

Community Engagement Subcommittee

Key recommendations

These recommendations address common barriers to meaningful community engagement, based on a list developed by the Community Engagement Subcommittee, with input from members of the public. See Appendix C of the Community Engagement Plan Guidance.

1. Each agency develops a community engagement plan, which must include the elements outlined in our Community Engagement Plan Guidance.
2. Agencies evaluate new and existing services and programs for community engagement using a systematic process to determine outreach goals. These evaluations weigh the goals of the service or program, potential for its impact on the public, its importance to the community/ies being impacted, and the makeup of the impacted community. These evaluations determine:
 - The agency's level of engagement for the project.
 - The potential for outcomes the public can see from their engagement in the process.Agencies then communicate both determinations in their outreach process. Example evaluation tools are attached in Appendix A and B of the Community Engagement Plan Guidance.
3. When planning outreach activities, agencies use screening tools that integrate spatial, demographic, and health disparities data to understand the nature and needs of the audience such as the Task Force's recommended use of the Environmental Health Disparities Map for area assessments. This screening is followed by further research with local people or organizations as needed.
4. When agency decisions have potential to significantly impact a specific community (as determined by the evaluation described above in item 2), agencies work with representatives of that community to identify outreach and communication methods. Significant impact includes potential changes to critical determinants of health such as legal rights, finances, housing, and safety. It is particularly valuable to include community members in oversight, advisory, program planning, and other processes. Washington's Department of Health [community health worker](#) program serves as one model.
5. When agencies ask for representation from a specific geographical or cultural community, the agencies actively support such representation in recognition of the costs of engagement borne by community members. Doing so would reduce barriers to engagement presented by trading time and/or money to learn about and engage in the agency's process, such as taking time from work, finding child care, and arranging for transportation.
6. Agencies use equity-focused hiring practices and inclusion-focused professional development to build and support an internal staff that represents the cultural and racial makeup of the population they serve.

7. Agencies consistently integrate engagement with Tribal and Indigenous peoples into their outreach work when a program or service has potential to impact these groups or their resources, using tailored approaches based on the needs of the Tribe. Note that engagement is not a substitute for formal government-to-government consultation.
8. Agencies integrate compliance with existing laws and policies that guide community engagement into the budgets of agency services and programs:
 - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national origin and requiring meaningful access to people with limited English proficiency
 - Executive Order 05-03 requiring Plain Talk when communicating with the public
 - Executive Order 13166, requiring meaningful access to agency programs and services for people with limited English proficiency

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