

# Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division

## 2023 Agency Annual Report to the Environmental Justice Council



Oregon  
Health  
Authority

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# AGENCY INTRODUCTION

## Agency Mission Statement

The Oregon Health Authority's mission is ensuring all people and communities can achieve optimum physical, mental, and social well-being through partnerships, prevention, and access to quality, affordable health care. OHA Public Health Division (PHD) works to protect and promote the health of all Oregonians and the communities where they live, work, play and learn. The agency has also centered a strategic goal to eliminate health disparities by 2030, and environment justice challenges are recognized as a core component of that work.

OHA-PHD carries out this work in collaboration with public health system partners, which include Tribal health departments of the nine federally-recognized Tribes in Oregon, local (county) public health authorities (LPHAs) and community based organizations (CBOs).

## Agency Leadership

### Key Leadership

Interim Public Health Director, OHA PHD: Cara Biddlecom, MPH

Center for Health Protection Administrator, OHA PHD: André Ourso, MPH, JD

Environmental Public Health Section Manager, OHA PHD: Gabriela Goldfarb, MPP

### Governing Boards

Oregon's Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB)

## Environmental Justice Personnel

### OHA PHD Environmental Public Health Section

Jen Seamans, Environmental Data and Epidemiology Unit Manager

Eric Main, Environmental Justice Mapping Lead

Kim Tham, Public Health Liaison to Environmental Justice Council

## Agency Budget and Revenue Sources

OHA has dedicated infrastructure, programs, staffing, and resources to healthy equity, environmental justice and community-centered work at the overall agency level (OHA) and OHA-PHD. At the OHA level, this includes the Division of Equity and Inclusion (43

staff). OHA-PHD also has an Equity Office which advances anti-racism and inclusion in the division’s workforce and programs, and includes a Community Engagement Team (20 staff) stewarding partnerships with community-based organizations. This report will focus on a subset of work most directly related to environmental justice, which is centered in the [Environmental Public Health](#) (EPH) Section (40 staff). In EPH, environmental justice work spans across four functional units with over a dozen program areas: Healthy Homes and Schools, Environmental Data & Epidemiology, Environmental Assessment, and Healthy Waters Units. Programs and staff are funded variably, across federal and state revenue streams. In addition, OHA’s 1115 Waiver governing Oregon’s use of Medicaid funding for the Oregon Health Plan incorporates funding for climate resilience interventions through their health care providers. This is an illustrative list of dedicated funding streams:

DESCRIPTION	REVENUE
OHA PHD EPH – Healthy Homes and Schools Unit	State general funds, federal funds (CDC, EPA) and fees
OHA PHD EPH – Environmental Assessment Unit	State general funds, federal funding (CDC, ATSDR)
OHA PHD EPH - Environmental Data & Epidemiology	State general funds (including HB 4077), federal fund (CDC, NIOSH)
OHA PHD EPH – Healthy Waters	State general funds, federal funds (CDC, EPA)
OHA Health System Division	Federal fund (Oregon 1115 Medicaid Waiver)

## Agency Programs (Major Programs Listed Below)

- Environmental Justice Mapping Project
- Public Health Equity/ Climate Adaptation Funding for CBOs, Tribes, LPHAs
- Climate and Health Resilience Program
- Environmental Toxics/ Environmental Health Assessment Program
- Domestic Wells Safety: Statewide education and outreach and Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area Nitrate Contaminated Wells Public Health Project
- Environmental Public Health Tracking (environmental hazard and health outcomes data)
- Occupational Public Health

Pesticide Exposure Safety & Tracking

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Healthy Homes Grant Program

Lead Based Paint Program (enforcing lead-safe practices in residential housing renovation)

Toxic Free Kids Program (hazardous chemicals in children's products)

OHA 1115 Medicaid Waiver Program/ Oregon Health Plan

***OHA PHD's strategic goal is to eliminate health inequities by 2030, and environment justice challenges are a key core component of that work.***

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE HIGHLIGHTS

Highlight key environmental justice projects in 2023.

## Environmental Justice Mapping Tool Project

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is working to support the state Environmental Justice Council in its oversight of development of an Environmental Justice Mapping Tool for the state as mandated by HB 4077 (2022). OHA is tasked to carry out this work in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and engagement by the Department of Administrative Services, the Population Research Center at Portland State University, and the Institute of Natural Resources at Oregon State University.

## Environmental Public Health Modernization Funding for CBOs, Tribes, LPHAs

OHA's [Public Health Modernization](#) is working to build an innovative, resilient and equitable public health system.

