

# Equity Impact Assessment (EIA)



## What is an Equity Impact Assessment?

A **process** used in decision-making that follows a list of formalized steps to intentionally identify and reduce potential harm for racial/ethnic minorities and other marginalized populations by engaging authentically with priority populations and stakeholders to co-create and increase equitable outcomes.

An **outcome** and opportunity to reduce and eliminate racial/health disparities, enact harm reduction, and advance equity for all.

MDHHS has adapted the Government Alliance for Race and Equity's (GARE) Racial Equity Impact Assessment model for use in Michigan.<sup>1</sup>

## Why use the EIA process?

The EIA Process is designed to respond to the racial disparities and root causes of health and racial inequity that are produced through programs, processes, practices, policies, budgetary and other decisions. Inequities in service outcomes are often unintentionally embedded into government systems and may be amplified by the implicit bias of government decision makers. Bias is baked into all facets of society and operates both individually and institutionally. Although the EIA Process does not create enforceable rights, this process tool reduces bias when assessing and creating operations and produces explicit considerations that can result in better outcomes for racial, ethnic, and other marginalized populations. Without intentional intervention, institutions and structures will continue to perpetuate racial inequities.

## When to use the EIA process?

This process can be used to inform a variety of externally facing decisions, such as changes in government policies or regulations, budget allocations, and new program design. It is not designed for use in internal operations, such as hiring or promotion. It is most effective when used early in the development/decision-making process, and often is used over a period of time as new issues are identified.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Nelson, J. & Brooks, L. (2015). Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity. Government Alliance on Race and Equity.

# EIA Process Questions



## Step 1 Data

- Are you using both quantitative as well as qualitative data, including storytelling?
- What is the top 1 or 2 disparities revealed by your data study?
- Are social determinants of equity associated with the disparity/ies?



## Step 2 Root Cause Analysis & Problem Statement

- What types of disparities and inequities have historically and contemporarily affected the intended populations?
- What are the deep-rooted causes of the problem, not the symptoms?



## Step 3 Engagement of Priority Populations and Stakeholders

- How will you ensure communities of color and those who are marginalized are engaged, from start to finish, in the decision making as equal partners at the table?
- Are strategies culturally and linguistically competent?



## Step 4 Proposal

- What strategies will you promote to advance racial equity or mitigate consequences?
- What is the decision under consideration and what is the desired result/outcome?
- What is the policy, program, practice or budget decision under consideration?



## Step 5 Test and Data Analysis

- Is your implementation process equitable, sustainable and culturally and linguistically competent?
- Who is benefiting or being burdened by your proposal? Were the disparities positively affected?



## Step 6 Standardization, Accountability and Communication

- How will you engage priority populations and stakeholders in guiding the review, communication, and evaluation of the final product and outcomes?
- How will you guarantee trust is being built and maintained with intended audience?