Racial Equity Impact Assessment - Short Form

> *"We know that when more Washingtonians are given a fair shot, we are a stronger and more resilient city."* - Mayor Bowser

What is this guide and how is it used? Racial equity is both an outcome and a process. Using racial equity tools like this one is not the end goal but a step towards integrating a racial equity lens across District work. The questions below are meant to help readers identify strategies and resources they may need to embed racial equity in their work. It is strongly encouraged to use this guide early in the policy/program development stage. It is suggested to discuss these questions as a group with all staff who will be responsible for developing and implementing the policy/program.

For technical assistance, please contact the Office of Racial Equity at racialequity@dc.gov.

Rationale: To guide agencies in addressing racial equity as they develop, implement, and evaluate policies, practices, and programs. While each decision analyzed using a racial equity impact tool may result in seemingly small changes, their cumulative impact over time can result in significant changes.

Framing the Vision: What are the expected goals and outcomes?

1. What policy, initiative, program, etc. (herein proposal) is being proposed and why? What is it in response to? (If your proposal is a budget, please see the Racial Equity Budget Tool, Appendix II)
2. What does the Agency/Department expect will be the outcomes of this proposal?
3. How does this proposal align with the goal of advancing racial equity in the District?

Evidence: What do the data show?

4. What qualitative data and quantitative data disaggregated by race and ethnicity does the Agency/Department already have related to this proposal?
   → Some: Continue to #6.
   → None: The Office of Racial Equity is available to help Agencies/Departments consider additional data sources and measures. For now, skip to #7.
5. Are the data you already have complete and reliable enough to look at this proposal's impacts and outcomes by race and ethnicity?
   → Yes: Do the data show any existing racial inequities? If so, what are they?
   → No: How can the Agency/Department data collection methods be changed to gather more complete data?
6. Is the Agency/Department required to gather and/or track these data? If not, is it possible for your Agency/Department to make it standard practice to collect race and ethnicity data? If not, what barriers are preventing your Agency/Department from collecting and/or accessing complete data?
7. What additional data sources can the Agency/Department collect and/or access to assess the racial equity impacts of this proposal? E.g., what do available data tell us about the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, primary language, or ability status?

8. What does your Agency/Department plan to use as benchmarks and success indicators for this proposal? What racial equity outcomes can be added to these measures if they are not already planned?

Please see Appendix I for additional recommended data sources.

Partners: Who are the stakeholders?

9. Which residents, other stakeholders,[*] and neighborhoods/locations will be most impacted by this proposal? Why?
10. How has the Agency/Department engaged residents and stakeholders in this proposal to date?
11. How will the Agency/Department engage the most impacted stakeholders from #9 in decision-making and follow-up moving forward?

Anticipate: What are possible benefits and burdens?

12. What negative impacts or unintended burdens could this proposal cause? (E.g., the location for a new airport could disrupt traffic patterns and create noise and air pollution that impact residents in the immediate vicinity and worsen racial inequities.) Which racial or ethnic groups could be negatively impacted? How could negative impacts be prevented or minimized?
13. What unintended benefits could this proposal cause? Which racial or ethnic groups might disproportionately benefit?
14. Are there any internal, organizational barriers which might hinder this proposal's success?

Accountability: How will the Agency/Department evaluate this proposal and follow up with stakeholders?

15. How will the impacts of this proposal be evaluated? Who will do the evaluation? How will communities who are impacted by this proposal partner in an evaluation?
16. How will the Agency/Department report on the proposal's outcomes? What methods will the Agency/Department use to follow up with impacted residents on evaluation results?

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[*] Other stakeholders include residents, businesses, communities, organizations, etc. who may benefit or be burdened by this proposal in addition to residents who are most impacted.

Racial Equity Impact Assessment - Pocket Guide
Appendix I: Data Sources

In addition to Census data and data collected by agencies, the following resources may be helpful:

- https://opendata.dc.gov
- https://dchealth.dc.gov/publication/health-equity-report-district-columbia-2018
- https://diversitydatakids.org/maps/
- https://www.dcracialequity.org/open-data-sets
- https://opdemographicdatahub-dcgis.hub.arcgis.com/documents/racial-education-income-segregation-in-the-district-of-columbia/explore
- http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators
- https://dchealthmatters.org
- https://catalyst.harvard.edu/policyatlas/

Racial Equity Impact Assessment – Short-Form
Appendix II: Sample Policy

The following scenario is completely fictional and intended for illustration purposes only. It is inspired by Alameda County, California's *Communicating Real-Time on Wildfire Smoke* project. This scenario is not meant to be predictive; the USDA currently ranks the District as falling in the 4th percentile nationwide for wildfire risk.

