



Sharing the Successes and Failures of Starting a Justice Focused Climate & Health Program

Speakers



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Presentation Overview



WA's
Climate &
Health
Program

Examples of WA
State Climate
Justice & Health
Equity Work

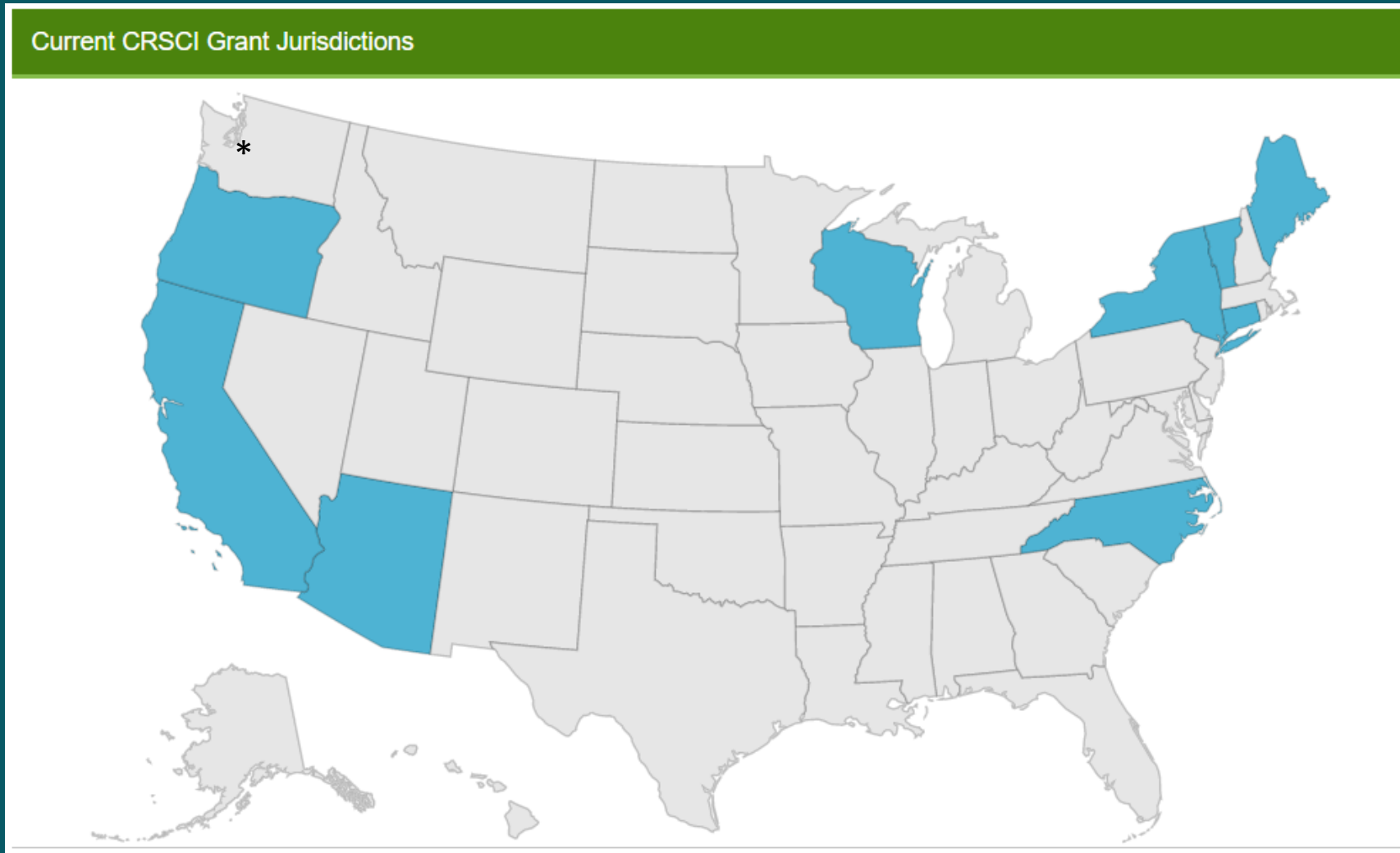
Healthy
Environment
for All (HEAL)
Act

Climate &
Health
Adaptation
Initiative (CHAI)

Starting a Climate & Health Section

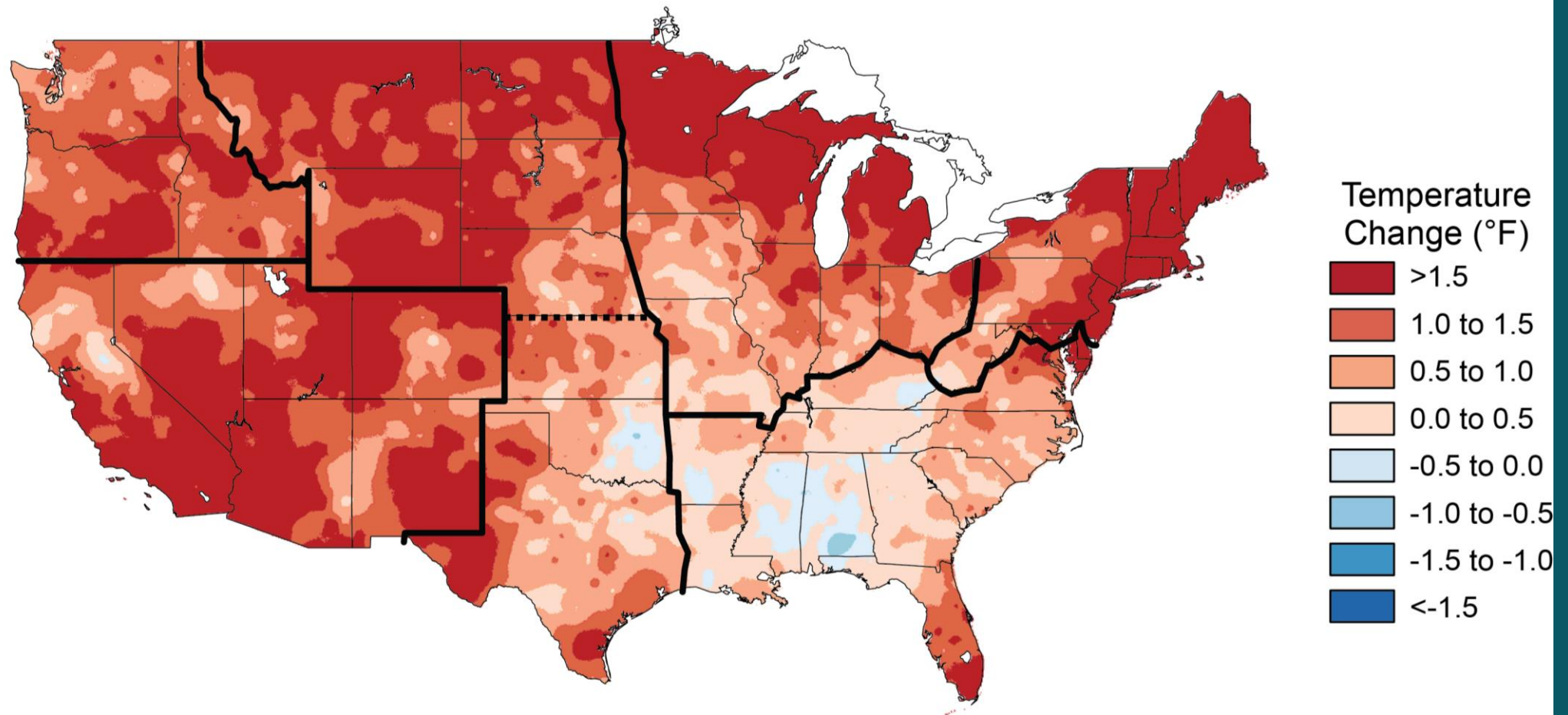
Our Origin Story & Other
Climate and Health Section
Structures

