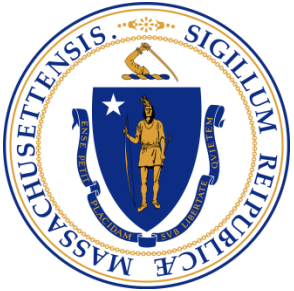


Environmental Justice & Meaningful Participation



Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

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Basics of Environmental Justice

What is Environmental Justice?

The concept of environmental justice means that all people should have the ability to live in and enjoy a clean and healthy environment regardless of race, color, income, class, handicap, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity or ancestry, religious belief or English language proficiency.

Decision-makers achieve the goal that all people must have equal protection to enjoy a healthy environment by providing:

- Fair Treatment
 - Prevention of disproportionate negative environmental hazards impact caused by governmental decisions or policies
- Meaningful Involvement
 - Participation in decision processes that may have direct impact on the quality of life of its residents and the environment
 - Ensuring community voice influences decision-makings or policies
 - Ensuring access to **all** people in its decision-making processes
- Equitable Distribution
 - Ensuring equal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens



Basics of Environmental Justice

Understanding the Term “Environmental” in Environmental Justice

According to Oxford dictionary the term “Environmental” relates to the natural world in which people, animals, and plants live and the impact of human activity on its conditions.

The aim of **environmental** justice is for all people to have the right and equal access to these environmental fundamentals, which include but is not limited to:

- ➡ Clean air
- ➡ Clean water resources
- ➡ Open space
- ➡ Access to outdoor recreational facilities
- ➡ Clean renewable energy



Basics of Environmental Justice

What is an Environmental Justice Community?

An environmental justice community is one that is disproportionately burdened of environmental pollutions and hazards. According to the law in Massachusetts, a community is defined as environmental justice if it meets one or more of these criteria:

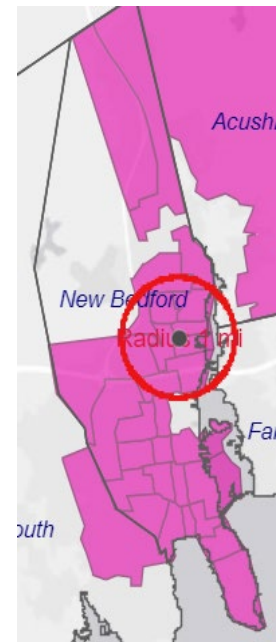
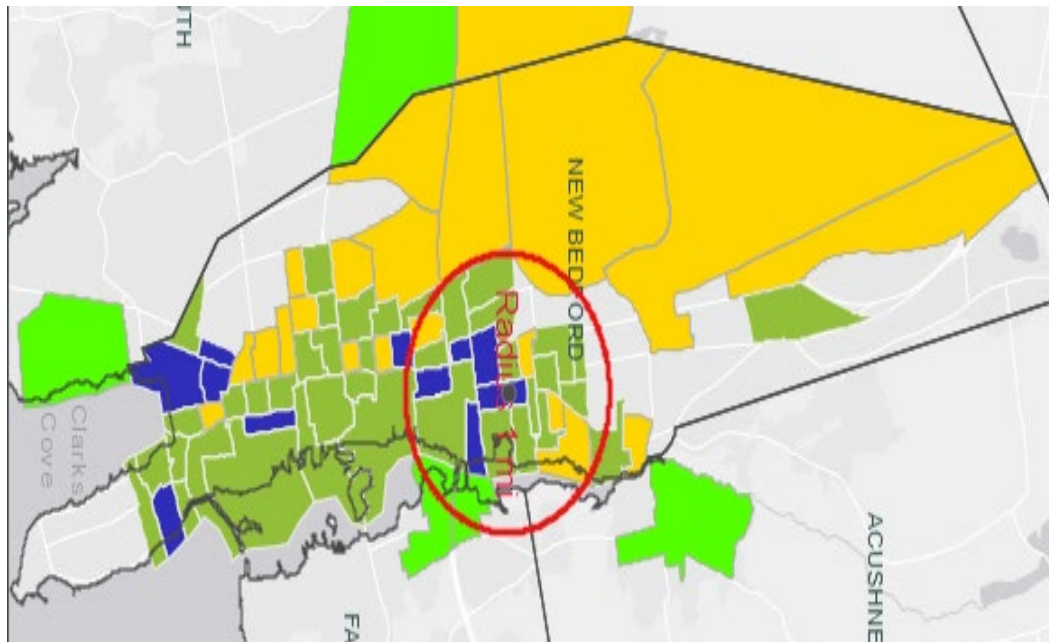
- ➡ 40% of the population comprise of **minorities**
- ➡ Community median **household income** is no more than 65% of statewide annual median household income
- ➡ 25% of the population **lack English proficiency**
- ➡ 25% of the population comprise of **minorities and the household income of the municipality** is no more than 150% of the statewide annual median household income



Basics of Environmental Justice

Breakdown of Neighborhoods in New Bedford

- Yellow = 40% comprise of minority
- Green = 25% comprise of minority and municipality annual household income is < than 150% of statewide income
- Pink = Minority and English isolation
- Blue = Minority, Income, and English isolation





Basics of Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice Community vs. Non-Environmental Justice Community

Block group 2,
census tract 6507
in New Bedford
shows 38% of
households with
English Isolation
([EJ Map Viewer](#))



YES

New Bedford median
household income is
56%* of the
statewide median
household income of
\$93,550
(2022 ACS 1-Year Estimate
[census.gov data](#))*



YES



Basics of Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice Community vs. Non-Environmental Justice Community (Cont'd)

Block group 2,
census track 6541
in Acushnet has
7.6% of limited
English speakers



NO

Census track 6542
in Acushnet median
household income
is 58% of the
statewide median
household income



YES

Excluding income,
census track 6542
has a minority
population of 8%



NO



Your Voice Matters

Why Your Voice Matters

- ★ Your quality of life is likely to be impacted by agency decisions or policies.
- ★ You know the difficulties your community is facing.
- ★ You can best inform decision-makers and policy-makers about the consequences of the burden your community has and continues to bear.
- ★ You know what is best for your community.

