

JUSTICE40

A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

“We’ll create good jobs for millions of Americans...and we’ll do it all to withstand the devastating effects of climate change and promote environmental justice.”

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN, 2022 STATE OF THE UNION

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

For the first time in our nation’s history, the Federal government has made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. President Biden made this historic commitment when he signed [Executive Order 14008](#) on *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* within days of taking office. To continue delivering on his environmental justice vision, President Biden signed [Executive Order 14096](#) on *Revitalizing Our Nation’s Commitment to Environmental Justice for All* in April 2023.

What kinds of investments fall within the Justice40 Initiative? The categories of investment are: climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure.

How is the Administration implementing the Justice40 Initiative? A national commitment to environmental justice of this magnitude has never been made before. To meet the goal of the Justice40 Initiative, the Administration is transforming hundreds of Federal programs to ensure that disadvantaged communities receive the benefits of new and existing Federal investments. Through the President’s [Investing in America Agenda](#) —

including the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#), and the American Rescue Plan — Federal agencies are making historic investments to advance environmental justice and benefit disadvantaged communities. These investments will help confront decades of underinvestment in disadvantaged communities and bring critical resources to communities that have been overburdened by legacy pollution and environmental hazards.

What type of direction has the White House provided to Federal agencies to achieve the goals of the Justice40 Initiative?

The task of delivering the benefits of hundreds of Federal programs to communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution requires fundamental and sweeping reforms to the very way in which the federal government as a whole operates. In 2021, the White House issued formal [Interim Implementation Guidance](#) directing all Federal agencies to identify and begin transforming their [programs covered](#) under the Justice40 Initiative – which agencies are currently implementing.

In January 2023, the White House issued [additional guidance](#) to Federal agencies on how to use the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST), which is a mapping tool that helps identify disadvantaged communities. [Disadvantaged communities, also known as Justice40 communities](#), include all Federally Recognized Tribes whether or not they have land. Here are some key topics addressed in the formal guidance:

What is a covered Justice40 investment? Covered Federal investments include any grant or procurement spending, financing, staffing costs, or direct spending or benefits to individuals for a covered program in a Justice40 category.

What is a covered Justice40 program? A “Justice40 covered program” is a Federal government program that falls in the scope of the Justice40 Initiative because it includes investments that can benefit disadvantaged communities across one or more of the following seven areas: climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical clean water and wastewater

infrastructure. Many existing and new programs created by President Biden's Investing in America Agenda that make covered investments in these categories are Justice40 covered programs.

All Justice40 covered programs are required to engage in stakeholder consultation and ensure opportunities for local community members to be meaningfully involved in determining program benefits. Covered programs are also required to report data on the benefits flowing to disadvantaged communities.

Agencies that have released their covered programs under the Justice40 Initiative include:

- [U.S Department of Agriculture](#)
- [U.S. Department of Commerce](#)
- [U.S. Department of Energy](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)
- [U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency](#)
- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)
- [U.S Department of the Interior](#)
- [U.S. Department of Labor](#)
- [U.S. Department of Transportation](#)
- [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#)
- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

The full list of Justice40 covered programs is available, [here](#).

How are communities involved in the Justice40 Initiative?

Communities have been involved in shaping the Biden-Harris Administration's environmental justice agenda and the Justice40 Initiative since the beginning.

President Biden and Vice President Harris are committed to ensuring that the voices, perspectives, and lived realities of communities with environmental justice concerns are heard in the White House and reflected in Federal policies, investments, and decisions. [Executive Order 14008](#) created the first-ever [White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council](#) that is charged with providing independent advice and recommendations on how to address current and historic environmental injustice. Members of the council are selected from across a wide range of backgrounds, and have knowledge about or experience in environmental justice, climate change, disaster preparedness, or racial inequity, among other areas of expertise.

Early and meaningful engagement—in particular with communities with environmental justice concerns and the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council—continues to shape the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative.

How is the Justice40 Initiative promoting meaningful engagement?

Community engagement is a critical component of the Justice40 Initiative. [Formal Administration guidance](#) directed Federal agencies with Justice40 covered programs to conduct meaningful engagement to ensure community members have the opportunity to provide input on program decisions, including in the identification of the benefits of Justice40 covered programs.

What does the Justice40 Initiative mean for communities? The Biden-Harris Administration is implementing the Justice40 Initiative right now. The Justice40 Initiative is not a one-time investment, nor a single pot of money. Rather, it is a series of changes to improve how the Federal government ensures equitable distribution of the benefits of many programs. Existing and new programs—including programs created by the President's [Investing in America Agenda](#)—are covered by the Justice40 Initiative if they meet the [eligibility requirements](#). To meet the goal of the Justice40 Initiative, agencies are changing their programs to ensure the benefits reach disadvantaged communities that need them most.

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How is the Biden-Harris Administration ensuring the Justice40

Initiative is accessible to communities? To help communities remain up-to-date on programs and funding opportunities, Federal agencies organize formal and informal engagements and educational opportunities—ranging from in-person convenings, virtual gatherings, and webinars, to other venues through which members of the public and communities can engage. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to ongoing and meaningful engagement with communities and stakeholders to advance President Biden’s ambitious environmental justice agenda, including implementation of the Justice40 Initiative.

To receive regular updates on environmental justice news and engagements across the Biden-Harris Administration [sign up for the CEQ EJ Connector newsletter](#).

What is the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool and how does it relate to the Justice40 Initiative?

Explore data about communities across the U.S., including your own, and provide [feedback on the tool](#).

What is the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool? The [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#) is an interactive mapping tool to identify disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. The CEJST features a user-friendly, searchable map that identifies disadvantaged communities across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories, to the extent data are available for the U.S. territories. Land within the boundaries of Federally Recognized Tribes, including Alaska Native Villages, are highlighted as disadvantaged on the map. By helping Federal agencies identify disadvantaged communities, the CEJST seeks to fulfill the promise of the Justice40 Initiative. The CEJST was developed with Federal resource allocation purposes in mind.

When will the CEJST be updated? The CEJST will be continuously updated approximately on an annual basis and refined based on feedback and as new datasets and research become available. In July 2023, the Administration released the [Spanish version](#) of the CEJST.

How is the CEJST being used for the Justice40 Initiative? Federal agencies are using the CEJST as their primary tool for identifying disadvantaged communities that are geographically defined for any covered programs under the Justice40 Initiative and for programs where a statute directs resources to disadvantaged communities, to the maximum extent possible and permitted by law.

Where can I find more information? Additional information on the CEJST can be found [here](#). CEQ and the U.S. Digital Service hosted several public training sessions on the CEJST. A recording is available [here](#).