CDC Funded Climate and Health Programs

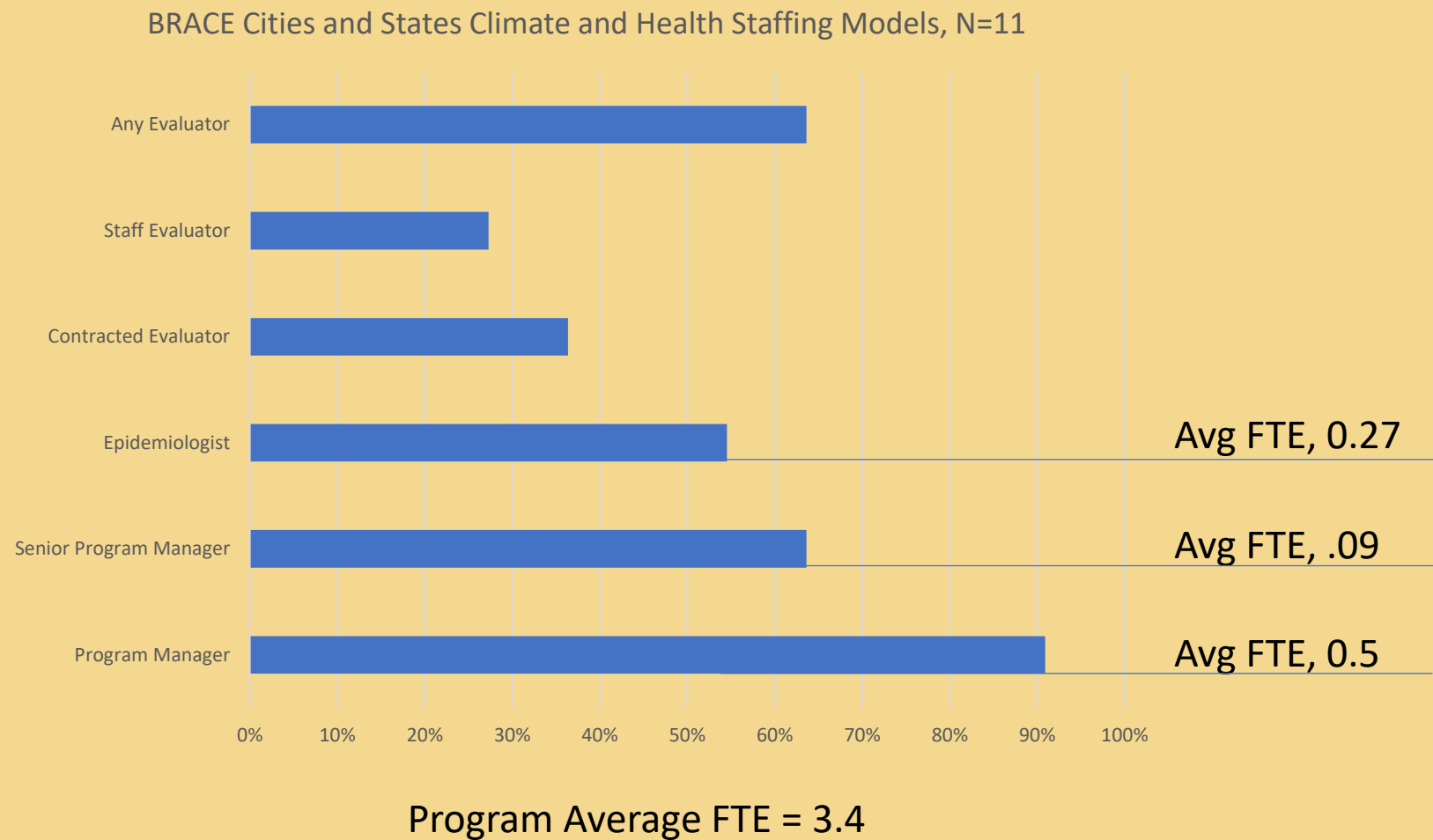


* First failure; unsuccessful BRACE grant application

Observed U.S. Temperature Change

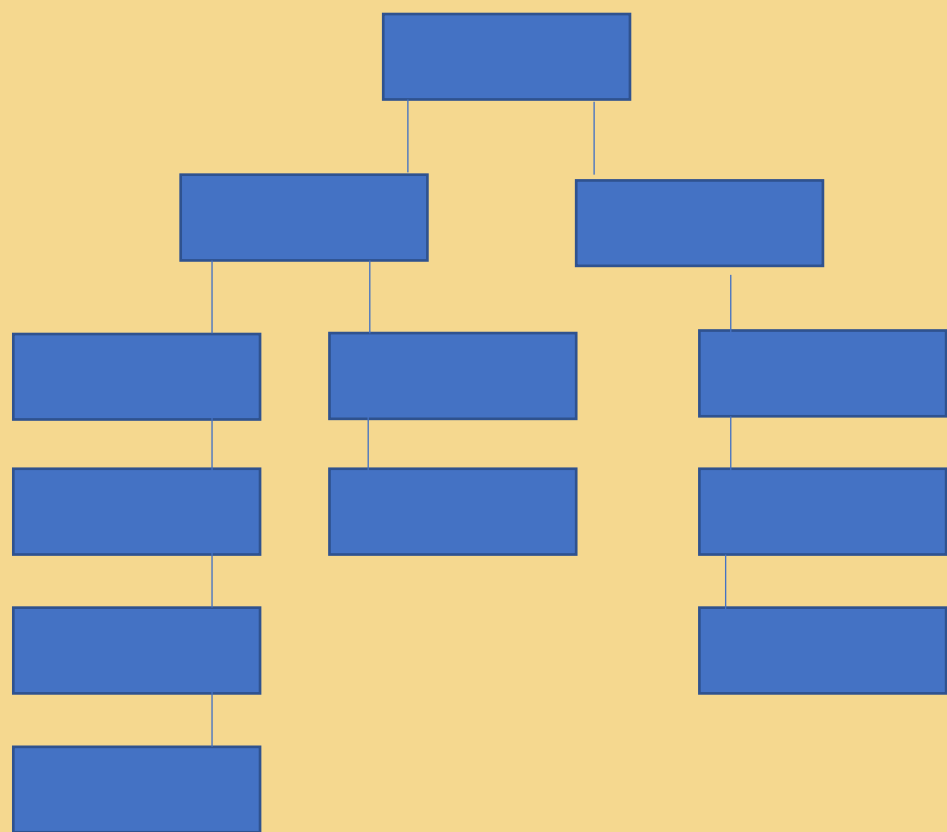


How are CDC Funded Climate Programs Staffed?



