

Civil Rights Program Development

Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ)

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Overview

- 1. What is civil rights law and why does it involve air agencies?
- 2. What is environmental justice and how does it connect to civil rights?
- 3. How our humble agency got involved in this.
- 4. What's next for our agencies in the new administration?



Civil Rights Law

Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Chapter 21) was initially explicitly a response to racial discrimination, passed through movement pressure:

All persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall have the same right in every State and Territory to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be parties, give evidence, and to the full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of persons and property as is enjoyed by white citizens, and shall be subject to like punishment, pains, penalties, taxes, licenses, and exactions of every kind, and to no other.





Civil Rights Law

Currently, federal civil rights law includes prohibitions on discrimination against people on the basis of basis of

- race
- color
- national origin (including limited-English proficiency)
- disability
- sex
- age

States and local governments may include additional protected classes.

Civil Rights Law

This is enforced through prohibitions on discrimination:

- By federal agencies
- In public accommodations
- To the states through the Interstate Commerce Clause and 14th Amendment
- And to recipients of federal funding

Civil Rights & the EPA

EPA is responsible for monitoring and enforcing:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975

...in accordance with EPA's implementing regulations.

40 C.F.R. Part 5 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40/chapter-l/subchapter-A/part-5

and

Part 7 https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40/chapter-l/subchapter-A/part-7

Civil Rights & the EPA

"Historically, public participation opportunities did not always succeed in reaching all interested or affected segments of the public, nor did they always provide access to influence EPA's decision-making or to ensure accountability. In response to these concerns identified by members of the public and other government agencies, EPA emphasizes the term "meaningful involvement" to refer to how the public participation process could include and be accessible to a more representative public—including multi-lingual, multi-cultural, rural, and urban populations with differing abilities, ages, and documentation statuses—all communicated in plain language."

- EPA's Meaningful Involvement Policy document, Page 5

Environmental Justice & Civil Rights



"Environmental justice" is a social justice movement

- It too arose as a response to racism, and became a national movement by Black-led organizing, in this case in the 1970's in NC
- The term "environmental justice" was coined in the 1980's, although arguably discriminatory practices of resource extraction and pollution concentration have been around for centuries/eons

Environmental Justice & Civil Rights

1st EJ Executive Order signed by President Bill Clinton in 1994, EO 12898

"Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"

Several executive orders have been signed since then, and agencies including the EPA have continued to develop their own plans and guidance for environmental justice.

Environmental Justice & Civil Rights

While civil rights compliance has defined classes, environmental justice allows for broader analyses of who is impacted, who is excluded, who is harmed, and who is engaged in all aspects of environmental projects and actions.

Both areas require a look not just at intent, but at effect.

Both, at their core, require *meaningful public* participation.

PDEQ's Civil Rights Resolution

Background:

In June 2024, PDEQ and the EPA signed an "Informal Resolution Agreement" resolving a complaint.

The complaint arose from our permitting process for Becton Dickinson (BD), which proposed to use ethylene oxide for medical device sterilization.

PDEQ engaged in a thorough outreach process and EJ analysis during the BD permitting application; however, this revealed that we did not have standard practices for our civil rights compliance for the department.

PDEQ's Civil Rights Resolution

Informal Resolution Agreement (IRA) signed in June 2024 between PDEQ and EPA Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR).

This Agreement imposed a number of conditions on PDEQ, including the development and adoption of multiple written documents, processes, internal office training, and tracking and reporting.

PDEQ's Civil Rights Program

Development of the Civil Rights Plan

Outreach

- Used office and personal organizing networks to reach out to local social justice, environmental activism, disability rights, refugee/immigration agencies, food banks, local governments, and other organizations for ongoing project development
- Ultimately had meetings with disability rights organizations, the regional EJ center at UA, and the head of a refugee agency

PDEQ's Civil Rights Program

Development, Cont'd

Review of other plans

- Looked to other Pima County plans for compliance; only PCDOT has one
- Looked at other regional, statewide, and beyond environmental and transportation agencies for their plans
- EPA was developing its plan concurrently with our development, so we were not able to rely on that ("Civil Rights Guidance on Procedural Safeguards")

PDEQ Civil Rights Program Structure Informal Resolution Agreement Compliance Plan Non-Discrimination Statement Meaningful Public Participation **Grievance Procedure** Disability Access Plan [INTERNAL | DOCUMENTS] **Standard Operating Procedure Best Practices Documents Ancillary SOP Documents**

PDEQ Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Pima County Department of Environmental Quality is **committed to ensuring that no person** is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or service that it provides.

PDEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or disability, in full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other applicable acts and laws. PDEQ does not intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised their rights to participate in or oppose actions protected/prohibited by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, or for the purpose of interfering with such rights.

PDEQ's Civil Rights Coordinator will be responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implemented by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 (Non-Discrimination in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (hereinafter referred to collectively as the federal non-discrimination laws).

PDEQ's Civil Rights Program

Public Participation Plan

 Details the Standard Operating Procedure for how PDEQ implements meaningful engagement into its activities

Disability Access Plan

 Covers how PDEQ ensures that community members of Pima County can access our engagement activities

Language Access Plan

 Explains language access challenges in Pima County and how PDEQ addresses and overcomes those challenges

PDEQ's Civil Rights Program

PDEQ has created a **Standard Operating Procedure** (SOP) to standardize how the department incorporates meaningful involvement into its public engagement processes.

This SOP mainly consists of 3 documents:

- Initial Assessment Tool
- Ongoing Assessment Tool
- Final Assessment Tool

The SOP also involves several additional supporting documents like a **Legal Notice Requirements** chart, a **Best Practices document**, and it also references the **Disability and Language Access Plans**.

	INITIAL ASSESSMENT TOOL
To be completed and sa	wed every time a project requiring public notice is initiated.
Name of project:	
Permit #, Code Section	(s) # or Rule(s) # if relevant:
Person completing form	n:
Date completed:	
 Action r New per Permit r New per Permit r Office p 	ce ce with fees requiring federal approval (i.e. SIP Rulemaking) rmit – Title V source renewal- Title V source rmit – non-Title V renewal – non-Title V olicy change
o Broad lo	
0	Air – release of criteria pollutants: O Decrease from current levels O Same as current levels O Increase above current levels
	Air – release of hazardous pollutants: O Decrease from current levels O Same as current levels O Increase above current levels
_	Water Other nuisance (i.e. noise, lights, odor):
	Financial impact:
	Safety
	Transportation/Mobility/Access
0	Heat
0	Other:

- o Tailored assessment to be completed (refer to internal Best Practices list "EJ Evaluation Tools and Criteria"):
 - o EJ Screen
 - o Pima Maps
 - o Heat map
 - Other:
- Legally required notice (see "Legal Notice Requirements")
 Additional steps for all PDEQ actions requiring notice (see "Standard Additional Notice")
- 5. Needs/corrective actions not met in Step 3 and 4, based on Step 2 evaluation
 - o Language Access Plan -
 - o Disability Access Plan
 - o Other (create Best Practices doc)
 - o Literacy/reading level
 - o Technology/news access
 - Other
- 6. Additional stakeholder input sought?

ONGOING ASSESSMENT TOOL To be completed as many times as necessary, if new information or concerns arise during a public notice process. Name of project: Permit #, Code Section(s) # or Rule(s) # if relevant: Person completing form: Date completed: Nature of new information and concerns: Brief summary: How was this information obtained (ie public comment, stakeholder information, other?): 2. Potential impacts of project - are there any new potential impacts not indicated in the Initial Assessment Tool? Broad look impacts Air – release of criteria pollutants: Decrease from current levels

Same as current levels
 Increase above current levels
 Air – release of hazardous pollutants:
Decrease from current levels
 Same as current levels
 Increase above current levels
o Water
Other nuisance (ie noise, lights, odor):
o Financial impact:
o Safety
 Transportation/Mobility/Access
o Heat
o Other:
o Tailored assessment to be completed (refer to Best Practices list "EJ Evaluation
Tools and Criteria"): Are there any tools not checked in the Initial Assessment
Tool that you now feel are important to use?
o EJ Screen
o Pima Maps
○ Heat map
o Other:
3. Needs/corrective actions: Are there any corrective actions not checked in the Initial
Assessment Tool that you now feel are important to use?
 Language Access Plan –
Disability Access Plan
Other (create Best Practices doc)
o Literacy/reading level
o Technology/news access
o Other
4. Do you anticipate an additional Ongoing Assessment after this one, or will this one likely resolve the known and anticipated issues?

