

Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division

2024 Agency Annual Report to the Environmental Justice Council



NOTE: THIS IS A SUBMITTAL DRAFT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COUNSEL FOR CONTENT REVIEW.

OHA will be creating a publication version of the document to meet current agency report formatting requirements and subsequent posting to the EJC webpage in final form.



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AGENCY INTRODUCTION

Agency Mission Statement

The Oregon Health Authority's mission is to ensure 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 also centers a strategic goal to eliminate health disparities by 2030, and environmental 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 public health authorities (LPHAs) and community based organizations (CBOs).

Agency Leadership

Key Leadership

Public Health Director, OHA PHD: Naomi Adeline-Biggs, MBBS, 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

Pradnya Garud, EJC Listening Session Project Lead

Kim Tham, Public Health Liaison to Environmental Justice Council

Agency Budget and Revenue Sources

OHA dedicates infrastructure, programs, staffing, and resources for healthy equity, environmental justice (EJ) and community-centered work at the overall agency level

(OHA) and at 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 focuses on a subset of work directly related to environmental justice, which is centered in the [Environmental Public Health](#) (EPH) Section (50 staff). In EPH, environmental justice work spans across four functional units with over a dozen program areas. These units include Healthy Homes and Schools, Environmental Data & Epidemiology, Environmental Assessment, and Healthy Waters. Programs and staff are funded variably, across federal and state revenue streams. In addition to the EPH programs, OHA's 1115 Waiver governing Oregon's use of Medicaid funding for the Oregon Health Plan, within OHA's Medicaid Division, 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) |
| OHA PHD – Public Health Modernization | State funds |

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's strategic goal is to eliminate health inequities by 2030.
Environment justice challenges are a key component of this work.***

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE HIGHLIGHTS

Highlight key environmental justice projects in 2024.

Environmental Justice Mapping Tool Project

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) works 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 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.

Environmental Public Health Modernization Funding for CBOs, Tribes, LPHAs

OHA's [Public Health Modernization](#) is an initiative to build an innovative, resilient and equitable public health system. In 2024 OHA-PHD funded 194 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) with nearly \$42 million to lead and carry out activities that promote community health and well-being through its Public Health Equity Grant Program. Of these CBOs, 132 organizations, as well as Local Public Health Authorities (LPHAs) and eight Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon and the Urban Indian Program received public health modernization funding.

These CBOs carry out community driven, culturally responsive, public health interventions that work to eliminate health inequities, with project areas serving communities in every county. Seventy-four of the funded CBOs are addressing climate and environmental health projects, 25 of which specifically identify environmental justice as a focus area. Many more CBOs are incorporating elements of environmental justice work through other focus areas including community disaster resilience, industrial pollution, unsafe housing or recreation environments, food systems, water security, wildfire smoke, heat, and access to green spaces. Examples of CBO activities include programs that increase knowledge on the impacts of wildfires and toxic air among Latinx farmworker communities and creating 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 and environmental health 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 to support work with the Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon to conduct community environmental health assessments to understand health threats and priorities for Tribal communities. This information will help inform Oregon's 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.

See the [Oregon Public Health Modernization Evaluation Report: 2021-2023 Biennium](#).

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 (ODHS), two LPHAs and CBOs carried out an intensive bilingual mass communications, outreach and testing campaign from July 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 declined 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.

Through 2024, OHA continued multipronged communication, outreach, and education efforts by resourcing local CBOs to connect and educate the communities they serve and co-create program components; resourcing LPHAs to support public health actions; sustaining direct mail, social media, radio and newspaper outreach and education; and delivering free direct safe water services of well water testing, retesting, treatment and water delivery through an operational partnership with ODHS.

All households testing above 10 mg/L 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 vendors install and maintain in-home water treatment systems (systems are not certified to treat water at nitrate levels above 25 mg/L).

Information available in English at testmywell.oregon.gov and in Spanish at 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](#) (ORS 431A.400) 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.

In 2024, OHA awarded nearly \$20.4 million in Healthy Homes Grant Program (HHGP) grants to repair and rehabilitate homes of low-income residents to eliminate risks to residents' health to 34 local organizations. The grants are intended to help homeowners and landlords repair and rehabilitate homes inhabited by low-income residents, including renters, to improve their environmental health and safety. The organizations—nonprofits, local housing authorities, community action agencies and local governments serving communities across the state—receive between \$199,980 to \$750,000 over a three-year period.