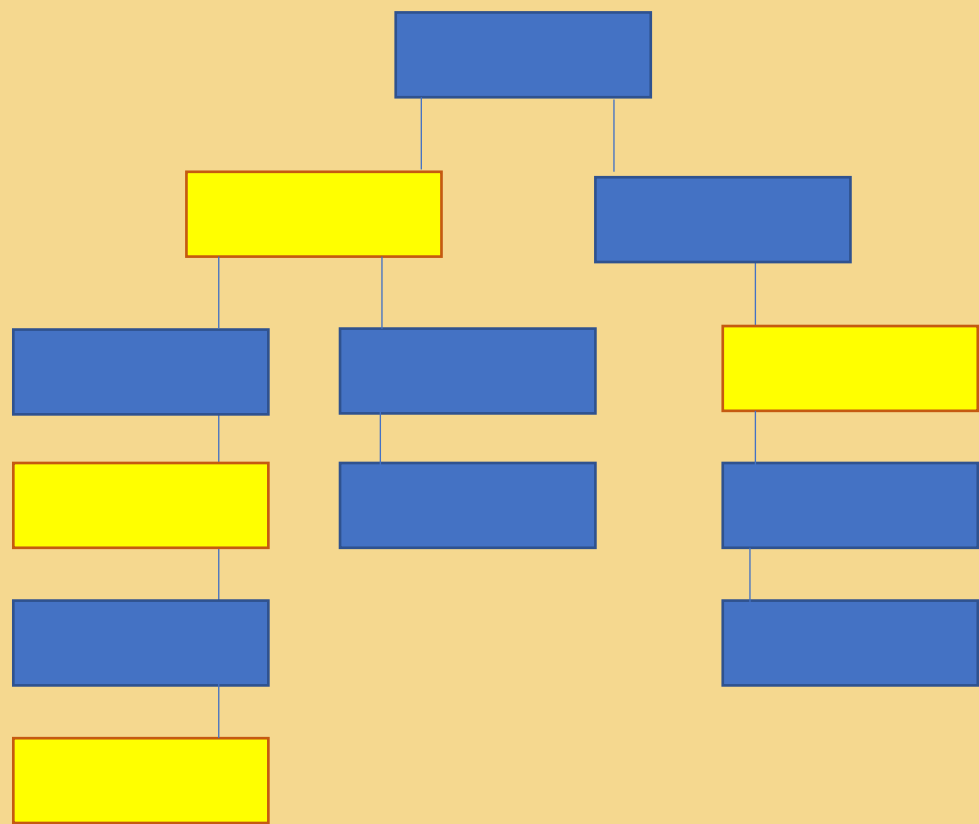
How to Create a Climate and Health Program for Free

Existing Division Structure



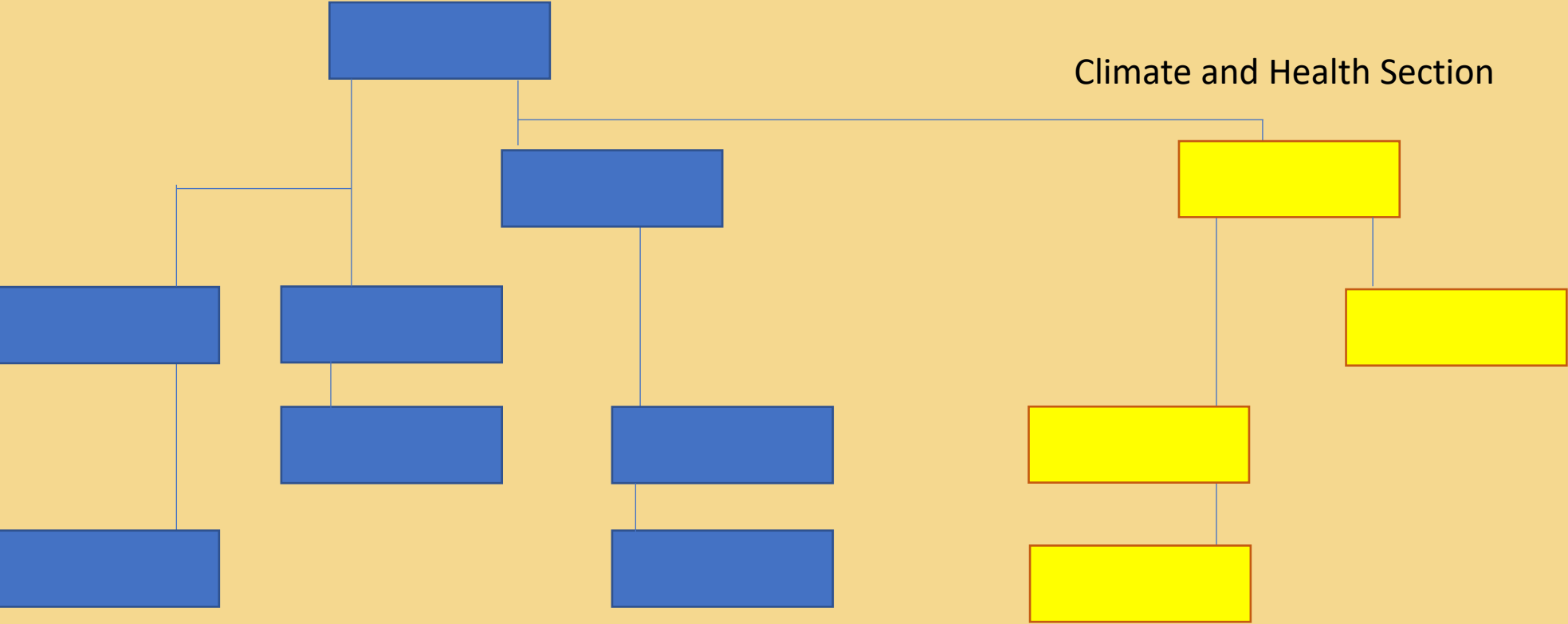
How to Create a Climate and Health Program for Free

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How to Create a Climate and Health Program for Free

