

# | BEYOND CASH TRANSFERS

Paving a pathway to economic security for all Chicagoans goes beyond the reach of cash transfer programs. In our work we came across complementary actions the State of Illinois and City of Chicago can take to increase economic security and decrease poverty. To that end, policies should be explored in the following areas. While not an exhaustive list, this demonstrates the interconnectedness of the policy landscape and gives a not to what is actionable locally this year and beyond to foster economic security. Visit [www.economicsecurityil.org](http://www.economicsecurityil.org) to find out more.

## **INCREASE WORK STABILITY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY**

The importance of income from work for Illinoisans cannot be overstated. Earned income is the primary source of income for most households. Without protections built in, our current labor landscape means that for many, that income is unreliable and work is unstable. Workplace conditions are often unsafe, unfair, and provide no benefits for workers. There are a number of policy actions that will improve wages, conditions, and opportunities.

## **STRENGTHEN THE SAFETY NET**

Our safety net is inadequate and does not provide needed support to people struggling to meet their most basic needs. Safety net programs should be strengthened and expanded to mitigate against the worst impacts of poverty and to support individuals and families in gaining economic stability and moving out of poverty. No one should go hungry, forgo needed medical care or wonder where they will sleep at night. This includes increasing uptake and adequacy of SNAP, TANF, health insurance and child care assistance.

## **BOLSTER CONSUMER PROTECTIONS**

Consumer protections are critical in fighting against inequitable policy and practices that impact the everyday financial life of Illinoisans. Fines, fees, debt collection, and predatory financial products and practices actively strip wealth from families. Instead of predatory actions eroding wealth from communities that cannot afford it, strong consumer protections would support financial security.

## **INCREASE ECONOMIC MOBILITY**

Public policy is a powerful lever to create opportunities for savings and economic mobility. In particular intentional action to support savings for education can change the economic trajectory of youth profoundly. In addition, ensuring that our largest household expense, housing, is within reach, can free up resources needed to support work, childcare, and overall well-being.