

Just Transition Employment and Retraining Working Group

Draft Work Plan for Discussion

Background and Purpose

The Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 modified the membership of the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC) to include the Just Transition Employment and Retraining Working Group (JTWG). The Working Group must do the following:

- **Advise the commission on issues and opportunities** for workforce development and training related to energy efficient measures, renewable energy, and other clean energy technologies, with a specific focus on training and workforce opportunities for:
 - Segments of the population that may be underrepresented in the clean energy workforce, such as veterans, women, formerly incarcerated individuals, and dislocated workers affected by the downsizing of fossil fuel industries.
- **Identify energy-intensive industries and related trades:**
 - sites of electric generating facilities that may be closed as a result of a transition to renewable energy sources;
 - sector-specific impacts of the state's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction plan on the state's current workforce;
 - avenues to maximize the skills and expertise of Maryland workers in the new energy economy;
 - challenges and opportunities related to minimizing adverse employment and financial impacts on displaced workers and their communities through environmental policies conditioned on the fair distribution of costs and benefits;
 - and resources necessary to protect workers from economic insecurity, including options for maintaining or supplementing retirement and health care benefits for dislocated workers affected by the downsizing of fossil fuel industries;
- **Advise the commission on the potential impacts of carbon leakage risks** on Maryland industries and local host communities, including the impact of any potential Greenhouse Gas emissions reduction measures on the competitiveness of Maryland businesses and industry; and
- **Conduct a study of the number of jobs created** to counter climate change impacts, including in the:
 - energy sector,
 - transportation sector,
 - and working lands sector;
 - the projected inventory of jobs needed and skills and training required to meet future demand for jobs to counter climate change impacts;
 - workforce disruption due to community changes caused by the transition to a low-carbon economy; and
 - strategies for targeting workforce development and job creation in fenceline communities that have historically borne the brunt of hosting carbon polluters.

2024 Priorities for Action

Deliverables

1. Recommendations to the MCCC
 - Advise the MCCC on equitable workforce development and training.
 - Advise the MCCC on carbon leakage risks on Maryland industries and local host communities as well as competitiveness of businesses and industries.
2. Research
 - Complete analysis on the identification of energy-intensive industries and related trades.
 - Complete a study on job creation, skills and training needed, workforce disruptions, and strategies for targeted workforce development.

Guiding Questions

Overarching Guiding Questions

1. What are the top priorities and common principles for this JTWG group?
2. As identified priorities arise, what approaches provide solutions (examples: economic development, worker support, negotiations, legislative strategy, communications, and resource management)?
3. How can different entities collaborate (local + state + federal governments, worker groups, private energy companies, educational institutions, etc.) on incorporating a Just Transition?
4. What are roadblocks to collaboration between stakeholders?
5. Are there any recent laws and implementation priorities affecting Maryland's Just Transition?

Questions about Workforce Development and Retraining

1. What are existing needs and projected needs for workforce development and retraining?
2. What are the best practices for ensuring that underrepresented populations will be included in workforce opportunities? (i.e. veterans, women, underrepresented individuals, etc)
3. What resources does your organization or network provide in supporting equitable workforce development and retraining across sectors?
4. Should the JTWG role include supporting training and encouragement of K-12 students?
5. How can the JTWG support underrepresented populations in a just transition, including in existing programs, policies, or incentives?

Questions about Energy-Intensive Industries and Related Trades

1. What opportunities can be expanded in the short, medium, or long term to support clean energy workforce needs for energy-intensive trades?
2. Which sectors in Maryland are easiest to transition? Which will be more difficult?
3. Are clean energy apprenticeship programs, internship programs, and other development programs in high-demand green career sectors being sufficiently supported?
4. Which sectors are undergoing a Transition, and how can the JTWG support these sectors?
5. What kinds of outreach opportunities are in place or could be done for communities and workers to understand the necessity for a Just Transition and how it may affect them?

Questions about Carbon Leakage Risks

1. What are some case studies of sustainable industrial policy aligning with JT goals, and could these approaches be replicated in Maryland (local, state, national, or international)?
2. How could local economic opportunities be diversified and supported in clean energy, transportation, natural working lands, and other sustainability sectors?
3. How can Maryland attract new businesses while aligning with climate and equity goals?
4. Are there any short term needs that align with clean and equitable economic growth, such as supporting commercial-ready technological applications?
5. What strategies can be pulled from Maryland-specific studies and examples to target equitable job creation, workforce development, and training programs?

Timeline

The JTWG will meet virtually on a monthly basis. Meetings will last for two hours with meeting details provided ahead of the meeting to the email list. Please email Cindy Osorto, cindy.osorto1@maryland.gov to be added to the email list. The JTWG will submit recommendations to the MCCC by October and a final jobs report to the General Assembly and Governor.

Draft Meeting Agendas

The following are draft agendas for meetings of the JTWG. Agendas will be modified as needed to best meet the JTWG's objectives.

Meeting 1: Introductions and Work Plan Review (April 26)

- Introductions and Overview of MCCC and Working Group Charge
- Overview of Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan
- Brief Legislative Update
- Discussion on Work Plan and Process

Meeting 2: Just Transition Approaches and Energy Sector Part One: Existing Efforts (May 31)

- Just Transition Approaches Discussion
- Energy Efficiency
 - Examples: HVAC, Energy Star (appliances, products, services), Building Materials (embodied carbon/circular economy considerations), Energy Efficient Lighting, Renewable Heating and Cooling
- Transmission, distribution, battery storage, and grid modernization
- Potential Guest Speakers: Lorax, Civic Works, union

Meeting 3: Energy Sector Part Two: Anticipated Growth in Clean Industries (June 28)

- Wind Energy
- Solar Energy
- Potential Guest Speakers: Labor, Solar nonprofit

Meeting 4: Fossil Fuel Communities (July 26)

- Fossil Fuel Communities in Maryland
- Research Check-In
- Potential Guest Speaker: Leading state with similar workforce/ energy goals (ex. Illinois, Colorado)

Meeting 5: Transportation and Research Check-In (August 30)

- Electric vehicles and infrastructure (small, medium, and heavy-duty vehicles)
- Public transportation, aviation, and miscellaneous
- Introductory Discussion on Potential Recommendations
- Potential Guest Speakers: MDOT, PSC

Meeting 6: Natural and Working Lands (September 27)

- Adaptation and Resilience
- Research Check-In
- Continue Draft Recommendations Discussion
- Potential Guest Speaker: DNR, Forest Service, local nonprofit

Meeting 7: Regenerative Vision for a New Economy (October 25)

- Continue and Finalize Recommendations
- Potential Guest Speakers: Green youth, U.S. Commerce or DOE

Meeting 8: (November 22)

- Final Research Check-In
- Discuss finalization of the report
- Next steps