In 2023 OHA-PHD was funding 143 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) as well as Local Public Health Authorities (LPHAs) and Tribal Health Departments with public health modernization funding appropriated by the 2021 legislature. In the 2023-2025 biennium, an increased investment of \$39.2 million will continue funding to these CBOs to carry out community driven, culturally responsive, public health interventions that work to eliminate health inequities, with the number of grantees expected to increase in 2024. Thirty-eight of the first cohort of CBOs are addressing climate and environmental health projects; applications from new CBOs are in the review process. Examples of CBO activities include a Climate, Health, and Housing Institute leadership development program, creation of a climate and health curriculum for community health workers and convening stakeholder groups to refine local building performance code standards.

LPHAs are also required to develop capacity to address climate risks. [Examples of LPHA activities](#) include creating climate adaptation plans, health equity training, and culturally/linguistically accessible health communication to communities.

OHA funded the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, Native American Rehabilitation Association, and Tribal Agency Partners to conduct community environmental health assessments to understand health threats and priorities for Tribal communities. This information will help inform Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes as they invest their direct allocations of public health modernization funding.

Public health modernization funding also resourced OHA to hire staff to lead work on Climate and Health, Land Use and Health, Healthy Homes and Schools, and Water and Climate Epidemiology which, together with federal grant-supported staff, are providing technical and data support to our public health system partners.

## LUBGWMA Domestic Well Safety Program

Since late 2022 OHA has worked with partners to mitigate exposure to nitrates in domestic well water among residents in the Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area (LUBGWMA) spanning parts of Morrow and Umatilla counties. The demographics of the area tend to be, compared to the state, more ethnically diverse, with a higher representation of Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native populations and with a higher poverty rate.

Exposure to high nitrate concentrations in drinking water (higher than the EPA maximum contaminant level of 10 milligrams nitrate per liter of water, or 10 mg/L) can cause decreased ability of the blood to carry oxygen to tissues, which is a serious health concern, especially for formula-fed infants and women who are pregnant or may become pregnant.

In 2023 OHA, together with the Oregon Department of Human Services, the two county LPHAs and CBOs carried out an intensive bilingual mass communications, outreach and testing campaign through September that: identified 3,300 well-dependent households (a previously unknown number) through door to door canvassing; tested well water of more than 1,600 households; identified 500 households that said they didn't want testing; and identified 500 households where residents were not home and 700 that had "no trespassing" signs that need to be contacted by targeted mailings to encourage them to test their well water.

All households testing above 10 mg/L are to immediately receive bottled water paid for by ODHS with signups coordinated by the LPHAs. For households with water testing between 10 mg/L and 25 mg/L, OHA is working to install in-home water treatment systems (systems are not certified to treat water at nitrate levels above 25 mg/L).

Information available in English at [www.testmywell.oregon.gov](http://www.testmywell.oregon.gov) and in Spanish at [www.pruebadepozo.oregon.gov](http://www.pruebadepozo.oregon.gov).

## Healthy Homes Grant Program

The 2021 Oregon Legislature enacted groundbreaking legislation to help achieve [Healthy Homes](#) for low-income households and communities impacted by environmental justice factors. [HB 2842](#) directs OHA to provide grants to a wide array of third-party organizations, which in turn provide financial assistance to eligible homeowners and landlords to repair and rehabilitate dwellings to address climate and other environmental hazards, ensure accessible homes for disabled residents, and make general repairs needed to maintain a safe and healthy home. HB 2842 allocated \$10



million to OHA for this work, and SB 1536 from the 2022 legislative session added \$5 million, for a total budget of \$15 million.

Post-pandemic delays meant OHA was not able to hire staff until mid-2022, but since then has been working to stand up the program as expeditiously as possible. Completed work, in addition to hiring, includes staffing the Interagency Task Force on Healthy Homes established by HB 2842, preparation of the Task Force's final report in January 2023, carrying out a rulemaking advisory committee in spring/summer 2023, and completing the rule adoption process.

The released the inaugural Request for Grant Application (RFGA) for release February 9, 2024 using \$10 million in funds:

- \$1.5 million (10% of first round allocation) set aside for the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes of Oregon.
- \$8.5 million available through a competitive grant process for the wide array of eligible entities set forth in ORS 431A.400.
- Grants to be reviewed in two cohorts: small grants (\$25,000-\$200,000) and large grants (\$200,001-\$750,000) to avoid larger, better resourced organizations competing against those with less capacity, and increase the likelihood of meeting desired statewide geographic distribution.
- Grants to be awarded for a three-year funding period.
- Anticipate distributing funds to approximately 40 grantees in summer 2024: 9 Tribal and ~30 statewide grants.