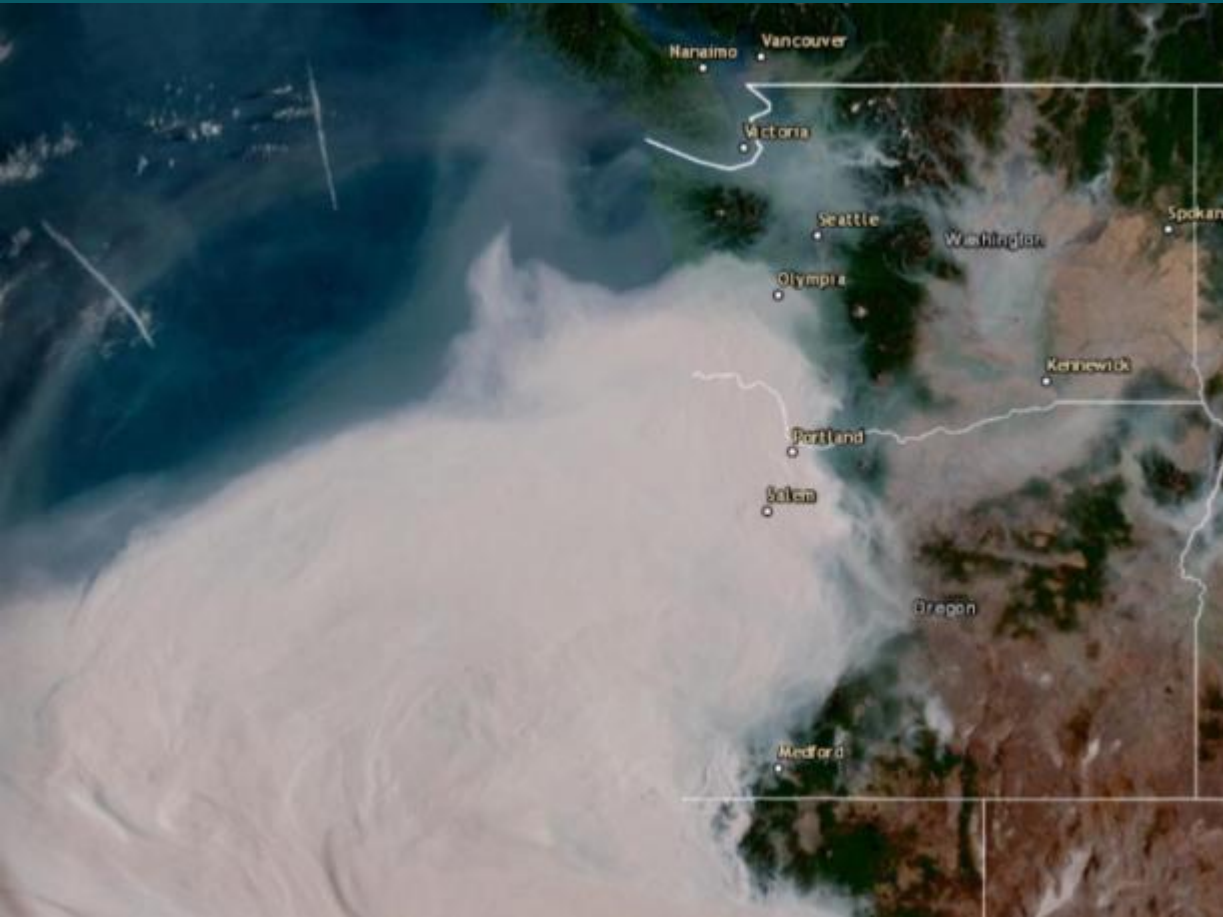
New Division Structure



Where We Are Now

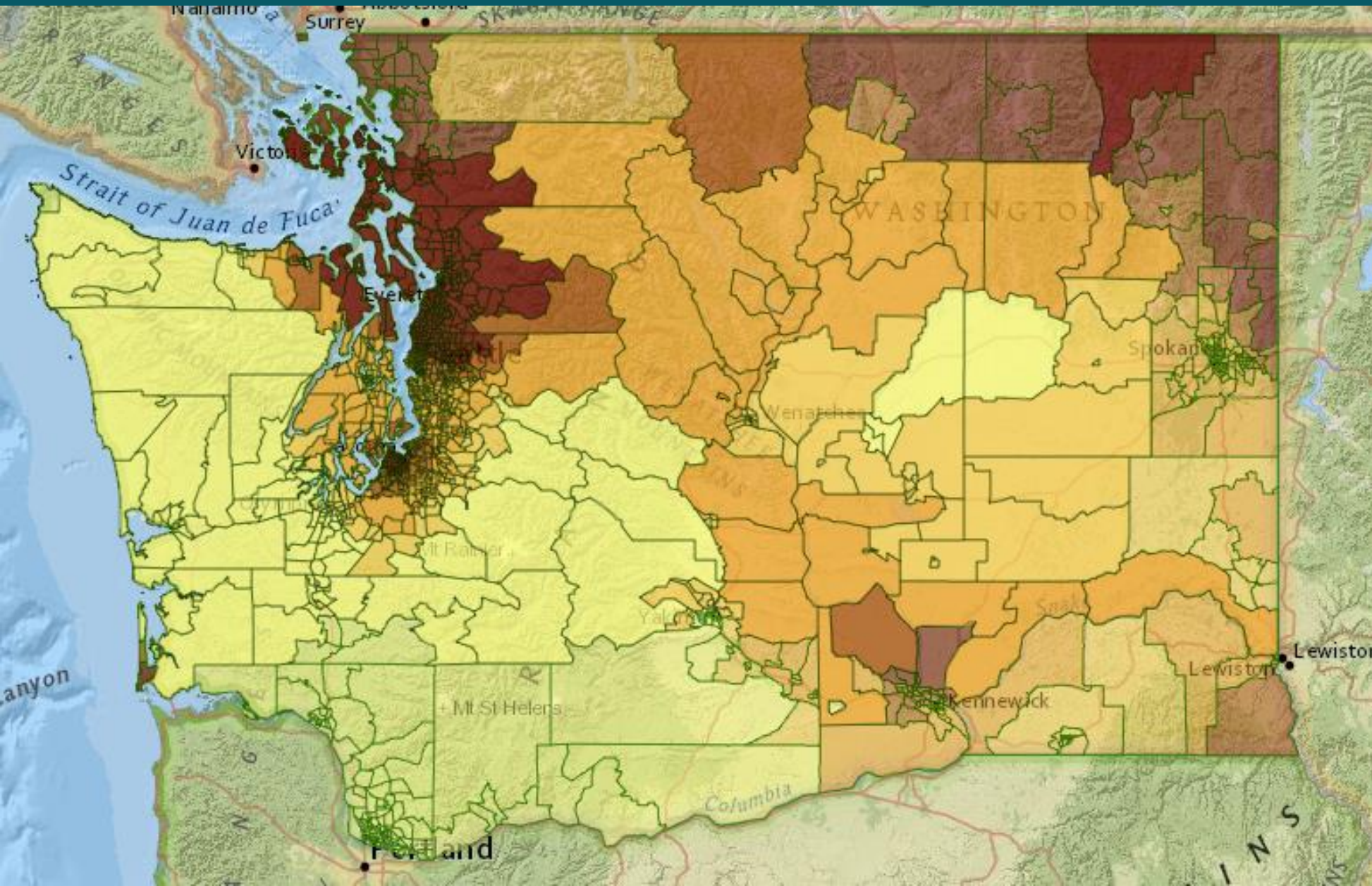


Shifting Priorities: Current Public Health Practice



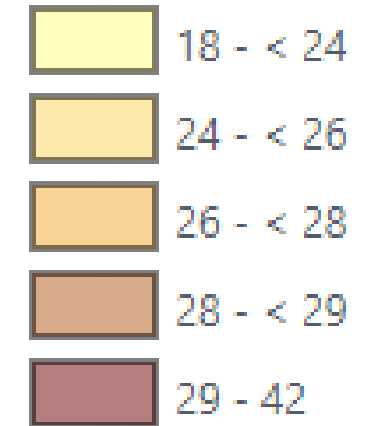
Sources: WA Dept of Ecology, Mother Jones , WNW Toxic Algae

Shifting Priorities: Projections



Legend (Measure 1)

Days Over Threshold



Source: Washington
Tracking Network,
Annual Days Over
99th Percentile
Historical
Temperature
Threshold

Shifting Priorities: Adaptation and Resilience

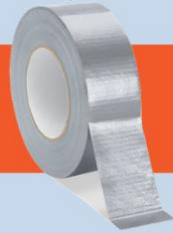
DIY FILTER FAN

MATERIALS:

20" X 20" Box Fan



Heavy Duty
Tape



20" X 20"
Air Filter (MERV13 or FPR 10)

Public Health
Seattle & King County

When in doubt,
STAY OUT!

