

## Equity Analysis Plan Digest: Department of Justice

*Summarized by Travis Reginal*

This is one in a series of Urban Institute digests summarizing federal agencies', subagencies', and commissions' 2022 equity action plans, which were released in response to the Biden administration's January 2021 executive order, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government. The Department of Justice's equity action plan is available at <https://www.justice.gov/equity>.

### Overview

<b>What problem is the agency trying to solve?</b>	The Department of Justice is aiming to remove barriers to equitable outcomes in accessing federal financial assistance, in improving language accessibility of DOJ communications, in engaging stakeholders, and in receiving supportive procurements and contracting (p. 1)
<b>Priority groups:</b>	Culturally specific, community-based organizations; <a href="#">HUBZone small businesses</a>
<b>Historic harm mentioned?</b>	No
<b>Partners in implementation</b>	Civil Rights Division; the local offices of the agency
<b>Equity defined as:</b>	"Equal justice under the law" and "ensuring that no one is denied the freedoms and protections guaranteed by the Constitution" (p. 1)

### Pillars and Principles of Equity

<b>Acknowledgement of past harm and present barriers</b>	Culturally specific and tribal organizations tend to struggle when competing for funding that is geared toward the broader field (p. 7); culturally specific and tribal organizations tend to receive awards primarily under a limited bucket of funds aimed at culturally specific groups (p. 8)
<b>Impact goals</b>	Increased prevalence of equity considerations in DOJ funding (p. 6); increased opportunity of access for culturally specific, community-based organizations (p. 7); remove language barriers that prevent some communities from accessing DOJ programs and funding (p. 8)
<b>Actions and activities</b>	Targeted outreach to culturally specific, community-based organizations (p. 7); creation of intra-agency working group on language access (p. 8); ongoing listening sessions with community stakeholders (p. 11); develop case-specific stakeholder engagement plans (p. 11)
<b>Accountability measures and approaches</b>	Increasing the use of body-worn cameras (p. 4); progress reported in FY 2022 report to Congress (p. 8); publish language access work publicly (p. 10); stakeholder engagement surveys (p. 12)

**Note:** For the rubric we used to evaluate these components of the equity action plans, see the appendix to the Urban Institute's 2023 brief "Pathways to Equity at Scale: An Analysis of the 2022 Federal Equity Action Plans and Recommendations for 2023 Plans," available at [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/Pathways%20to%20Equity%20at%20Scale%20Appendix\\_0.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/Pathways%20to%20Equity%20at%20Scale%20Appendix_0.pdf).

## Types of Equity and Related Activities

<b>Procedural</b> (example: expanding language and translation services; simplifying the vendor application process)	Add equity considerations to solicitations (p. 5); prioritize funding for culturally specific, community-based organizations (p. 7); provide technical assistance for culturally specific, community-based organizations (p. 7); make solicitations easier to navigate for culturally specific, community-based organizations (p. 7)
<b>Distributional</b> (example: creating new procurement program)	Pilot data-collection program focused on identifying disparities in access to and delivery of services (p. 5); new training on hate crimes (p. 9); using person-first and inclusive language to reduce stigma of marginalized groups (p. 9); developing long-term relationships with community organizations that are led by marginalized populations (p. 11)
<b>Structural</b> (example: policy change via proposing legislation related to an equity goal; changing organizational functions)	Limiting the use of chokeholds, restricting no-knock warrants, and increasing the use of body-worn cameras (p. 3); hiring a language access coordinator (p. 9); increasing awareness of DOJ staff on how to access interpretation services (p. 9); holding listening sessions with historically marginalized populations to inform policy recommendations (p. 11)

## Key Metrics to Measure Progress on Equity

- number of programs in equity-focused data-collection pilot (p. 6)
- number of programs that add Title VI and other civil rights data-collection requirements or equity-performance measures (p. 6)
- percentage of applications from, and the percentage of grants awarded to, culturally specific, community-based organizations (p. 7)
- number of calls offering limited-English-proficiency support services (p. 9)
- web views of public-facing content in different languages (p. 9)
- number of relevant stakeholder engagement events and alliances (p. 12)
- percentage of DOJ contracting dollars awarded to HUBZone firms with the goal of at least 3 percent (p. 12)
- each of DOJ's major procuring bureaus will "identify at least two contracting opportunities for HUBZone small business each fiscal year for 4 years" (p. 13)

## Looking Ahead: Key Reflections for Plan Implementation

Where is the agency set up for success?	Diversifying grantees; improving language access
Areas for future investment and growth	Rethinking public safety; addressing historical and present harm perpetuated by the DOJ; addressing areas of disparities, such as investigation and prosecution of offenses; restructuring federal clemency review practices; building trust by acknowledging the DOJ's role in creating barriers to its mission of advancing equal justice; identifying external partners and key stakeholders; adding staff to support new equity initiatives; defined tracking of improvements to stakeholder engagement with underserved populations