Organizations that helped inform development of the program include Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), the Ka'Aha Lahui O Olekona Hawaiian Civic Club, Adelantes Mujeres, the Black COVID-19 Strategy Meeting and Regional Health Equity Coalitions.

OHA, following a formal tribal engagement process, made presentations and solicited guidance from Tribal Health Departments and staff from the Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest, Inc (NARA NW) to develop the Tribal funding component of the program.

## Medicaid Waiver

In 2022, Oregon received approval for a Medicaid waiver renewal application to increase support for people most affected by climate and weather events. This makes Oregon the first state in the country to cover climate change expenses for certain low-income patients under its Medicaid Program.

## Wildfire Recovery

The 2021 Oregon Legislature invested more than \$600 million across multiple state agencies for wildfire prevention, mitigation and recovery in wildfire-prone areas (SB 762). This included strengthening electric utility systems, mapping wildfire risk, establishing requirements for defensible space around structures, resilient land use zoning and

building, emergency planning, forest treatments to reduce wildfire risk, and more. Of this investment, OHA received \$4.7 million to provide residential smoke filtration devices to Oregon Health Plan members (Medicaid) with high-risk medical conditions that live in counties experiencing the highest risk of wildfire smoke exposure.

# ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ISSUES (ORS 182.550 SECTION 1)

## Environmental Justice Consideration Process

**Does the agency have a defined process for incorporating environmental justice factors into agency operations and decision-making?**

*Note: due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OHA is updating these plans on a delayed timeline.*

OHA-PHD has extensively included environmental justice factors into core strategic planning processes, which is carried through in operational practices. [OHA's Strategic Plan](#) sets the structure for environmental justice to be weaved into agency policies, programs, and partnerships as exemplified in the following two reports:

### [Healthier Together Oregon: 2020-2024 State Health Improvement Plan](#)

- Values explicitly carried forward in the shared work include equity and social justice, empowerment, and authentic community input.

### [Oregon's State Health Assessment](#)

- The Assessment includes a dedicated Equity Analysis as well as a chapter dedicated to [Environmental Health](#) that assesses community needs around highlighted topics such as air quality, water security, climate change, healthy and safe housing, the built environment, and occupational health.

**How does your agency keep track of environmental justice issues that have been identified?**

### [Public Health Accountability Metrics](#)

The OHA [Public Health Advisory Board](#) (PHAB) establishes accountability metrics to track progress toward population health goals. In 2023 OHA worked to significantly revise the indicators and process measures to more meaningfully evaluate progress toward the agency's strategic goal to eliminate health inequities by 2030 in the context of environmental drivers of health. By mid-2024 OHA will finalize the indicators and process measures. Indicators will be based on reducing heat related illness and non-infectious respiratory illness (e.g., wildfire smoke-related health impacts). Process measures will focus on LPHA preparation of assessments and plans to reduce climate change health risks to their communities, and OHA meeting complementary technical assistance and policy supports. These will replace OHA's [existing](#) public health accountability metrics.

# Environmental Justice Community Considerations

## How does your agency define environmental justice communities?

- OHA has adopted the following [Health Equity Definition](#) “communities historically and currently disadvantaged by their race, ethnicity, language, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, intersections among these communities or identities, or other socially determined circumstances”
- OHA has also adopted in rule the OAR 943-021-0005 (7): Priority populations means: (a) Communities of color; (b) Tribal communities including the nine federally recognized tribes of Oregon and other American Indians and Alaska Natives people; (c) Immigrants; (d) Refugees; (e) Migrant and seasonal farmworkers; (f) Low-income individuals and families; (g) Persons with disabilities; and (h) Individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, or who question their sexual or gender identity.
- OHA recognizes that systemic racism, historical and contemporary injustices have led to health inequities in Oregon. Environmental threats like wildfire smoke, water insecurity and unhealthy homes disproportionately impact communities of color, tribal communities and low income communities. Racist housing policies relegated these communities to areas with higher pollution, heat exposure and natural disaster risks. Systemic educational disinvestment and lack of oversight result in overrepresentation and lack of protections in jobs with greater exposure to environmental hazards. These communities can be characterized further based on overlays of environmental justice or health equity challenges.
- As a lead agency supporting implementation of the Environmental Justice Mapping Tool, we use the definition of environmental justice communities as outlined in statute, “communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, communities experiencing health inequities, tribal communities, rural communities, remote communities, coastal communities, communities with limited infrastructure and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes and adversely harmed by environmental and health hazards, including seniors, youth and persons with disabilities (ORS 182.535 Section 4).”

