

RHODE ISLAND  
DRAFT  
CLIMATE JUSTICE  
PRIORITIES

FIRST DRAFT  
STAKEHOLDER  
SURVEY  
RESULTS

## **Review of Proposed State Climate Justice Priorities**

State government climate leaders have outlined a set of proposed priorities to advance a coordinated climate justice approach to their work, emphasizing equity and access for all Rhode Islanders.

The EC4 Advisory Board is surveying stakeholders to provide feedback on the outline.

For each of the four priorities:

- What would you add, change or remove related to those goals?

Overall questions:

- Are these 4 priorities the right ones to advance climate justice in Rhode Island? Would you add another one or edit/remove any of them?
- Do you have any recommendations about what first next steps the state should take to advance climate justice?
- Who else should be engaged in this review?
- Other comments?

RHODE ISLAND  
CLIMATE JUSTICE  
PRIORITIES  
-DRAFT-



Conduct a gap analysis of statewide policies and programs



Prioritize and improve public engagement and input throughout development and decision-making process



Create or improve access to programs, resources and information



Mitigate and remove burdens from environmental justice communities

## Conduct a gap analysis of statewide policies and programs

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A gap analysis is an examination of the space between "where we are" (the present state) and "where we want to be."  
By defining gaps, we can create a plan to address them.

### Example related goals:

- Informed by community engagement
- Qualitative and quantitative comprehensive equity assessment of programs
- Include metrics (e.g., grant funds awarded to environmental justice communities)
- Define environmental justice and develop statewide environmental justice policy, defining environmental justice communities, benefits, and burdens (aligned with federal definitions/restrictions)
- What else?

## Prioritize and improve public engagement throughout development and decision making

### Example related goals:

- Compensate community members for their engagement
- Provide free child-care and/or transportation during community listening sessions and public input meetings
- Even after COVID, consider continuing to live stream public meetings and enable remote public comment
- Attend and present at community meetings and/or host workshops at community groups
- Hold regular environmental justice listening sessions with community members and leaders from our overburdened communities
- Engage advisory boards: RIPTA Passengers Advisory Board, TCI Equity Advisory Board, DPUC Ratepayer Advisory Board, National Grid/OER Income-Eligible Energy Efficiency Advisory Board, EC4 Advisory Board
- In EC4 annual report, include environmental justice section
- What else?

# Improve access to programs, resources, and information

- Example related goals:
- Analyze existing programs to promote increased access to environmental communities
- Coordinate across agencies to connect Rhode Islanders with comprehensive resources across state government (i.e. broad comprehensive resource document with personal contacts at state agencies; think about how we can plug resources into 211 and/or validate info)
- Create new initiatives that serve environmental justice communities
- Improve outreach and sharing information (includes ensuring all public documents and/or websites are translated); translation opportunities to provide public input (consider Google Translate resource or other state translation program)
- Short-term: secure stable translation services
- Expand translation opportunities to provide public input
- Improve public access and transportation to shores, parks, state offices
- Forge community partnerships with EJ communities
- Identify a climate justice point of contact at each agency
- Expand hours of operations
- Create a climate justice webpage on [climatechange.ri.gov](http://climatechange.ri.gov)
- Educating people about channels for involvement and engagement
- What else?

# Mitigate and remove burdens from Environmental Justice communities

## Example related goals:

- Identify burdens for environmental justice communities
- Consider unique needs of environmental justice communities in statewide grant programs
- Create new programs specifically targeted to serve environmental justice communities
- Reduce local emissions in environmental justice communities
- Create maps of environmental justice areas
- Address cost inequities in services
- Screen new initiatives through an environmental justice lens
- Coordinate efforts with our Health Equity Zones (HEZs)
- What else?

17 PEOPLE  
SURVEYED

6 Interviewers

Interviewees:  
2 women of color

8 white women

7 white men





# EARLY THEMES

Need clear definitions, values, acknowledgements and principles

The state needs staffing, training, and funding for this work to be effective

Meet people where they are

Proceed at the pace of trust

Partner with community-based organizations and compensate them

Representation matters on state boards and decision-making groups

Consider cumulative impacts and rectify them

Move toward collaborative governance with environmental justice communities