

## Scorecard Veterans Affairs



### Veterans Affairs

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### About the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

The mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is to fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors. VA integrates environmental justice into its mission and will continue to encourage and facilitate meaningful involvement of affected stakeholders and communities and consultation with Tribes.

This page provides information on how **the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** is working to advance environmental justice for communities across America. It is part of Phase One of the Biden-Harris Administration's Environmental Justice Scorecard.

## Justice40 Initiative

As part of President Biden's [Justice40 Initiative](#), the federal government is working toward the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments reach disadvantaged communities that are marginalized and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment. In particular, the President's Justice40 Initiative applies to federal investments that address 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.

This Phase One Scorecard provides an update on initial progress made by **the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** in implementing the Justice40 Initiative. F [Share your feedback](#)

versions of the Environmental Justice Scorecard will provide additional information and updates on the benefits of Justice40 covered programs.

For more information on VA's Justice40 covered programs, please contact [LG.VBACO@va.gov](mailto:LG.VBACO@va.gov).

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights in Fiscal Year 2022 include:

- **1** Justice40 covered program(s)
- **1** funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative
- **\$40,000** in funding made available from Justice40 covered programs<sup>1</sup>
  - VA's Energy Efficient Mortgage Loan program resulted in 11 loans to recipients in disadvantaged communities in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022.

<sup>1</sup> This funding amount describes examples of the funding that was made available in Fiscal Year 2022 through Justice40 covered programs. The amount does not represent the total funding that benefits disadvantaged communities. The funding was made available through grants, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58). The Justice40 Initiative sets a goal that 40 percent of overall benefits from certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities.

## Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

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Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country's bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work **the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022.

For more information, please visit [VA's Environmental Justice Strategy](#).

### National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental, health, and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them. Environmental reviews help ensure the public is informed about potential actions, and give communities an opportunity to participate in the government's decision-making process. Environmental reviews also ensure that federal agencies consider ways to protect and enhance public health and the environment, and advance environmental justice in their decision-making. The following information highlights some work **the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022.

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:



- VA's NEPA Interim Guidance for Projects establishes parameters to consider environmental justice as part of the NEPA process.

## Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

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Since the start of the Biden-Harris Administration, federal agencies have been working to embed environmental justice into all aspects of their work, including by implementing [Executive Order 12898](#) and [Executive Order 14008](#). The following information shares some of the work **the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022 to institutionalize environmental justice.

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:

**Has** an environmental justice strategic plan that **has not been** updated in the past 5 years

- In 2022, VA published an updated Directive 0065, Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Planning, that incorporated pursuing climate mitigation efforts that advance environmental justice as a core policy. This policy update was not directly related to the VA's EJ Strategic Plan, but rather part of larger planning in which environmental justice was prioritized.

**1** staff that work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

- **1** new or strengthened internal working group(s), steering committee(s), council(s) on environmental justice
- In response to Executive Order 14057, VA established a senior level Sustainability Task Force (STF) and prioritized environmental justice as a responsibility of the STF.

### VA's Highlights

As part of the activities of the STF and EO 14057, VA is integrating environmental justice considerations into several efforts, such as facility prioritization for new energy performance contracts and as a factor within upcoming climate change vulnerability assessments of mission critical facilities.

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