Framing the Vision: What are the expected goals and outcomes?

1. What policy, initiative, budgeting, program, etc. (herein proposal) is being proposed and why? What is it in response to? (If your proposal is a budget, please see the Racial Equity Budget Tool)

An emergency communications network and protocol to share wildfire health and safety updates with residents as quickly and effectively as possible. Wildfires are a fast-moving threat to residents' health and safety as well as to District infrastructure and natural resources. District residents at highest risk of adverse effects due to local wildfires and/or smoke are also currently the hardest to reach with existing emergency alert methods due to lower rates of smart phone ownership, among other barriers. Based on available data, these residents are disproportionately BIPOC. The District currently employs a smart phone based alert system and transmits emergency messaging through local news media outlets. This proposal would expand the network with whom the District shares alerts and emergency messages to include trusted community institutions and groups, such as K-12 schools, places of worship, etc. to create fast and reliable information channels to our hardest to reach residents.

2. What does the Agency/Department expect will be the outcomes of this proposal?
- A real-time wildfire and heightened smoke risks map
- A wildfire emergency communications network
- Using the map and network, the District will increase its ability to alert key communicators to increase the speed and accuracy with which it warns residents of potential wildfire risks and smoke pollution in their vicinity, especially to target information to residents at highest risk of adverse health and economic outcomes due to wildfire and/or smoke.

Our Office's long-term vision is to reduce wildfire-related risks and harm for all D.C. residents and to eliminate the emergency communications gap with our hardest to reach communities.

3. How does this proposal align with the goal of advancing racial equity in the District?

Currently, residents who are hardest to reach with information about wildfire and smoke-related air pollution risks are also the residents who have the fewest resources or face other barriers to preparing for and/or evacuating the immediate risk area. Of particular concern are residents who may wish to avoid interaction with authorities and thus will be most difficult to reach with timely health information, such as residents experiencing homelessness, undocumented residents, and/or unaccompanied minors. This proposal is designed to target emergency alerts and communications to the hardest to reach residents to increase safety and prevent wildfire-related risks and harm from concentrating among D.C.'s BIPOC communities.

Evidence: What do the data show?

4. What qualitative data and quantitative data disaggregated by race and ethnicity does the Agency/Department already have related to this proposal?
   → Some: Continue to #6.
   → None: The Office of Racial Equity is available to help Agencies/Departments consider additional data sources and measures. For now, skip to #8.

Currently available data are primarily from the U.S. Census Bureau and other federal sources. Our Office does not collect its own data, but it will start data collection when this proposal is launched.

5. Are the data you already have complete and reliable enough to look at this proposal's impacts and outcomes by race and ethnicity?
   → Yes: Do the data show any existing racial inequities? If so, what are they?
   → No: How can the Agency/Department data collection methods be changed to gather more complete data?

Yes, we have Census information related to this proposal. Based on available Census data, we can see the communities that are currently at highest risk of adverse effects due to wildfire and smoke are disproportionately BIPOC. While this proposal does not directly address the root causes of these risks, our office has identified the following inequities:

- Geographical considerations: The residential areas of the District at highest risk of wildfire damage are majority Black and other residents of color due to historical housing policies and practices (also called 'red lining') which prevented Black and other homeowners of color from purchasing homes in lower fire risk neighborhoods. Houseless residents are also at considerable risk; recent point-in-time counts suggest roughly 88% of D.C.'s homeless population is Black.[†]
- Socioeconomic gaps: Due to occupational segregation and other factors, D.C.'s Black non-Hispanic residents have a median household income of roughly $49,000. Hispanic residents of all races have a median household income of roughly $100,000, whereas white residents have a median household income of roughly $150,000.[‡] This income gap contributes to Black and Hispanic households having fewer resources to fireproof or otherwise prepare their homes to protect against fire damage, as well as fewer resources to repair fire and/or smoke damaged homes. The District's racial income gap also translates to smartphone ownership: 42,300 of Black residents, or 14%, do not own a smart phone. They constitute 81% of District residents who do not own or use a smart phone; because emergency alerts are sent via smartphones, these residents are particularly hard to reach. Additionally, Black and other residents of color are more likely than their white peers to work in service industries and other occupations with work schedules that fall during major nightly news hours, the second most popular source of health emergency information after smartphone alerts.