## What tools does your agency use to identify and prioritize environmental justice communities?

- [Oregon Public Health Tracking Data Explorer](#)
- [Full list of OHA-PHD Data and Statistics](#)
- [Data Justice Initiatives](#)
- [REALD](#) (race, ethnicity, language, and disability)
- [SOGI](#) (sexual orientation and gender identity)
- Additional tools are integrated into the development of the Environmental Justice Mapping Tool

# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT (ORS 182.535 SECTION 2)

*ORS 182.550 Section 2: Increase public participation of individuals and communities affected by agencies' decisions;*

*Meaningful Involvement: (ORS 182.535 Section 7)*

*"Meaningful involvement" means:*

*(a) Members of vulnerable populations have appropriate opportunities to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment or health;*

*(b) Public involvement can influence a decision maker's decision;*

*(c) The concerns of all participants involved are considered in the decision-making process; and*

*(d) Decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of members of vulnerable populations*

## Public Engagement Policy and Processes

**Does your agency have a public engagement process for promoting community participation in agency decision-making processes?**

OHA has a robust community engagement infrastructure with an intention towards shared leadership and decision-making with community.

Example: [OHA-PHD's Public Health Equity Funding Grant](#) request for grant application (RFGA) process demonstrates how OHA acknowledges CBOs as essential in centering community health priorities rooted in equity and accessibility.

"OHA recognizes the essential role of community-based organizations (CBOs) in community led, culturally, and linguistically responsive public health service. This RFGA seeks to center community strengths, wisdom, and priorities for health. The State's goal is to improve access to all. OHA will fund work on specific public health issues and provide opportunities for flexible funding for specific community health needs related to equity and the structural determinants of health (for example, racism, colonialism, ableism, heterosexism, sexism)." – [OHA Public Health Equity Funding RFGA](#)

OHA also carries forward equitable community and stakeholder participation in statutorily required public engagement processes, such as rulemakings. See for example the composition of the [rulemaking advisory committee for the Healthy Homes Grant Program](#)

on the program's webpage.

### **Describe the current level and quality of public participation.**

OHA PHD strives to engage and recognize community-based organizations as part of the state's public health system, including paying for their time and expertise through over [170 contracts](#) and community participatory incentives. This approach and priority recognizes the expertise of CBO partners, the importance of partnership investment over time, and shared work processes. Contracted and compensated partnerships acknowledge shared and community-led priorities, rather than an engagement model that prioritizes community query driven by agency need.

## Targeted Audiences

### **Has the agency performed a stakeholder analysis to determine the stakeholder groups impacted by agency decisions?**

OHA integrates community partner feedback loops at many levels of agency decision-making. Examples:

#### **Domestic Well Safety Program, [Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area](#)**

OHA is the lead state agency for the public health project to alert residents in the Area who depend on domestic wells of possible health risks from elevated nitrate in their drinking water, and offer free testing, water delivery and treatment where needed. OHA together with ODHS and the Morrow and Umatilla County LPHAs engage five CBOs on a biweekly basis to provide ongoing community feedback and inform programmatic decisions. This ongoing stakeholder feedback and analysis method has contributed to the successful delivery of services and education.

Healthier [Together Oregon: 2020-2024 State Health Improvement Plan](#) is a five-year plan that identifies state health priorities, and informs state agency policies, partnerships, and investments. It is a framework for the State Community Needs Assessment to transform community-led needs into collaborative statewide action among partners. This plan is part of an iterative process of stakeholder needs assessment, strategic planning, action, evaluation, and improvement.

### **With which stakeholders does your agency engage?**

OHA-PHD most commonly engages with LPHAs, CBOs and Tribal health departments, as well as state natural resource agencies, academic partners, and diverse stakeholder groups through widely varied programmatic and departmental initiatives.

***“OHA is striving to make engagement with public health effective for communities, especially those communities that experience institutional, systemic and structural barriers.”  
Healthier Together Oregon, 2020-2024***

# AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACTS (ORS 182.550 SECTION 3)

ORS 182.550 Section 3: Determine the effect of agencies' decisions on environmental justice communities.