FINAL ASSESSMEN To be completed after the public participation process the action has been made.	 Mandatory Additional N ☐ Informal notice po	atory notice completed (please reference "PDEQ Notice" document): osted in Spanish on a Spanish language or dedicated bilingual
Name of project:	 news forum	oleted:
Permit # or Rules # if relevant:	O Where was	
Person completing form:		1 media sites and PDEQ webpage
Date completed:		- Intesta sites and 1 DDQ weepinge
1. Minimum required legal notice completed: Bos Vote – Date completed: Bos Vote – Date completed: Website Posting – Date completed: Newspaper Notice – Date(s) completed Which newspaper(s)? Mandatory Public Comment Period – D Notified Interested Parties List (Gov.De Notify Local Governments – Date comp Published Response to Public Comment Mandatory Public Hearing – Date comp Public Hearing (if requested) – Date comp Published after adoption – Date comple Location of publication: Any additional comments:	What would you change next time?	ain Pima County Library (if open) and in a library to the physical location impacted by the action if vanish) is posted at?: rt 70 air permit applications and permit renewals ninors) or any other actions where PDEQ is st in the matter iod from 30 days to 45 days (or longer if desired) panish on a Spanish language or dedicated ocial media sites and PDEQ webpage

				NOTICE	REQUIREME	NTS				
ACTION	BoS vote and BoSAIR **If required, <u>Clark</u> of Board will post notice to BoA lobby**	Website Posting	Newspaper Notice	Mandatory Public Comment Period	<u>Notify</u> Interested Parties	Publish Response to Public Comment	Mandatory Public Hearing (in addition to BoS hearing)	Public hearing (if requested)	Published After Adoption	Additional Requirement and Notes
All county ordinances* (ARS 11-251.05) *Excluding rules adopted under A.R.S. Title 49, Chapter 3, Article 3 (County Air Pollution Control), pursuant to the exception in PCC 2.32.020.A	Yes. ARS 11-251.05 BoSAIR required per. Pima County Admin Pro. 4.1. See details for multiple deadlines. Notice of proposed rulemaking to be filed with Clerk of Board before any rulemaking. PCC 2.32.030	Yes, posted by PDEQ. PCC 2.32.030 (C)	Notice in ONE newspaper of general circulation in County Seat <u>at least 15 days before BoS Meeting</u> ARS 11-251.05	Public comment period will bagin the date the notice of proposed action is posted on the county website and will close seven calendar days following the last public meeting PCC 2.32.030		Must evaluate all public comments and must respond in writing to all written comments, may respond to verbal comments, must provide responses to Board and post on website. PCC 2.32.040	Not less than 14 calendar days following posting of notice of proposed action on County website, proponent will conduct one or more public meetings to receive public comment. PCC 2.32.030 (D)		Yes, <u>m</u> specific deadline. <u>ARS</u> 11-251.05(C)	
New or increased tax or fee (ARS 11-251.13)	Yes. ARS 11-251.13 and ARS 11-251.05 BoSAIR required per Pima County Admin Pro. 4.1. See details for multiple deadlines.	At least 60 days before BoS approval or disapproval. ARS 11-251.13								
Air rule, ordinance, or regulation	20 days' notice of this required by ARS 49-479 Additional citations: ARS 11-251.13 and ARS 11-251.05 BoSAIR required per Pima County Admin Pro. 4.1. See details for multiple deadlines.	Yes. ARS 49-471.04 And if more stringent because "peculiar local conditions" apply then also through ARS 49-112(D)(1) (although this is already covered under 471.04)	Notice in ONE newspaper of general circulation with <u>at least 30 days</u> comment <u>period</u> ARS 49-112(D)(1) and (2) Notice in ONE newspaper of general circulation <u>at least 2 times</u> ARS 49-498 and PCC 17.04.400	At least 30 days long ARS 49-112(D) and ARS 49-471.06(B)	Send notice by mail, fax, or email to any person who has requested notification ARS 49-471.04	Yes, on website. ARS 49-112(D)(3)		Notice of this hearing to be posted on website at least 20 days before hearing, and in newspaper. ARS 49-112(D)(4) Also with 30 days' notice after posting on website. ARS 49-471.06	Within 30 days after adoption of rule. ARS 49- 471.07(G)	- Notice of proposed rulemaking demonstratin compliance with_ARS 49-112(D/11), ARS 49-471.04 ARS 49-471.05 - Within 120 days after clos of record: Complete with info from ARS 49-471.07 Informal Stakeholder Meeting: Permissive. ARS 49-471.06(A)