OHA also set aside \$3 million in HHGP for the Nine Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon and is working with each Tribe to award this funding. Consistent with the agency's Tribal Consultation Policy and Government-to-Government relationship, OHA partnered with the Federally Recognized Tribes and Urban Indian Program to develop the Tribal-specific funding component.

Medicaid Waiver

In 2022, Oregon was among the first states in the country to receive federal approval for a Medicaid waiver (alternative state approach to using Medicaid funding) to cover climate change expenses for certain low-income patients under its Medicaid Program, the Oregon Health Plan. Starting in March 2024, Oregon began distributing [OHP Climate Supports](#) to provide housing, climate and nutrition support for people in challenging situations, with eligibility criteria including those who are homeless or at risk of losing housing, leaving state or Tribal custody (carceral, foster care), transitioning from behavioral health treatment, and aging into Medicare and Medicaid coverage. Climate supports include devices needed to help keep people safe during climate events.

Examples include:

- Air conditioners, heaters, and air filters to provide clean air and healthy temperatures
- Mini fridges to keep medication cold during a power outage
- Portable power supplies to operate medical devices like ventilators during a power outage

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?

OHA extensively includes environmental justice factors into core strategic planning processes, which is carried through in operational practices through the [Oregon Health Forward](#) effort.

The [OHA Strategic Plan](#), one of three core components of *Oregon Health Forward*, sets the structure for the agency's upstream, preventive environmental justice to be weaved into agency policies, programs, and partnerships. The strategic plan goal pillar, "Fostering healthy families and environments" includes specific environmental justice and climate resilience strategies.

Strategies:

- Implement policies and programs that facilitate equitable access to quality housing, climate adaptation resources, nutrition supports and preventive services (Strategy 2).
 - Implement Medicaid waiver HRSN services, health- related services (HRS), in lieu of services (ILOS), and CCO quality metrics within the framework of the Healthier Together Oregon State Health Improvement Plan (Action 1, Strategy 2).
 - Leverage all available contractual mechanisms and OHA funding to ensure local partners and contractors are working meaningfully to eliminate health inequities and ensure compliance with these provisions (Action 2, Strategy 2).
 - Increase identification and response to climate health risks and improve the health of home environment (Action 3, Strategy 2).
- Build a modern public health system that is fully resourced and equipped to eliminate health inequities and respond to public health risks and emergencies in real time (Strategy 4).
 - Implement climate adaptation plans (Action 3, Strategy 4).

[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 [Health Equity Analysis](#) as well as [an Environmental Health](#) chapter 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?

The OHA [Public Health Advisory Board](#) (PHAB) establishes [accountability metrics](#) to track progress toward population health goals. Indicators rely on health outcome data available to OHA about health outcomes, such as number of hospitalizations due to heat. Process measures evaluate whether public health actions are carried out to improve health outcomes, such as demonstrated actions in communications that reduce the health impacts of extreme heat. In 2024, OHA finalized new environmental public health indicators and process measures. Indicators are based on reducing heat related illness and non-infectious respiratory illness (e.g., wildfire smoke-related health impacts). Process measures focus on LPHA communications, policy and partnerships aimed at reducing climate change health risks to their communities, and OHA meeting complementary technical assistance and policy supports. See the [2024 Preliminary Report on Health Outcome Indicators](#).

Environmental Justice Community Considerations

How does your agency define environmental justice communities?

- OHA has adopted the following [Health Equity Definition](#) that centers “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. Achieving health equity requires the ongoing collaboration of all regions and sectors of the state, including tribal governments to address:
 - The equitable distribution or redistribution of resources and power; and
 - Recognizing, reconciling and rectifying historical and contemporary injustices.”
- 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)
- [Oregon Office of Rural Health Data and Visualizations](#)
- Through 2024, [EPA EJSCREEN](#) (no longer available)
- [EPA Smart Locations Database](#)
- [CDC Environmental Justice Index](#)
- [CDC Environmental Public Health Tracking Data Explorer](#)
- [CDC PLACES](#)
- [The American Community Survey](#)

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 communities.

Example: OHA's implemented a groundbreaking [Public Health Equity Grants program](#) currently funding nearly 200 CBOs across the state, acknowledging the role of 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 [rules advisory committee for the Healthy Homes Grant Program](#).

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 overall public health system, including paying for their time and expertise through nearly [200 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 four CBOs on a biweekly basis to provide ongoing community feedback and inform programmatic decisions. This ongoing partner feedback and analysis method has contributed to the successful delivery of water testing and treatment services, potable water delivery 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 informs 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 partner needs assessment, strategic planning, action, evaluation, and improvement.