Toxic algae blooms happen in this lake

Avoid areas of scum

Toxic algae, also called cyanobacteria, can make you and your pets very sick. Algae blooms can look like scum, streaks or clumps in the water.

For more information or to report a bloom:
<http://granthhealth.org> | 509-766-7960

Public Health
Seattle & King County



Funding | Leadership

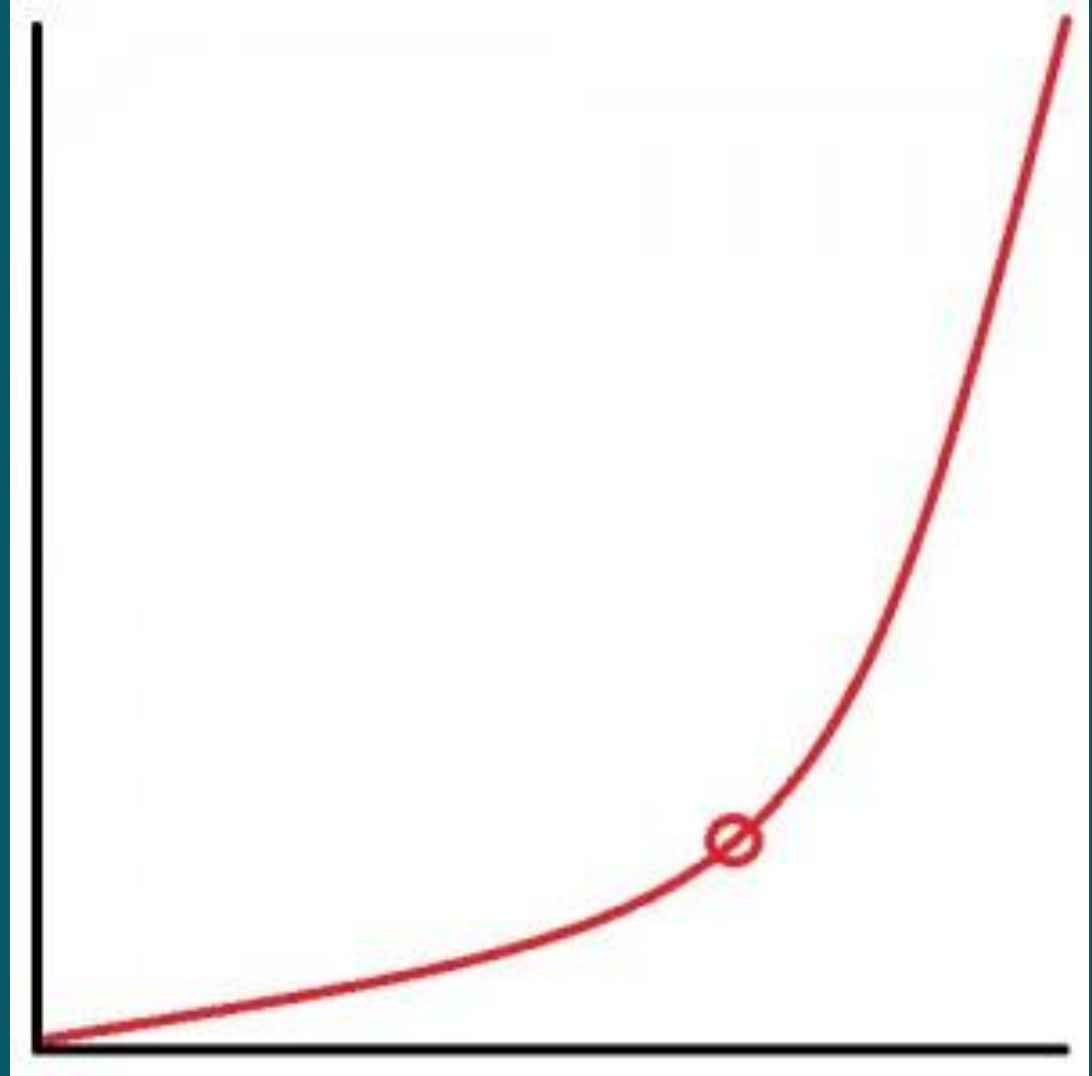
- National Environmental Health Association – Climate Health Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership (CHAMP)
 - Foundational Public Health Services
 - State general fund
 - CDC Environmental Health Capacity Grant
 - Funding through local partners
- *Many existing climate-sensitive hazards and exposures are underfunded



