

ARPA Fact Sheet: Equity

The American Rescue Plan Act (APRA) has provided \$641 million in one-time funding to the City of Baltimore in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its negative economic impacts. Mayor Brandon M. Scott has established the Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs to administer this funding on behalf of the City via an application process. As part of that application process, organizations must establish an equity framework for their proposed projects. This document contains information on how applicants can best respond to inquiries around equity concerning ARPA funding.

What is equity?

The United States Department of Treasury in the [Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) defines equity as "the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, 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." The City of Baltimore also defines equity in [Article 1 39-1 of the Baltimore City Code](#).

Why is equity important?

The COVID-19 public health emergency has disproportionately impacted the health and economic opportunities and outcomes for people of color and low-income communities. With this in mind, the Recovery Office is prioritizing communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 public health emergency for ARPA-funded investments. Proposals eligible for ARPA funding will be evaluated against seven different criteria, one of which is equity. The equity criterion is worth 20 points- the most of each criteria. Proposals must successfully explain actions that will lead to equitable impact.

How should applicants think about equity for ARPA funding requests?

Equity should be a central tenet of all proposed projects. Organizations should integrate an equity framework from planning to implementation for all projects. Ask the following questions:

- How will the project mitigate or decrease existing and historical disparities?
- Does the project explicitly account for potentially disparate outcomes for underserved communities? How?
- How is an equity lens incorporated in tracking outcomes?
- How does this policy incorporate, advance, and operationalize equity overall?

This list is not exhaustive. Organizations should identify and address areas where a project impacts equity whenever possible. [Treasury's interim final rule](#) also outlines that organizations can serve disproportionately impacted communities by targeting their projects to Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs).

Additional Resources

Chief Recovery Officer & Mayor's Office of Recovery Programs:
arp@baltimorecity.gov

Chief Equity Officer & The Baltimore City Office of Equity and Civil Rights:
civilrights@baltimorecity.gov

Government Alliance on Racial Equity:
gare@raceforward.org

