



HEALTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP & GRANT PROGRAM

OUR COMMITMENT TO HEALTH JUSTICE

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts has put our members at the center of health care for more than 80 years. However, we now find ourselves at an inflection point as we begin to emerge from a devastating pandemic that has exposed deep and structural racial disparities in care. For our company, this continues to be a time of reckoning and an opportunity to move toward a more equitable and just society – a time that demands we deepen our focus on health equity throughout our organization.

In Corporate Citizenship, our Health Justice strategy articulates our responsibility to understand how the context in which we live, work, and play – the social drivers of health – affects the health and well-being of all community members. Along with understanding this social context, we are equally committed to acting in collaboration with our not-for-profit partners to address and ultimately eliminate the barriers that lead to these health inequities. To guide our efforts, we have identified three focus areas:



FOOD JUSTICE

Ensure access to healthy, culturally relevant food and to build a sustainable food system.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Overcome the disproportionate impact of pollution and environmental degradation on under-resourced communities.



RACIAL JUSTICE

Strive to eliminate systemic, institutional, and interpersonal racism that contributes to disparate health outcomes.

Our Health Justice strategy is part of the company's overall strengthened commitment to be a leader in health equity. We are committed to eliminating health inequities both with our members and with the community by implementing an ambitious and comprehensive strategy: (1) As part of our core operations, Blue Cross' clinical and quality improvement teams are collecting critical member data and working with provider networks to address inequities in the care its members receive; (2) the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is leveraging its research expertise, charitable grants, and advocacy programs to illuminate and address these issues across the Massachusetts health system broadly; and (3) through our corporate citizenship program, Blue Cross is expanding the aperture to address specific social drivers of health, including environmental justice, food justice, and racial justice.

2022 FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

At Blue Cross, we recognize that to be a leader in health equity, we must also be an environmental steward. Our health and the health of our communities are directly linked to the health of our environments. For too long communities of color and historically marginalized communities have had to bear an unfair burden of air pollution, lack of green space, polluting infrastructure, and other environmental degradation, which has created and deepened health disparities.

Over the course of the next three years, this program will cycle annually to focus on each of the social drivers of health that align with our Health Justice Strategy. **The 2022 Health Justice Partnership & Grant Program prioritizes environmental justice.** The purpose of this partnership and grant support is to build a more

sustainable, community-driven, and resilient future by supporting not-for-profit organizations that address the physical and social drivers that lead to environmental degradation on underserved communities and cause health inequities. We seek to support solutions that address issues at their root cause and can have long-term impact, systemically or through a cultural shift.

FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

We take pride in being invested in the missions of the community organizations we support and strive to create multifaceted trust-based partnerships that leverage our corporate resources. The 2022 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Health Justice Partnership & Grant will be awarded to seven not-for-profit organizations and is a two-year commitment providing the following to each selected partner:

YEAR 1	\$35,000 in general operating support	Up to \$110,000 in total support per organization
	Up to \$20,000 in pro bono support	
YEAR 2	\$35,000 in general operating support	
	Up to \$20,000 in pro bono support	

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The 2022 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Health Justice Grant is open to organizations and programs that:

- Work to eliminate the physical and social barriers that lead to health inequities, with a particular emphasis on overcoming the disproportionate impact of pollution and environmental degradation on under-resourced communities.
- Facilitate the involvement of historically excluded groups in the search for solutions and the development of partnerships that address the unequal distribution of environmental vulnerabilities.
- Leadership, governing structure and staff are representative of the communities served and include those with lived experience.
- Are community-based organizations registered as a 501(c)(3) or use a fiscal agent that is a 501(c)(3). Universities and academic and public research institutions are eligible to apply by collaborating or partnering with community-based organizations.
- Serve Massachusetts communities.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts will lend its support in ways that bring value to our members and associates by serving the community with no discrimination by age, race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability. In general, we will not support individuals; religious organizations for sectarian or religious purposes (secular programs of faith-based organization that meet criteria will be considered); fraternal, political or lobbying organizations; school groups; and organizations based in or that serve communities outside of Massachusetts or entities that are not 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations.