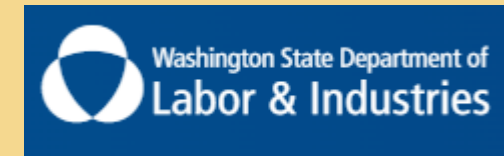
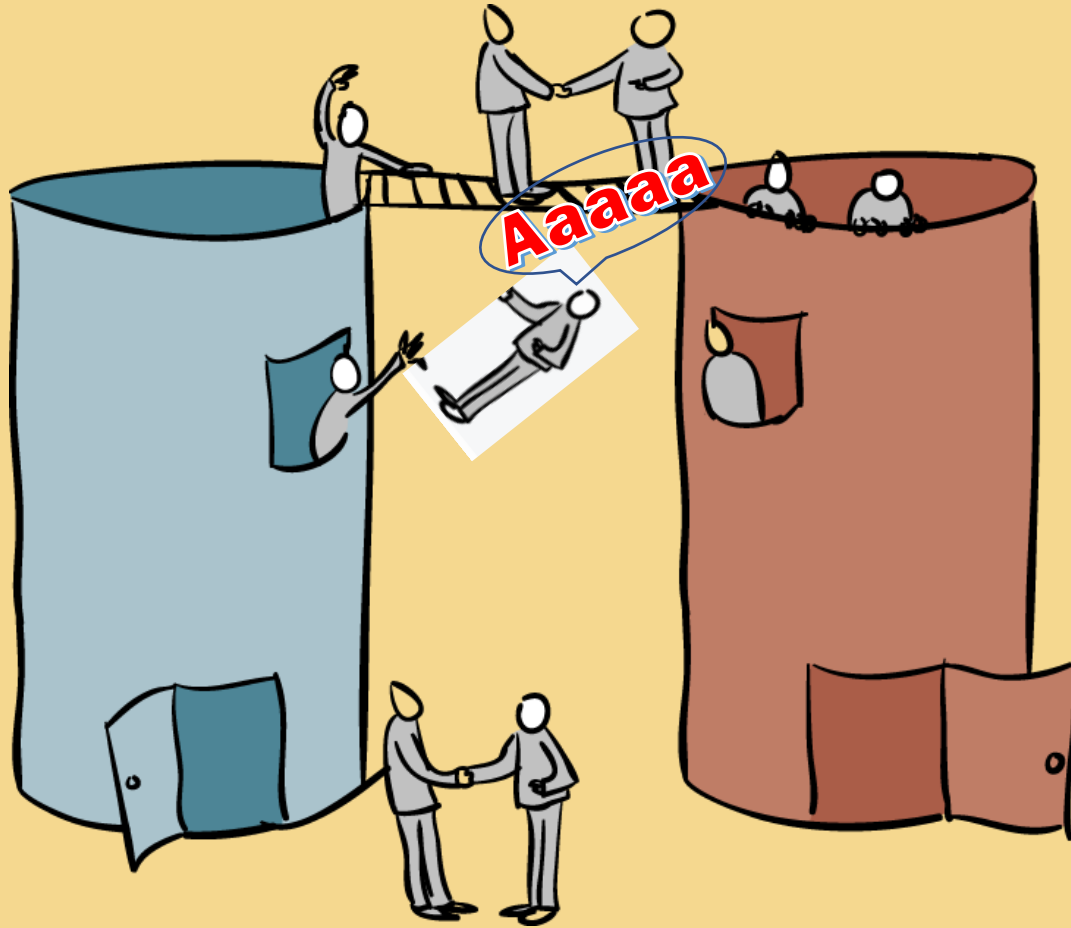
Funding | Leadership

Foundational Public Health Services

A New Vision for Washington State



Challenges: Public Health Role



Challenges: Health Washing



Logic Model

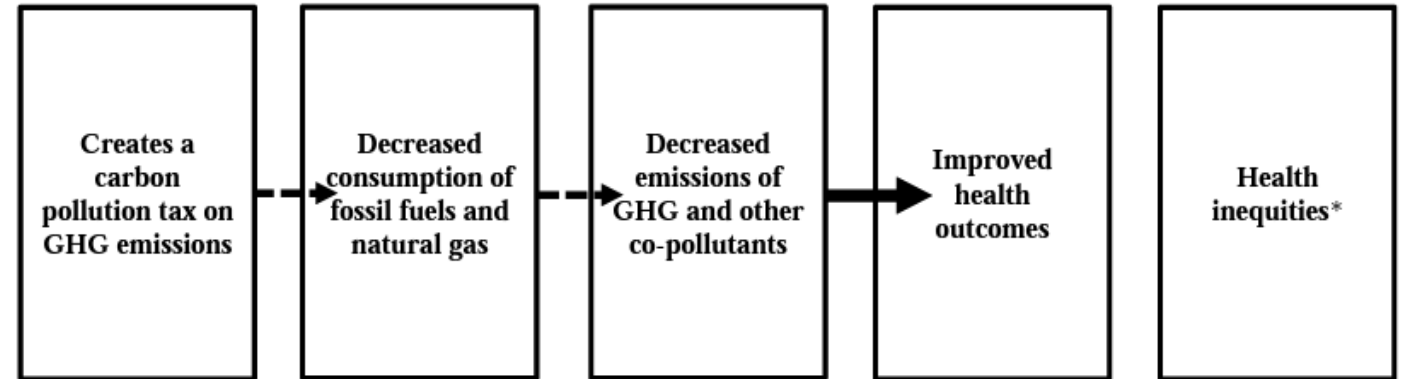
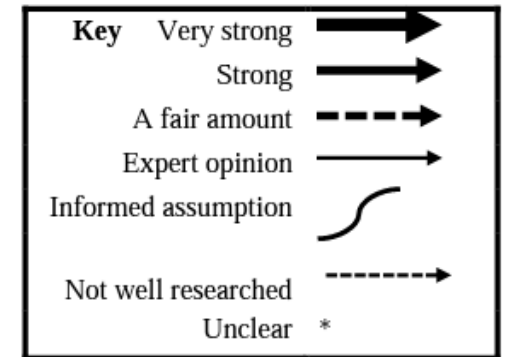