PDEQ Public Participation Process

Initial Assessment Tool: Step 4

Mandatory Additional PDEQ Notice Requirements for All Actions Requiring Public Notice

- If an action is legally required to have a notice in a physical newspaper (See Initial Assessment Tool Step 3, and accompanying Legal Notice Requirements Table), PDEQ will additionally post informal notice:
 - o In Spanish on a Spanish language or dedicated bilingual news forum
 - o On social media sites and the PDEQ webpage
 - In a manner that is accessible to language translation tools and lowvision/no-vision reader software (See PDEQ's web team with questions about accessibility)
 - o This notice does not need to meet all formal notice requirements of the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) and Pima County Code (PCC), so long as it includes information about the nature of the action, the timeline for public comments and date of any public hearing, and a link to the PDEQ web page where more details can be found.
- All notices posted anywhere outside PDEQ's websites must have QR codes or links to the PDEQ website.
- PDEQ will post informal notice in the main Pima County Library if open, and in the library or other public building closest to the physical location impacted by the action if applicable (in English and in Spanish)
- 4. PDEQ will hold mandatory public hearings required in Step 3, and will additionally hold public hearings:
 - For all Part 70 air permit applications and permit renewals (Class I and Class II synthetic minors)
 - $\circ\quad$ For all new permit applications releasing HAPS
 - For all other actions where PDEQ is already aware of a public interest in the matter
- If PDEQ is holding a public hearing, it will extend a mandatory 30-day comment period to 45 days (or longer if desired) to allow for at least 15 additional days after the hearing for submission of written comments.

- 6. For public hearings, PDEQ will consult Best Practices [x document] to determine whether the hearing should be:
 - o In person, virtual, or both
 - o During normal business hours, after business hours, or both
 - Please indicate which decision was made and why:
- 7. If the action is legally required to be published in a newspaper after adoption, PDEQ will also publish it:
 - o In Spanish on a Spanish language or dedicated bilingual news forum
 - o On social media sites and the PDEQ webpage
 - In a manner that is accessible to GoogleTranslate and low-vision/no-vision reader software (See PDEQ's web team with questions about accessibility)
- If a virtual stakeholder meeting or public hearing/oral proceeding is required, PDEQ will
 record and transcribe the event to be provided, by request, to the public.

PDEQ has set up a temporary web page to share the Public Participation Documents and receive feedback. The webpage is fully compatible with accessibility and translation software.

www.pima.gov/3361

- Public Participation Plan
- Disability Access Plan
- Language Access Plan

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS + CONTENT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

DRAFT WEBPAGE: This page is a draft, and some of the contents on it are open for public comment from November 14 through December 16, 2024.

The following 3 documents (*Public Participation Plan, Disability Access Plan, and Language Access Plan*) are open for review and public comment through December 16, 2024. Please review them in order to understand how they work together.

You may submit comments on any or all of the documents using the feedback form at the bottom of this page, or by sending written comments to Abigail Okrent by email at civilRights.PDEQ@pima.gov, or by mail to 33 N. Stone Ave., 7th Floor, Tucson, Arizona 85701. You will need to submit a separate comment for each document.

All web pages are compatible with accessibility software (see icon to the left of the screen)and with translation software (see GoogleTranslate icon towards the top of the screen).

Todas las páginas web son compatibles con software de accesibilidad (ver icono a la izquierda en la pantalla) y con software de traducción (ver icono de GoogleTranslate en la parte superior de la pantalla).

