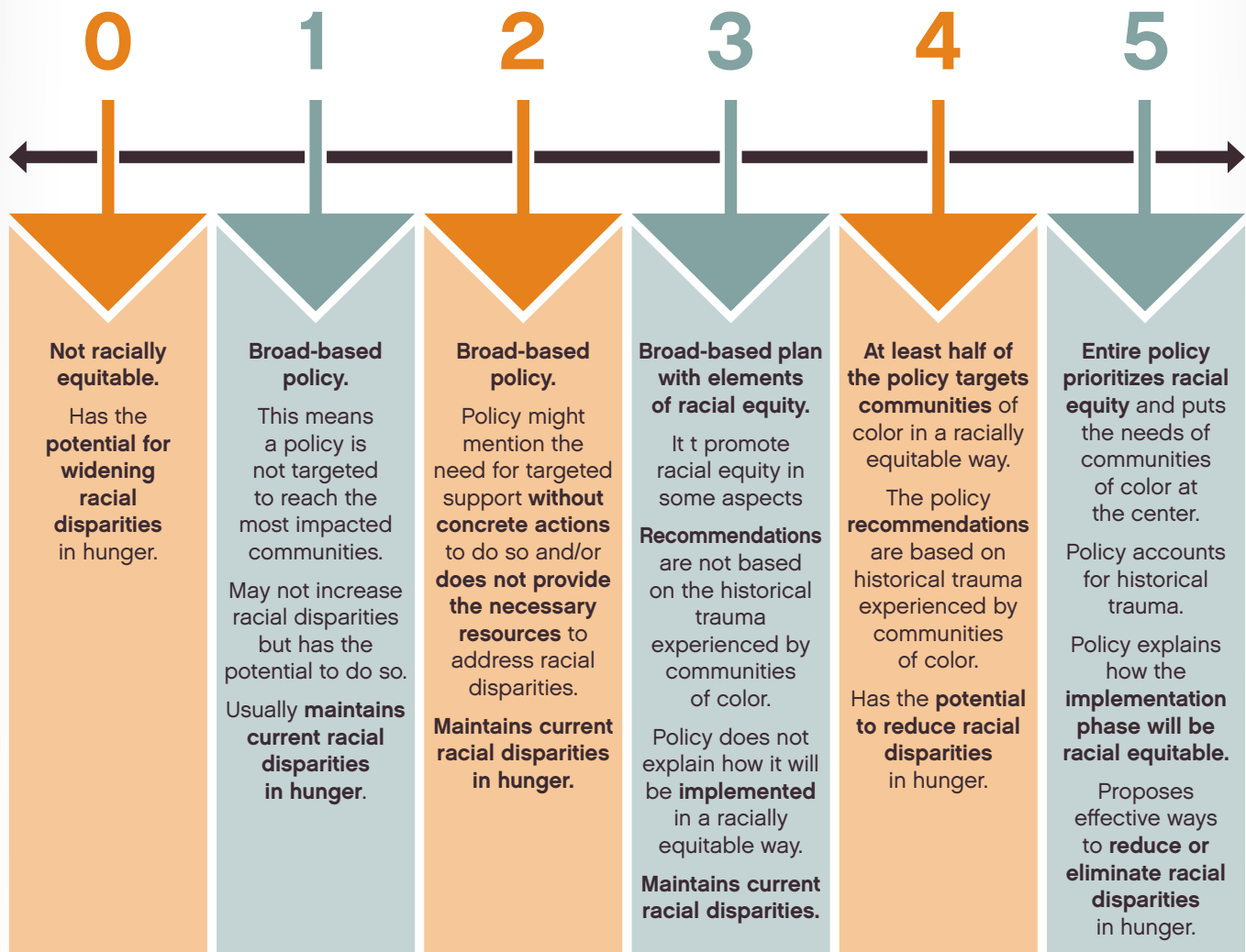
⁶ Malcolm, John and John-Michael Seibler. "LEGAL MEMORANDUM: Collateral Consequences: Protecting Public Safety or Encouraging Recidivism?" Heritage Foundation. March 2017. <http://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2017-03/LM-200.pdf>

⁷ Mass incarceration: A Major Cause of Hunger. Bread for the World Institute. February 2018. <https://www.bread.org/sites/default/files/downloads/briefing-paper-mass-incarceration-february-2018.pdf>

⁸ Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) are institutions that help spur economic growth in historically marginalized communities, through a variety of services, including but not limited to making loans to small businesses, sponsoring training, and providing technical assistance. For more on CDFIs, visit: <https://www.cdfifund.gov/programs-training/Pages/default.aspx>



Racial Equity Rating Tool*



For more analysis on how the presidential candidates promote racial equity, go to votingrecord.us.

*This analysis was based on Bread's work to promote racial equity in anti-hunger policies. To learn how to apply a racial equity lens, please see Bread's [Racial Equity Methodology Tool](#), which outlines a step-by-step process to assess whether a policy or program promotes racial equity. To see how Bread applied this methodology to the national nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Child Nutrition Programs, read our [Racial Equity and Nutrition Report](#).