



# COG ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TOOLKIT 2.0

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MWAQC Meeting  
December 3, 2025



Metropolitan Washington  
**Council of Governments**

Agenda Item #6

# Background

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- MWAQC and CEEPC Approve Update
  - March 2023: the Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) and the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) approved ACPAC to update its 2017 Environmental Justice (EJ) Toolkit
  - May 2023: Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) adopted its FY24 work program including an objective to include a racial equity lens in work activities. The committee also included a goal of developing a new document to address EJ in air quality planning
- Other equity related work:
  - The Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) climate plan program for the MSA requires significant new community engagement, emphasizing Justice40 and LIDAC. Outreach strategy - include EJ/Equity/Community Engagement

# NEW COG EJ Products: Guide, Plan, and Toolkit

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- MWAQC EJ Subcommittee Resource Guide for Air Quality Action, July 2025
- Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, December 2025
- EJ Toolkit 2.0, January 2026

# EJ Toolkit Update

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## Purpose of Toolkit Refresh

- To provide recommendations or strategies for local governments to more effectively and appropriately engage vulnerable/disfavored communities on issues related to climate, energy and air quality.
- Update recommendations, best practices, and case studies for engagement.
- Incorporate new research and EJ engagement tools.

# EJ Toolkit Update

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- Two-pronged Approach
  - Local government workshops - COG held two sessions with local government staff that have EJ community engagement experience (February 14, and March 13).
  - Community engagement - Equival held workshops and in-person engagements with community-based organizations and grassroots communities, as well as ACPAC. They provided a Report to COG with recommendations based on the data gathered from those interviews and outreach events.
- Plus, national case studies, and information from conferences and related COG work.
- Thanks to colleagues as contributing writers: Leah Boggs, Robert Christopher, Caroline Sherman

# Toolkit 2.0 Format

2017 Toolkit		Toolkit 2.0
Approach #1: Identifying Potentially Vulnerable Populations	➡	Approach 1: Summary of EJ Tools & limitations
Approach #2: Providing Meaningful Engagement Opportunities	➡	Approach 2: Providing Meaningful Engagement Opportunities: <b>Building Trust and Meeting Best Practices</b>
Approach #3: Assessing Community Impacts		2017 information still relevant.
Approach #4: Developing Metrics	➡	Approach 3: Developing Metrics (may be expanded)
Approach # 5: Providing Data, Information and Resources for Communities	➡	Approach 4: Providing Data, Information and Resources for Communities: <b>Leveraging Trusted Institutions.</b>
Approach # 6: Using <b>Citizen</b> Science	➡	Approach 5: Using <b>Community</b> Science
Approach #7: <b>Developing</b> Community Leadership	➡	Approach 6: <b>Bolstering</b> Community Leadership
Approach #8: <b>Supporting</b> Economic and Workforce Development	➡	Approach 7: <b>Augmenting</b> Economic and Workforce Development
Approach #9: Mainstreaming EJ into Public Planning and Programs	➡	Approach 8: Mainstreaming EJ into Public Planning and Programs

# Toolkit 2.0

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## Body of Toolkit

- Updated with information from “on the ground” perspectives gathered from local government listening sessions, Equival interviews, EJ conference speakers, and online research of national examples.
- Features regional and national case studies and examples: Of effective engagement, partnerships, and equitable programs and policies.

## Appendix

- Policies
- Funding resources (grants and foundations)
- Reports and guides
- References

## Toolkit 2.0 Still to Come

- Will be adding cover photos and updating acknowledgments with names of individuals who have contributed.
- Title may be updated.
- Would like to gather additional case studies from our region as well as quotes to emphasize to content.
- The next round of review will be broadened to include local governments and CBOs. COG staff will also present Toolkit overview to the CEEPC committee.
- Staff will be doing a round of committee presentations of the finalized Toolkit 2.0 and get the word out (schedule on the next slide).



# Review and Comment Process

- Internal and consultant review and comment: Mid-October – early November.
- ACPAC Comment Period on Draft 1: November 7 – November 21
- Presentation of draft 1 toolkit: November 17 ACPAC meeting
- COG Staff review/incorporate ACPAC comments: November 24 – November 28
- Local Government and Community Based Organizations Comment Period on Draft 2: December 2 – December 22
- **Presentation on toolkit (draft 2): December 3 Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee meeting**
- COG Staff review/incorporate local government and CBO comments: December 22 – January 9, 2026
- COG Office of Communications review (final version): January 9 – 13, 2026
- Final Toolkit: January 26, 2026: ACPAC meeting, and presentation to CEEPC early 2026

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