

July 21, 2023

TO: Environmental Justice Council Members

FROM: Environmental Justice Council Executive Committee

RE: Proposed Interim Policy for Non-Tribal EJC Member Support Person for Committee Work

We recognize the dire need to quickly resolve capacity inequities within the Environmental Justice Council (EJC) and the Members' ability to fully participate in EJC committee work. Note that the workload and capacity issues for the Tribal Representatives were addressed by guidance from the Governor's office on February 1, 2023 (see Appendix A).

We appreciate the input that we received from Council Members and have moved away from the original concept of a "delegate" to stating the actual need for a "support person."

Therefore, we are proposing this interim policy on Non-Tribal EJC Member support person for committee work.

Equity Issues:

The hardship is caused by inequitable workload and the lack of guidance on Council Member allowable support as follows:

1. Inequitable workload. The HEAL Act looks to the EJC to bring community voices in developing HEAL Act implementation guidance, resulting in greater capacity required and added pressure to ensure Non-Tribal EJC representatives can amplify constituent voices and participate in committees.
2. Inequitable exhaustion experienced by Non-Tribal EJC Members who are already stretched and at high risk for burnout.
3. Inequity within the EJC with only Tribal representatives and Ex Officio Members able to have support.

Interim Policy:

Therefore:

1. The Non-Tribal EJC Members may bring or send a support person to a committee meeting where no formal action is taken pursuant to RCW 42.30.020 of the Open Public Meeting Act.
2. The support person may be a paid or unpaid person from the Non-Tribal EJC Member's organization, coalition, and/or their ally network(s). They must have the relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities appropriate to the committee work.
3. When the Non-Tribal EJC Member is attending the committee meeting, the support person can take notes and will not participate in the committee discussion.
4. When the Non-Tribal EJC Member is absent, the support person can participate in the discussion and assist in formulating committee recommendations.
5. This interim policy will be in effect until the Governance Committee recommends and the EJC adopts a regular policy on supplementing Non-Tribal EJC Members' capacity to fully participate in committee work.
6. The EJC Executive Committee acknowledges that the Governance Committee can recommend, and the EJC can adopt, an EJC standard for Council Member attendance and participation.
7. Members will notify the full Council the name of their support person before inviting them to join any committee meeting.