[†] Metropolitan Council of Governments, "Homelessness in Metropolitan Washington: Results and Analysis from the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness," May 2021. https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2021/05/05/homelessness-in-metropolitan-washington-results-and-analysis-from-the-annual-point-in-time-pit-count-of-persons-experiencing-homelessness-featured-publications-homelessness/
[‡] Based on 2019 Census data (American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Table S1903)

- o Health gaps: As of 2018, non-Hispanic Black people are more than 40 times more likely to have asthma than their non-Hispanic white peers and nearly three times as likely to die of asthma related causes.[§] Multiple social determinants of health drive comparatively higher rates of respiratory issues among Black communities, including higher rates of exposure to environmental pollution and limited access to quality health care due to occupational segregation. This health equity gap places Black District residents at higher risk of adverse health effects due to wildfire smoke than their white peers.
- o Language: As many as 18% of District households may be considered as having limited English proficiency, the majority of whom are racial and ethnic minorities. Not all trusted news sources used by the District to transmit wildfire and/or smoke hazard emergency warnings are translated with fidelity into other languages. Moreover, communities with limited English proficiency often have members who are linguistically isolated from common information sources, including mainstream word-of-mouth.

6. Is the Agency/Department required to gather these data? If not, is it possible for your Agency/Department to make it standard practice to collect race and ethnicity data? If not, what barriers are preventing your Agency/Department from collecting and/or accessing complete data?

No, it is not currently required, but race/ethnicity data will be a required category in our programmatic data collection and reporting once this proposal is launched. Because resident data, including the race/ethnicity category, will be self-reported we do not expect to obtain complete information on every resident. We will use Census data matching to test the reliability of our samples.

7. What additional disaggregated data can the Agency/Department collect and/or access to assess the racial equity impacts of this proposal? For example, what do the data tell us about the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or ability status?

We will need to do some survey sampling of District residents pre/post implementation of the emergency alert network to gauge whether the proposal has increased the reach of wildfire/smoke emergency messaging. We will include race, ethnicity, and gender in our polling. We will discuss other potential markers to collect during our focus groups.

8. What does your Agency/Department plan to use as benchmarks and success indicators for this proposal? What racial equity outcomes can be added to these measures if they are not already planned?
- One of our most important success indicators will examine percent change in the number of residents reached by the wildfire emergency communications network. We will break this percent change down by race and ethnicity as well to see any change (hopefully reduction) in the gap.
- We will use additional benchmarks in the lead up to and roll-out of this proposal's implementation that measure output, e.g., number of target community members engaged in step X, number of planning decision points which engaged residents who are most impacted by this plan.

[§] "Asthma and African Americans." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health. 11 Feb 2021. https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=15 (accessed 9 Sep 2021).

Partners: Who are the stakeholders?

9. Which residents, other stakeholders,[**] and neighborhoods/locations will be most impacted by this proposal? Why?

Our Office hopes this proposal will most impact District residents who are currently the hardest to reach using existing emergency communications methods, the majority of whom are BIPOC.

Additional stakeholders who will be impacted are the schools, places of worship, community-based organizations, and other community entities the agency plans to partner with under the new wildfire emergency communications network.

This proposal will be implemented primarily through phone calls, social media, and other remote channels. It will not have a physical program location outside of existing agency offices.

10. How has the Agency/Department engaged residents and stakeholders in this process to date?

Our agency has conducted informational interviews with ANCs, service providers from a range of community-based organizations, and frontline community engagement staff from other District agencies to help inform the development of community focus groups and other community engagement events. Community-based organizations chosen to serve as focus group sites were selected for their diversity of clientele and geographic reach. They include: a free and low-cost health center, a senior center which serves low-income senior residents, a food bank, and others listed at the end of this form.

11. How will the Agency/Department engage the most impacted stakeholders from #9 in decision-making and follow-up moving forward?

If approved, our agency will develop a robust community engagement plan based on these interviews to accompany this proposal. Draft plan attached at the end of this document.