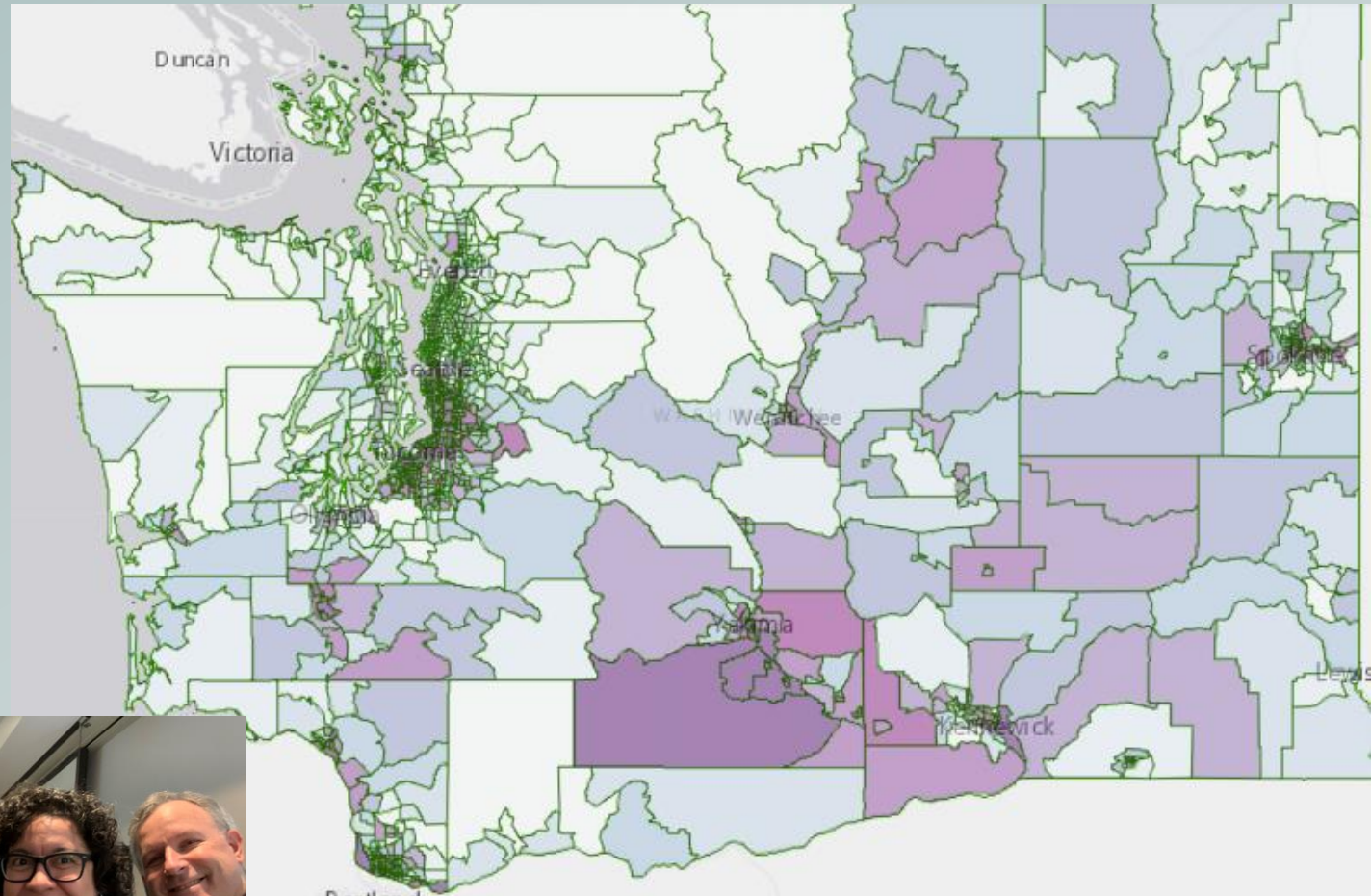
Figure 1:

Improving environmental health by reducing carbon emissions through increasing climate resilience and mitigating the effects of climate change by levying a carbon pollution tax, authorizing a climate finance bond program, and investing in clean economic growth

HB 1513



Environmental Health for All



"Public health is at a crisis point. With a changing climate, ensuring basic public health services for every person in every location within our lifetime is the true measure of public health success".

– Lauren Jenks, Assistant Secretary
EPH, WA DOH



Least impacted							Most impacted		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities	10% of communities
70% of communities are less impacted							are similarly impacted	20% of communities are more impacted	

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

TRANSFORMATIONAL PLAN

A VISION FOR HEALTH IN WASHINGTON STATE

GLOBAL AND ONE HEALTH

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND
RESILIENCE



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

HEALTH SYSTEMS AND
WORKFORCE TRANSFORMATION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

CORNERSTONE VALUES: EQUITY • INNOVATION • ENGAGEMENT
VISION: EQUITY AND OPTIMAL HEALTH FOR ALL





VISION

All Washingtonians will thrive in a broad range of healthy environments — natural, built, and social.

COMMITMENT

We will lead broad efforts that address external factors impacting health, safety, and well-being, recognize the intersection of people, animals, and environment, and incorporate principles of **environmental justice** and shared responsibility for community health.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. **Support** systems and policies that promote optimal individual and community health by investing in proactive efforts to advance a broad range of healthy environments and interactions where people live, learn, work, worship, and play.
2. **Ensure** our policies, planning, and programming incorporate environmental justice principles with the goal of reducing health inequities and promoting community well-being.
3. **Incorporate** data-driven approaches and community engagement strategies, assets and strengths, into public health and response planning efforts aimed at **building resilience** against the health and social impacts of **climate change** and other environmental challenges.
4. **Ensure** communities likely to bear the worst **climate-related** and environmental health impacts have **resources and support to foster resilient communities** that promote true health and well-being.
5. **Support** initiatives that promote safe and active living, commuting and recreation **reduce greenhouse gas emissions**, and increase community cohesion.
6. **Communicate** and **promote** the health benefits of behavior change and interventions that protect our environment, while ensuring equitable access to health opportunities through robust data systems and information sharing.

ENSURING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE








Discussion Time!

1. What comes to mind when you try to define / explain climate justice?
2. Are you able to explicitly talk about & work to address climate change in your work?
 - If not, what have you found to be successful in working around this challenge?
 - If so, how?
3. Are you able to explicitly talk about & work to advance anti-racism & equity in your public health / climate change / environmental / sustainability work?
 - If not, how are you working around this?
 - If so, how are you prioritizing environmental and climate justice?


Climate Justice & Health Equity

What is public health's role in
advancing climate justice?

Examples of Health Consequences from a Changing Climate

	Climate Driver	Exposure	Health Outcome
 Extreme Heat	More frequent, severe, prolonged heat events	Elevated temperatures	Heat-related death and illness
 Outdoor Air Quality	Increasing temperatures and changing precipitation patterns	Worsened air quality (ozone, particulate matter, and higher pollen counts)	Premature death, acute and chronic cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses
 Flooding	Rising sea level and more frequent or intense extreme precipitation, hurricanes, and storm surge events	Contaminated water, debris, and disruptions to essential infrastructure	Drowning, injuries, mental health consequences, gastrointestinal and other illness

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Drivers, Exposures, and Outcomes
are unevenly felt & worsening
health inequities

The Urgent Need to Lead with Climate Justice

Climate change adds to existing health inequities in communities and populations least responsible for the climate crisis.

Drivers of Climate Inequities in the US

- Racism & Discrimination
- Environmental injustices
- Poverty
- High-risk occupations
- Pre-existing health needs
- Limited English proficiency



A photograph of a forest path with sunlight filtering through the trees. The path is a light-colored, winding trail that leads into a dense forest. Sunlight beams through the canopy, creating a warm, golden glow. The trees are tall and slender, with green foliage. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

“Transition is inevitable. Justice is not.”