With which partners does your agency engage?

OHA-PHD most commonly engages with LPHAs, Federally Recognized Tribes, and CBOs, as well as state natural resource agencies, academic partners, and diverse partner 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's strategic goal is to eliminate health inequities in Oregon by 2030, and both the overall agency and the OHA Public Health Division have incorporated metrics and outcome measures focused on environmental health equity.

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 2024, OHA finalized environmental health indicators and process measures that meaningfully evaluate progress toward eliminating health inequities. Current goals for reducing climate impacts on health by 2030 include:

- Extreme heat indicators:
 - o Reduce heat related illness by 50%
 - o Reduce heat-related hospitalizations by 60%
 - o Reduce heat-related deaths by 70%
- Wildfire smoke indicators:
 - o Reduce respiratory emergency department and urgent care visits by 20%
- Climate and health process measures:
 - o Demonstrated actions in use of data to identify populations of focus
 - o Demonstrated actions in communications, policy, and partnerships to reduce the health impacts of extreme heat and/or wildfire smoke
 - o LPHA preparation of assessments and plans to reduce climate change health risks to their communities
 - o OHA delivery of complementary technical assistance and policy supports

In future years, PHAB plans to develop accountability metrics for the areas of drinking water security and mental health effects of climate change. These metrics are tracked and reported annually: see the [2024 Preliminary Report on Health Outcome Indicators](#).

OHA Strategic Plan and Data Dashboard

[OHA's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#) is the roadmap for making the program and policy changes needed to achieve the agency's strategic goal to eliminate health inequities in Oregon by 2030.

This goal means ensuring that all people in Oregon:

- Can reach their full health potential and well-being
- Do not face disadvantages due to their race, ethnicity, language, disability, immigration status, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, geography, or social class

OHA defined five supporting pillars needed to reach this goal:

- Transforming behavioral health
- Strengthening access to affordable care for all
- Fostering healthy families and environments
- Achieving healthy Tribal communities
- Building OHA's capacity and commitment to eliminate health inequities

The third pillar, "Fostering health families and environments" houses the actions and outcome measures related to environmental public health, which are to reduce risks for people in Oregon at inequitable risk from wildfire smoke, extreme heat, and childhood lead poisoning.

OHA is tracking strategic plan on its [OHA Strategic Plan Data Dashboard](#).

Measuring Impacts to Inform Actions of Policy Makers and Agencies

While the above measure agency work related to the public health and health care systems, the agency also works to advance "health in all policies" outside of these context with data and recommendations for policy makers, natural resource agencies and others to consider in shaping investments, programs and priorities. OHA has several programs that develop and report on 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 analyzed the data by race, ethnicity and income to refine prioritization of monitor placement to benefit priority populations inequitably impacted by wildfire smoke.

Climate Change and Health Program

OHA's [Climate and Health in Oregon, 2023 report](#) (published July 2024) highlights work and opportunities for public health partners to strengthen resilience against wildfires, drought, and extreme heat. The report affirms findings of OHA's [2021-2022 report](#) and [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. OHA also published [climate resilience spotlights highlighting partner work](#) complementing the report's findings.

OHA began publishing the reports in response to Governor Executive Order No. 20-04. OHA is directed to deliver annual reports 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.

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 adopted a 2024-2027 [strategic plan](#) in June 2024. The Goal Pillar “Fostering healthy families and environments” has the most direct nexus to environmental justice.

This goal’s focus is to “equitably promote health and well-being, especially among communities most harmed by health inequities, by expanding access to: 1) preventive health services and supports, including for new parents and families before and after birth; 2) safe and accessible housing; 3) healthy food and nutrition; and 4) climate resilience.”

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

In recent years, through Public Health Modernization funding, the state legislature has made a meaningful investment in environmental public health that prioritizes communities at inequitable risk of harm to health from environmental and climate hazards, disinvestment and racism.

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.

OHA is also the lead strategist and facilitator for the first two EJC Mapping Tool community listening sessions. The team will work closely with DEQ and EJC to develop a community engagement plan that offers meaningful engagement with communities who are most impacted by environmental justice issues. OHA's experience in facilitating culturally responsive community events, equity-centered principles, and broad network of contracted community-based organization (CBO) partners equip the team to facilitate thoughtful listening sessions. The first two listening sessions are expected to be complete by June 2025.

AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT 2025

How would your agency like to engage with the EJC in 2025?

- 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](#)

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