Public Participation Plan

- Public Participation Plan (PDF)
- View in Browser

Disability Access Plan

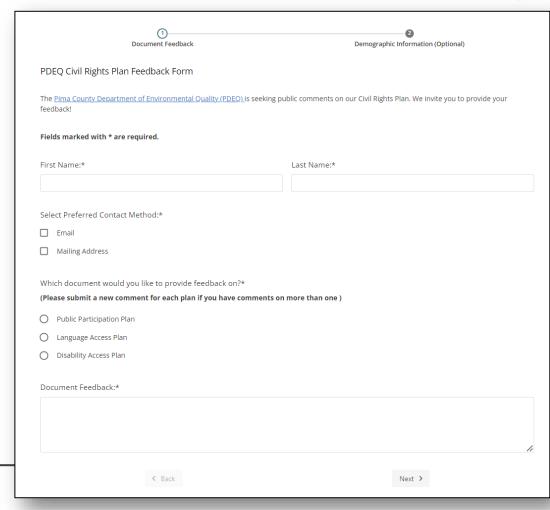
- Disability Access Plan (PDF)
- View in Browser

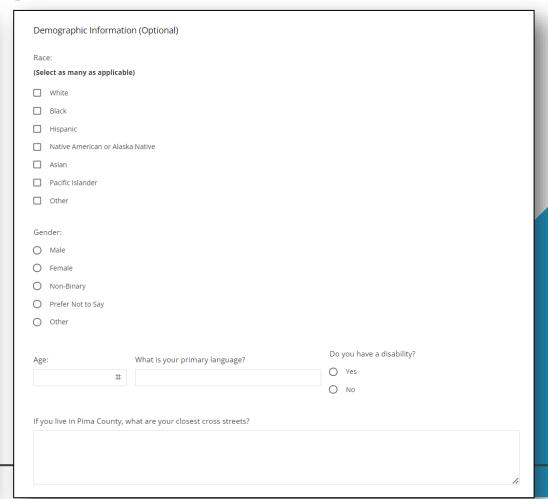
Language Access Plan

- Language Access Plan (PDF)
- View in Browser

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www.pima.gov/3361





PDEQ's Civil Rights Program

Next steps:

After public comment closes on December 16, PDEQ will make any changes we need to, and then send the drafts to the EPA for input.

Once those are finalized, we will create an internal training program so all staff understand our obligations and practices.

Project 2025 EPA Chapter:

What's next?

Needed Reforms and New Policies

• Review EPA's Environmental Justice and Title VI authority.
Wherever possible, the Biden Administration is broadening EPA's use and interpretation of Environmental Justice (EJ)⁵² and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964⁵³ beyond long-standing understandings of the legal limits of that authority. As a threshold matter, there is an opportunity to redefine EJ as a tool for the agency to prioritize environmental protection efforts and assistance to communities in proximity to pollution or with the greatest need for additional protection. Allocations of agency resources, increased EPA enforcement, and/or agency distribution of grants should be based on neutral constitutional principles.

In 2023, the Supreme Court is expected to provide guidance on the constitutionality of race-based discrimination as it considers *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina*.⁵⁴ Accordingly, the next Administration should pause and review all ongoing EJ and Title VI actions to ensure that they are consistent with any forthcoming SCOTUS decision.

3. The Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR). OEJECR was established during the Biden Administration. EJ and civil rights functions were taken from OGC and moved into a stand-alone office as well as spread through the regions. OEJECR should be disbanded; OEJECR's attorneys should be moved back into OGC; and nonlegal staff (for example, EJ Policy Advisers) should be moved back into the Administrator's office as is customary.

What's next?

At PDEQ:

- We haven't heard back from OEJECR since August
- Our reporting and tracking requirements will go into the ether
- We intend to continue to follow the plans because *meaningful public participation* remains our north star.

Questions?

Contact

Abigail.Okrent@pima.gov Sarah.Hite@pima.gov

Websites:

Civil Rights | Pima County, AZ: www.pima.gov/3195

Public Participation Process + Content for Public Review | Pima County, AZ: www.pima.gov/3361