Anticipate: What are possible benefits and burdens?

12. What negative impacts or unintended consequences could this proposal cause? (E.g., the location for a new airport could disrupt traffic patterns and create noise and air pollution that impact residents in the immediate vicinity and worsen racial inequities.) Which racial or ethnic groups could be negatively impacted? How could negative impacts be prevented or minimized?

The agency will develop the communications network in cooperation with its main stakeholders (listed under #9) to avoid any undue burden associated with participating in the communications network. If the communications network does not succeed, it is possible that residents who are hardest to reach with existing emergency alert methods will remain disproportionately BIPOC.

13. What unintended benefits could this proposal cause? Which racial or ethnic groups might disproportionately benefit?

This proposal is non-revenue generating and does not offer a traditional direct service. As such, we do not anticipate any subpopulation of residents unintentionally benefitting more than others.

[**] Other stakeholders include residents, businesses, communities, organizations, etc. who may benefit or be burdened by this proposal in addition to residents who are most impacted.

14. Are there any internal, organizational barriers which might hinder this proposal's success?

Our agency has only one Community Engagement Specialist and limited community engagement capacity for a project of this size. We will need to either subcontract additional support for the planning and roll-out phases of the proposal or submit a budget amendment request for an additional FTE.

Accountability: How will the Agency/Department evaluate this proposal and follow up with stakeholders?

15. How will the impacts of this proposal be evaluated? Who will do the evaluation? How will communities who are impacted by this proposal partner in an evaluation?

Our Office's Data and Policy Analysis team will be responsible for planning and coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of this proposal, including developing the program and performance measures for this proposal (such as racial equity metrics described in #8). These measures will then go through a review process by our interagency and community review boards. The Data & Policy Analysis team will also be responsible for engaging community partners in the evaluation process; they will identify community partners who have the time and interest in participating in a final evaluation during the focus groups described below.

16. How will the Agency/Department report on the proposal's outcomes? What methods will the Agency/Department use to follow up with impacted residents on evaluation results?

The evaluation for this proposal will be submitted to OBPM, the CA's Office, and the Office of Racial Equity. Recommendations will be considered before planning any additional scaling or replication of this proposal.

Topline outcomes will be shared with community partners and other evaluation participants with the same methods used to engage them during the proposal planning/roll-out. E.g., if the participants were previously reached using U.S. mail, they will be mailed the public-facing results. A short public-facing report will also be placed on our Office's website for residents and other municipalities. Once the program is at-scale, our agency will partner with DCHHS and other direct-service providing agencies at community events to drive enrollment in the emergency communications network. We also plan to partner with DMFEMS to incorporate wildfire and smoke related safety training into their K-12 programming.

Draft Community Engagement Plan (SAMPLE)

Recommended Community Partners and Engagement Sites	Date & Status	Equity Supports	Follow-up Actions
Focus Groups			
Mary's Center, Petworth (Mothers with children under five, noncitizen residents, residents w/limited English proficiency, experiences of people with respiratory issues)	March X, 2022 13-15 participants XX participants registered	• Lunch • Gift card stipends • Spanish language translation by a trusted community facilitator • Childcare	• short public-facing report that explains how community concerns shaped the project
So Others Might Eat Senior Center, Anacostia (geography based; open to all seniors)	March X, 2022	• Snacks • Raffle prizes	• short public-facing report that explains how community concerns shaped the project
Thrive DC, DCCFH can advise on how to get information/resources to unhoused residents with the fewest connections to formal services, such as encampment settings	Feb X, 2022	• Breakfast • Gift card stipends (for volunteer responders and houseless residents only)	• engage on prog/performance metrics • short public-facing report that explains how community concerns shaped the project
Friends of the Deanwood Library	Feb X, 2022	• Snacks • Gift card stipends • Childcare	• engage on prog/performance metrics • short public-facing report that explains how community concerns shaped the project
Surveys			
X question pre-survey to residents identified by community-based partners	Run for 3 weeks in April or May, pending focus groups		
X question post-survey to residents identified by community-based partners	Pending roll-out timeline		
Engagement via Community Events			
Martha's Table grocery store: access to engage with very low-income resident community, 11-4 M-F	10 short interviews in March	• Raffle prizes	• short public-facing report that explains how community concerns shaped the project for participants willing to share email address