

Attachment D

Environmental Justice Policy

For the purposes of this RFR, “Environmental Justice” is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment regardless of race, color, national origin, income, or English language proficiency. Environmental justice is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people and communities with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of energy, climate change, and environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of energy and environmental benefits and burdens.

While encouraged, the following questions are voluntary and will not impact eligibility. Answers to these questions help MDAR track progress towards the goals set forth in the [2021 Environmental Justice Policy](#), and the [2022 Environmental Justice Strategy](#), which require MDAR to a) report the amount of public funds used in Environmental Justice Communities, and b) track the number of new applicants for grant programs from Environmental Justice Communities and BIPOC Farmers. More information can be found in below. MDAR encourages stakeholders to provide feedback on the Environmental Justice Policy and Strategy, by visiting mass.gov/environmental-justice.

Environmental Justice Questions

1. Has the applicant applied for MDAR funding programs before this current application? Yes No I don't know

2. Has the applicant received funding from any MDAR funding programs? Yes No I don't know

3. Select one or more of the racial categories below:

Answers to the following questions are optional. This information will not in any way affect your eligibility for MDAR programs and is used for statistical purposes only.

American Indian/Alaskan Native/Indigenous

Middle Eastern or North African

Asian/South Asian

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Black or African American

White

Other:

Please state with the understanding that the races above may not be reflective of everyone.

4. Select one or more of the ethnic categories below:

Answers to the following questions are optional. This information will not in any way affect your eligibility for MDAR programs and is used for statistical purposes only.

Not Hispanic or Latino

Hispanic or Latino

Other:

Please state with the understanding that the races above may not be reflective of everyone.

5. Are any applicants a Historically Underserved Farmer?

Please check any of the following categories that apply based on these USDA definitions:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/underserved-farmers-ranchers>

Limited Resource Farmer

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer

Beginning Farmer

Veteran Farmer

6. If you feel that this application did not allow you to fully explain the diversity of the applicant for this grant (whether you are applying as an individual or on behalf of an entity), please explain here:

RFR - Further Information on MDAR's Environmental Justice Goals

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MDAR strives to promote and integrate EJ considerations across their programs, policies, and activities to ensure the equal access and meaningful involvement of all people residing in the Commonwealth with respect to agricultural economic and environmental sustainability and the equitable development, implementation, and accessibility to information and resources.

Among the priorities and goals outlined in the [2021 Environmental Justice Policy](#), and the [2022 Environmental Justice Strategy](#), EEA agencies are tasked with ensuring that Environmental Justice neighborhoods benefit from positive impacts of environmental programs, grants and investments.

A. Environmental Justice Populations

EJ populations are those segments of the population that EEA has determined to be most at risk of being unaware of or unable to participate in environmental decision-making or to gain access to state environmental resources, or are especially vulnerable.

“Environmental Justice Population” is defined by the Environmental Justice Policy, issued by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in 2017, and updated in June, 2021, as

- A. a neighborhood that meets 1 or more of the following criteria:
 - i) the annual median household income is not more than 65 per cent of the statewide annual median household income;
 - ii) minorities comprise 40 per cent or more of the population;
 - iii) 25 per cent or more of households lack English language proficiency; or
 - iv) minorities comprise 25 per cent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 per cent of the statewide annual median household income; or
- B. a geographic portion of a neighborhood designated by the Secretary as an environmental justice population in accordance with law.

B. MA Environmental Justice Map Viewer

The [MA Environmental Justice Map Viewer](#) was designed to map Environmental Justice populations as census block groups in Massachusetts.

Please note - The data submitted in your application will be used to determine whether your project falls within an Environmental Justice block group, and will be used to design a map, available on the MDAR website, to show the positive impact of its grant awards, demonstrating the reach of its programs in EJ communities.

For more information on MDAR's Environmental Justice Program, or to provide feedback, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mdars-environmental-justice-program>.