KEY DATES AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Applications must be completed and submitted electronically via our online portal by August 19, 2022. Only complete proposals, including all requested attachments, will be considered. Blue Cross will not consider proposals submitted after the deadline, via email or means other than our online portal. If for any reason, you are not able to access the online portal, please contact us prior to the deadline to arrange for an alternate solution.

ACTIVITY	DATE
Opportunity to meet with members of the Blue Cross team for questions or feedback during virtual office hours. Please contact Caeli.Richter@bcbsma.com for scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2, 2022, 9:30–11:00AM, • August 4, 2022, 9:00AM–12:00PM • August 4, 2022, 1:00PM–4:00PM
Proposals due	August 19, 2022
Application evaluation by Blue Cross	August 20, 2022 – September 9, 2022
Finalists contacted	Week of September 12, 2022
Finalist conversations	October 14, 2022
Official partner announcement	November 2022

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this program, the review committee will use the following definitions and classifications while evaluating each application:

- **Climate resilience:** The ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to the negative impacts of climate change.
- **Community-based organization:** A nongovernmental organization that has demonstrated effectiveness as a representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and that helps members of that community or segment obtain environmental, educational, or other social services.
- **Environmental vulnerabilities:** Elements of a community's environment that might cause harm to the community members.
- **Environmental degradation:** Any activities that cause harm to our natural or built environment.
- **Health disparity:** A particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion.
- **Health inequity:** A health difference or disparity that is unfair, unjust, and avoidable.
- **Historically excluded/marginalized groups:** Any group of people that has been historically excluded from full rights, privileges and opportunities in a society or organization.
- **Pollution:** Substances or hazards with harmful effects to the environment and/or humans. We can encounter pollutants by way of air pollution, noise pollution, water pollution, etc.
- **Sustainable food system:** Food system that generates healthy food while also providing additional environmental, social, and economic benefits for the community, including minimal waste or environmental damage.
- **Trust-based philanthropy:** A core set of values rooted in advancing equity, shift power, and build mutually accountable relationships between corporate and community partners. For additional information, click [here](#).
- **Under-resourced/underserved communities:** Populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life and includes individuals such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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HOW TO APPLY

1. [Click here to access the online application](#)
 - If this is your first time applying for support from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, you must create an account and profile before logging in. Once you've created an account, you may need to confirm your email address. This confirmation request will be received through the email sent to you or click on the application link again to access the form. If you are encountering any issues setting up your account, please contact grantsconnect-support@yourcause.com.
2. **Complete the application**
 - This application uses our standard request form. Please provide the requested organization information as well as the additional required documentation listed below.

3. **Upload required documentation**

- Attach your answers to the Health Justice Partnership & Grant application questions (see next page)
 - Save your answers as a word document and attach in the section labeled "Upload supporting documentation"
 - **Please limit total application to no more than 4 pages**
- Use the "Upload sponsorship benefits and opportunities" section to attach a copy of your organization's 501c3 form
- Use the "Upload W-9" to attach your organization's W-9 form
- Under "Impact" – for Focus Area, please select "N/A"

APPLICATION

1. How do you define environmental justice at your organization?
2. How does your organization address health inequities through the advancement of climate resilience and environmental justice?
3. How will this funding and partnership strengthen your organization and operations, as well as the nonprofit ecosystem?
4. What goals do you have for measuring impact over time? How might Blue Cross support you in achieving these goals?
5. Describe the communities and populations your organization serves.
6. How are you facilitating the involvement of historically excluded groups in the search for solutions?
7. Provide an overview of how your leadership, staff and board is representative of the communities served, including those with lived experience.

Responses to the following questions will not affect the outcome of your application:

8. In the future, would it be helpful to your organization (or other community-based organizations) if Blue Cross Partnership and Grant materials were available in languages other than English?
 - Yes. Please explain what would be most helpful to your organization and/or to other organizations that you work with:
 - No. At this time, we have the resources required to engage in a potential partnership in English.
 9. Would you like to add additional content that was not addressed in the application?
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