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# **EPA Administrator Announces Agency Actions to Advance Environmental Justice**

## **Administrator Regan Directs Agency to Take Steps to Better Serve Historically Marginalized Communities**

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### **Contact Information**

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**WASHINGTON** – Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Michael S. Regan directed all EPA offices to clearly integrate environmental justice considerations into their plans and actions.

“Too many communities whose residents are predominantly of color, Indigenous, or low-income continue to suffer from disproportionately high pollution levels and the resulting adverse health and environmental impacts,” **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan in a message to all agency staff.** “We must do better. This will be one of my top priorities as Administrator, and I expect it to be one of yours as well.”

The new measures announced today are one part of EPA's response to the Biden-Harris Administration's directive to all federal agencies to embed equity into their programs and services to ensure the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals. In his message, Administrator Regan, while acknowledging the agency's past environmental justice efforts, called on all EPA offices to take the following steps:

1. Strengthen enforcement of violations of cornerstone environmental statutes and civil rights laws in communities overburdened by pollution.
2. Take immediate and affirmative steps to incorporate environmental justice considerations into their work, including assessing impacts to pollution-burdened, underserved, and Tribal communities in regulatory development processes and to consider regulatory options to maximize benefits to these communities.
3. Take immediate and affirmative steps to improve early and more frequent engagement with pollution-burdened and underserved communities affected by agency rulemakings, permitting and enforcement decisions, and policies. Following President Biden's memorandum on strengthening the Nation-to-Nation relationship with Tribal Nations, EPA staff should engage in regular, meaningful, and robust consultation with Tribal officials in the development of federal policies that have Tribal implications
4. Consistent with the Administration's Justice 40 initiative, consider and prioritize direct and indirect benefits to underserved communities in the development of requests for grant applications and in making grant award decisions, to the extent allowed by law.

Today Administrator Regan is engaging in a series of roundtables to hear directly from representatives of underserved communities and environmental justice leaders about pollution burdens and the importance of EPA leadership. These meetings include one with national Environmental Justice leaders, a Congressional roundtable with the co-chairs of the Senate EJ Caucus, Senator Tom Carper and Senator Corey Booker along with the co-chairs of the United for Climate and Environmental Justice Congressional

Task Force, Congresswoman Nanette Barragán and Congressman Donald McEachin, followed by a meeting with mayors and city councilmembers in the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials.

EPA defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.” Environmental justice is a major part of the agency’s core mission of protecting human life and the environment.

For more information: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

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