



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Rule Implementation Plan

Public Participation Grants

Chapter 173-321 WAC

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Publication and Contact Information

This report is available on the Department of Ecology's website at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/1707012.html>

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Ecology publishes this document to meet the requirements of the Washington State Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.325)

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Purpose

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) provides the information in this implementation plan to meet agency and Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.328) requirements related to rule adoptions.

Introduction

On June 28, 2017, Ecology adopted amendments to Chapter 173-321 WAC Public Participation Grants (AO # 16-13). The purpose of this rule implementation plan is to inform those who must comply with chapter 173-321 WAC about how Ecology intends to:

- Implement and enforce the rule.
- Inform and educate persons affected by the rule.
- Promote and assist voluntary compliance for the rule.
- Evaluate the rule.
- Train and inform Ecology staff about the new or amended rule.

Also included in this plan is information about:

- Supporting documents that may need to be written or revised because of the new rule or amended rule.
- Other resources where more information about the rule is available.
- Contact information for Ecology employees who can answer questions about the rule implementation.

Implementation and enforcement

The rule outlines the requirements for administering the Public Participation Grants (PPG) Program and does not have an enforcement element. Ecology's Waste 2 Resources staff will be responsible for implementing the rule. Amendments to the rule result in minor changes to the overall structure of the program. Changes in implementation are primarily administrative due to the use of Ecology's on line Administration of Grants and Loans (EAGL) system.

Informing and educating persons affected by the rule

Ecology will continue to notify all interested parties of the rule changes including the PPG ListServ, tribal communities, and EPA's Environmental Justice ListServ. There will be an increased emphasis on outreach to underserved communities due to rule changes prioritizing projects in highly impacted communities. Ecology is required to provide notification of the application process statewide and will provide webinar training to potential applicants. Ecology also offers to meet with any potential applicant for up to one hour of technical assistance on project development.

Promoting and assisting voluntary compliance

The rule does not contain a formal enforcement component. Instead, grant recipients are required to follow all grant requirements in order to continue to receive funding. Recipients are required to submit quarterly progress reports so Ecology can evaluate grant compliance. Rule changes require Ecology to evaluate recipient's performance at the end of the first fiscal year in order to

authorize the second year of grant funding. Ecology will provide training to all potential applicants as well as training and technical assistance to grant recipients.

Evaluating the rule

The rule will be first tested during the application and evaluation process for the 2017-19 grant cycle. Many changes centered on eligibility and application evaluation criteria. One of the purposes of the changes was to increase outreach to underserved communities. Ecology is required to describe the application outreach and selection process when the grant recipients are announced to the public. Ecology will meet with the PPG Advisory Committee to discuss the outcome of the selection process to get feedback for the next grant cycle. The advisory committee is comprised of external stakeholders, Ecology's Environmental Justice coordinator, and Toxic Cleanup Program staff.

Ecology is also required to publish a report at the conclusion of the grant cycle (end of the biennium) outlining the program performance. The report will include, at a minimum, the type and location of grant projects and the outcomes achieved.

Training and informing Ecology staff

There is one fulltime PPG staff who will be trained on administering grants in EAGL. Waste 2 Resources staff, as well as interested Toxic Cleanup and Nuclear Waste Program staff, will be notified of the rule changes. They will also be notified of the application period and recipient selection. PPG staff involve other agency staff as technical advisors on grant projects as needed.

List of supporting documents that may need to be written or revised

Public Participation Grants Program Guidelines

More information

See more information on the rule changes here:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/rules/wac173321/1613ov.html>

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