Justice & Ecology Project

**Meaningful
community
engagement**

WA's Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act Goals

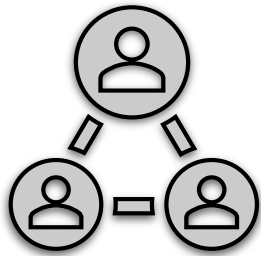
- Implement many of WA's EJ Task Force recommendations
- Incorporate EJ into state agency decision-making processes
- Improve state government accountability to communities
- Create consistent & accessible pathways for community to be meaningfully involved in government decision making processes

Environmental Justice Task Force *Recommendations for Prioritizing EJ in Washington State Government*

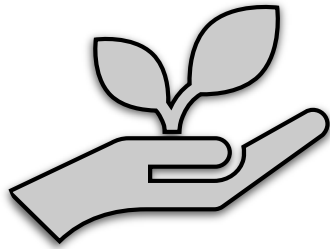
Fall 2020



HEAL Obligations for WA State Agencies



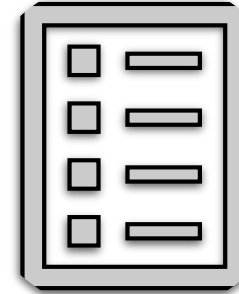
Adopt
community
engagement
plans



Incorporate EJ
into agency
strategic plans



Incorporate EJ
into budget &
funding
decisions



Conduct EJ
assessments

Environmental Justice Council

Environmental Justice Interagency Work Group

And beyond

2023

2022

2021



Climate Justice in Action at WA DOH

Implementing HEAL Act & Climate Justice Priorities Concurrently

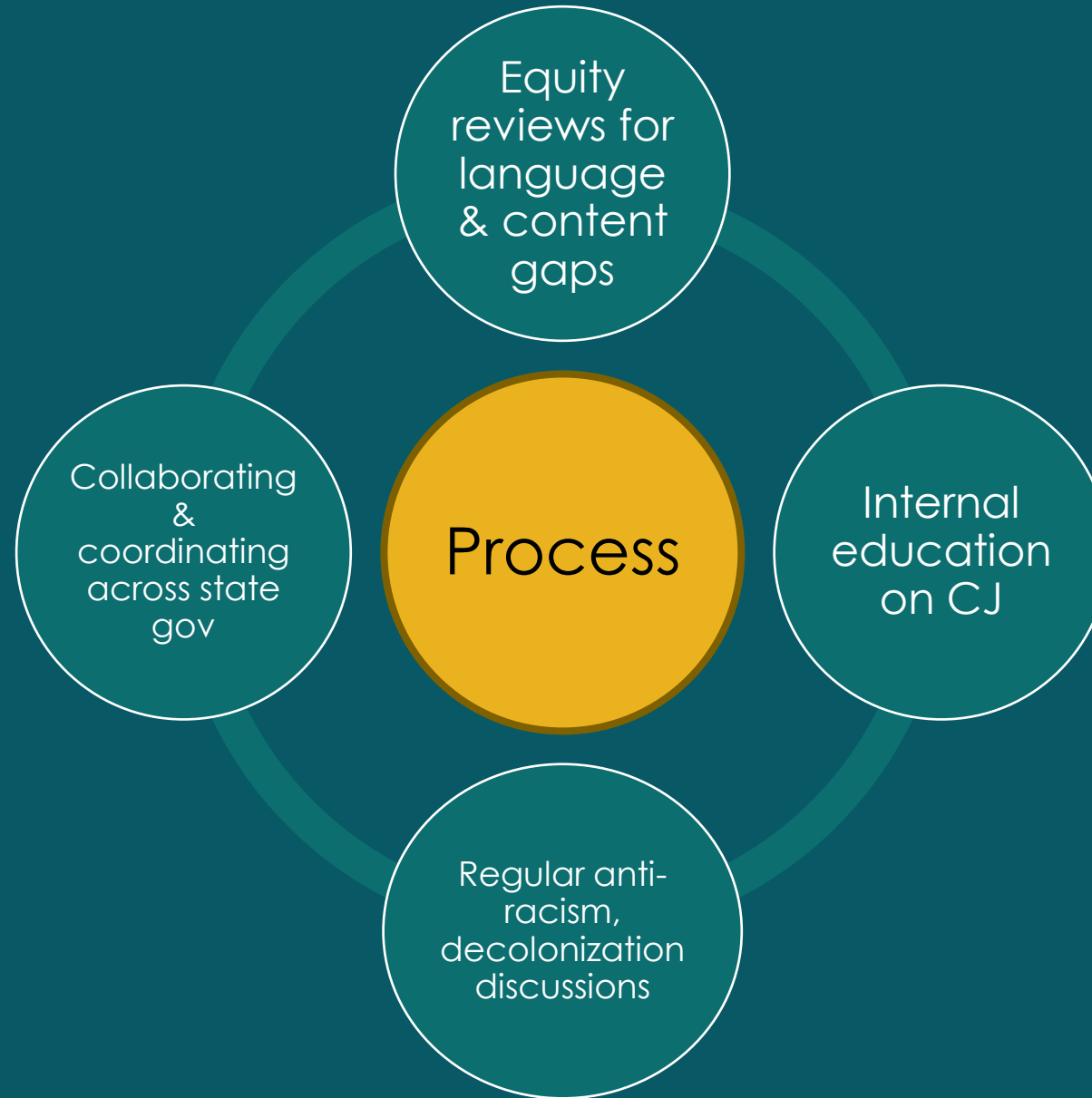
Building out a Climate Justice Position

Leadership
buy-in

LISTENING:
Building
relationships &
trust

Implementing
community
climate justice
priorities

Internal Priorities for Climate Justice



Climate & Health Adaptation Initiative (CHAI)

Bringing Partners Together to
Resource Community Climate &
Health Priorities

Climate & Health Adaptation Initiative (CHAI)

Mission

- Assist & resource communities that have the fewest opportunities for living healthy lives in a changing climate.

Process

- Bottom-up
- Relationships first
- Community-driven timeline

Regions of Focus Have

- Existing climate plans & some local capacity to implement plans
- High risk/occurrence of climate-related health impacts
- Communities with environmental justice concerns
- High % BIPOC and/or low-income communities
- Tribes & Tribal lands

Initial CHAI Regions in WA



Pierce County

Extreme heat, wildfire smoke, sea level rise

- Funding development of county health dept. heat & smoke plan
- Coordinating across City/County/Tribal plans



Clallam/Jefferson Counties

Landslides, flooding, wildfires, energy, disaster preparedness

- Identifying funding mechanisms for climate & health priorities
- Public health education for climate change practitioners



City of Spokane

Extreme heat & wildfire smoke

- Building capacity for their *Beat the Heat Program*
- Supporting public engagement & education re: heat & smoke

Initial CHAI Regions in WA

Environmental Justice & Climate Justice & Health Equity



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Questions?

Working together for a healthier tomorrow...



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