## Does your agency measure the impacts of agency decisions on environmental justice in Oregon communities?

OHA-PHD has several programs that track the links between environmental justice and health equity impacts using both qualitative and quantitative reporting metrics. Example highlights include:

### **Environmental Public Health Tracking Program**

OHA's wildfire health outcomes project team completed phase one of an analysis of hospital admissions (2016-2020) and emergency department visits (2018-2020) for illnesses that may be related to exposure to wildfire smoke. The analysis will inform Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) decisions about air pollution monitor placement by identifying areas where there are Oregon residents experiencing a high burden of respiratory, cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular illness. In 2024 OHA will analyze the data by race, ethnicity and income to refine prioritization of monitor placement to benefit priority populations inequitably impacted by wildfire smoke.

DEQ and OHA submitted in March 2023 a [joint comment letter to the US Environmental Protection Agency](#) on proposed revisions to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate air pollution (PM2.5) that emphasized the importance of protecting people of color and low-income communities experiencing inequitably high exposure and consequent adverse health impacts from PM2.5 pollution in alignment with the Biden Administration's Justice 40 initiative.

### **Occupational Public Health Program**

OPHP-OHA analyses of occupational health impacts from environmental hazards:

Health impacts and related costs incurred to workers related to the widespread 2020 Oregon wildfires and cumulatively for 2017-2021.

Combining environmental and occupational queries in syndromic surveillance (Oregon ESSENCE), including air quality-related respiratory visits and heat-related illness.

## Climate Change and Health Program

OHA's [Climate and Health in Oregon, 2021-2022 report](#) (published June 2023) was a two-year report due to pandemic-induced delays. The report affirms findings of OHA's [2020 report](#): events linked to climate change affect communities of color, Tribal communities, those living with lower incomes, older adults, people with disabilities, people who live or work outdoors, and under- or uninsured people more than other populations. This year's report highlights several high-profile extreme climate events that triggered spikes in hospitalizations and deaths in Oregon over the last two years, while also highlighting signs of hope as recent and upcoming investments are building climate and health resilience in Oregon communities.

OHA began publishing the reports in response to Governor Brown's Executive Order No. 20-04. OHA is directed to deliver a report on the public health impacts of climate change in Oregon, with particular emphasis on the risks faced by vulnerable communities, including Oregon's nine federally recognized Native American tribes, communities of color, low income communities, and rural communities. OHA is directed to update the report annually.

The Executive Order also directed OHA to study climate change impacts to youth mental health and depression in Oregon. In follow up to [OHA's June 2022 report](#) in 2023 we developed [infographics in English](#) and [Spanish](#) to make the study findings more accessible and hosted a May 2023 workshop in order to increase awareness of this emerging issue and foster cross-sectoral collaborations to better support youth.

## Public Health Accountability Metrics Development

As noted earlier in this document, the OHA [Public Health Advisory Board](#) (PHAB) establishes accountability metrics to track progress toward population health goals. In 2023 OHA worked to significantly revise the indicators and process measures to more meaningfully evaluate progress toward the agency's strategic goal to eliminate health inequities by 2030 in the context of environmental drivers of health. By mid-2024 OHA will finalize the indicators and process measures. Indicators will be based on reducing heat related illness and non-infectious respiratory illness (e.g., wildfire smoke-related health impacts). Process measures will focus on LPHA preparation of assessments and plans to reduce climate change health risks to their communities, and OHA meeting complementary technical assistance and policy supports. These will replace OHA's [existing](#) public health accountability metrics.



# AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRESS (ORS 182.550 SECTION 4)

ORS 182.550 Section 4: Improve plans to further improve environmental justice in Oregon.

## How is EJ built into agency strategic plans?

### OHA PHD Strategic Plan

Goal 1: *Promote and protect safe, healthy and resilient environments to improve quality of life and prevent disease.* This objective weaves in environmental justice and health equity principles through two specific objectives of (1) creating healthy environments and (2) increasing community preparedness and resilience.

Goal 2: *Strengthen public health capacity to improve health outcomes* also builds the structure for community and justice-centered health outcomes including objectives to (1) promote health equity in all programs and policies and (2) invest in and maintain up-to-date systems and expertise for public health assessment, monitoring and evaluation.

## What does your agency need to further develop and implement environmental justice policies at the agency?

OHA is in the welcome position, thanks to legislative funding of public health modernization, of seeing, for the first time, a meaningful state investment in environmental public health that prioritizes communities at inequitable risk of harm to health from environmental and climate hazards, disinvestment and racism. Our challenge in 2023 has been able to recruit and hire new positions and implement funding through state human resources and fiscal infrastructure, which were strained by the pandemic. We hope to be fully staffed in 2024, allowing us to build out programs and subsequently identify any remaining gaps.

# AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MAPPING TOOL INVOLVEMENT (ORS 182.550 SECTION 5)

ORS 182.550 Section 5: Utilize the environmental justice mapping tool developed under section 12 of this 2022 Act.

## How is your agency participating in the development of the environmental justice mapping tool?

OHA is working to support the state Environmental Justice Council in its oversight of development of an Environmental Justice Mapping Tool for the state as mandated by HB 4077 (2022). OHA is tasked to carry out this work in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality as the two principal agencies providing technical and coordination support, with engagement by the Department of Administrative Services, the Population Research Center at Portland State University, and the Institute of Natural Resources at Oregon State University.

OHA is also seeking to tap relevant expertise in other states and the federal government through participation in the West Coast EJ Tool group with CalEnviroScreen, Washington Environmental Health Disparities and Colorado EnviroScreen developers to share ideas and lessons learned. OHA's Environmental Justice Mapping Lead staff person: leads the Environmental Justice methodology workgroup tasked with reviewing composite indices and making environmental justice mapping tool recommendations to the Environmental Justice Council; and participates in the Environmental Justice liaison and data workgroups.

# AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT 2024

## How would your agency like to engage with the EJC in 2024?

- Gain feedback from EJC on use or test cases for EJ mapping tool development and public health applications.
- Create opportunities for EJC to hear from staff and community partner testimony on how environmental justice impacts public health.
- Liaise between EJC and local public health and community partners for shared program opportunities or technical assistance.

# DEFINITIONS

**Environmental Justice: (ORS 182.535 Section 3):** “Environmental justice” means the equal protection from environmental and health risks, fair treatment and meaningful involvement in decision making of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, immigration status, income or other identities with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies that affect the environment in which people live, work, learn and practice spirituality and culture.

**Environmental Justice Community: (ORS 182.535 Section 4):** “Environmental justice community” includes communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, communities experiencing health inequities, tribal communities, rural communities, remote communities, coastal communities, communities with limited infrastructure and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes and adversely harmed by environmental and health hazards, including seniors, youth and persons with disabilities.

**Meaningful Involvement: (ORS 182.535 Section 7):** “Meaningful involvement” means:

- (a) Members of vulnerable populations have appropriate opportunities to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment or health;
- (b) Public involvement can influence a decision maker’s decision;
- (c) The concerns of all participants involved are considered in the decision-making process; and
- (d) Decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of members of vulnerable populations

**Environmental Burdens: (ORS 182.535 Section 2):** “Environmental burden” means the environmental and health risks to communities caused by the combined historic, current and projected future effects of:

- (a) Exposure to conventional pollution and toxic hazards in the air or in or on water or land;
- (b) Adverse environmental conditions caused or made worse by other contamination or pollution; and
- (c) Changes in the environment resulting from climate change, such as water insecurity, drought, flooding, wildfire, smoke and other air pollution, extreme heat, loss of traditional cultural resources or foods, ocean acidification, sea-level rise and increases in infectious disease.

# APPENDIX

## [House Bill 4077 \(2022\)](#)

Legislation establishing the Environmental Justice Council, the Council's responsibility to develop an environmental justice mapping tool, develop a biannual report to the Governor, and the requirement for natural resource agencies to submit an annual report to the Environmental Justice Council.

## [Senate Bill 420 \(2007\)](#)

Legislation establishing the Environmental Justice Task Force, the predecessor for the Environmental Justice Council. It also includes requirements for the Task Force to submit biannual reports to the Governor and the requirement for natural resource agencies to submit an annual report to the Environmental Justice Task Force.

## [ORS 182.550 Reports by natural resource agencies](#)

All directors of natural resource agencies, and other agency directors as the Governor may designate, shall report annually to the Environmental Justice Task Force and to the Governor on the results of the agencies' efforts to:

Address environmental justice issues;

Increase public participation of individuals and communities affected by agencies' decisions;

Determine the effect of the agencies' decisions on environmental justice communities;

Improve plans to further the progress of environmental justice in Oregon; and

Utilize the environmental justice mapping tool developed under section 12 of this 2022 Act.

## [Additional support](#)

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact Environmental Public Health Section at [ehap.info@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:ehap.info@dhsosha.state.or.us) or call 971-673-0440 (voice/text). We accept all relay calls.