

# Agency Climate Implementation Plan

DSCI

November 1, 2024



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DSCI, Climate Implementation Plan required by Executive Order,  
“Leadership by State Government: Implementing Maryland’s Climate Pollution  
Reduction Plan”

In accordance with Governor Moore’s [Executive Order 01.01.2024.19](#), “Leadership by State Government: Implementing Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan,” *the Department of Service and Civic Innovation* affirms its commitment to:

- Work to address climate change and ensure a just transition to a clean economy;
- Advance environmental justice by working to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change for underserved and overburdened communities, including the application of Justice40 goals, initiatives, and funding;
- Equitably implement all existing laws, regulations, and policies related to climate change, incorporating robust community and stakeholder engagement; and
- Continue to maximize federal and philanthropic funding opportunities on climate to achieve and maximize the goals above.

The Department of Service and Civic Innovation hereby submits its own Climate Implementation Plan (CIP) to demonstrate its commitment to a whole-of-government approach to addressing climate change and fully implementing Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan.

## Part 1: Agency Actions Under the Climate Pollution Reduction Plan

Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan calls on the Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI) to expand service-to-career pathways into green jobs and apply for relevant federal funding. Below DSCI outlines the actions taken to date to achieve these goals and the planned actions for the next year:

1. Expand service-to-career pathways into green jobs:
  - a. This year DSCI designed, recruited for, and launched a new climate-focused corps, the Maryland Climate Corps as part of the Service Year Option to expand pathways into green jobs for underserved youth. Maryland Climate Corps was launched in partnership with Chesapeake Bay Trust.
  - b. DSCI also scaled the Maryland Corps and Service Year Option to over 500 members, with an increased number of climate-focused positions.
  - c. The AmeriCorps team also administered grants to two climate-focused programs including the Maryland Conservation Corps and CASA's Green Vocational Training programs that have over 50 members.
  - d. The AmeriCorps team added capacity to existing disaster response structures, such as state Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and Emergency Management Agencies with a plan to expand Community Emergency Response Teams and programs statewide.
  - e. The AmeriCorps team recently provided Howard EcoWorks a planning grant to focus on disaster preparation, disaster response and developing community resiliency to the impacts of climate change. The AmeriCorps investment of \$102,475 will be matched with \$32,565 of local and state public funding and \$4,823 in private funding.
2. Apply for federal and philanthropic funding to scale programming:
  - a. In the upcoming year, DSCI plans to collaborate with other state agencies on applying for federal funding to implement actions that support the achievement of this plan. DSCI, under the leadership and coordination with the Governor's Federal Investment Team, hopes to work closely with state agencies, local governments, and community-based organizations to ensure Maryland is competitive for federal climate action implementation funds and to build capacity for local-level implementation.
  - b. DSCI applied for and was recently awarded a Technical Assistance grant from the US Climate Alliance to provide additional capacity to coordinate with state agencies, identify opportunities for joint-agency applications for federal

resources, and submit grant applications for federal climate and workforce funding streams.

- c. Collaborating with other agencies to build capacity through members using their service.

## Part 2: Recommending Actions to Address Climate Change

In addition to the agency actions outlined in Part 1 and in compliance with the law, DSCI is taking or recommending the additional following actions to more fully integrate the consideration of Maryland's greenhouse gas reduction goal and the impacts of climate change:

- Increase the number of members participating in the Service Year Option and service programs generally who work on climate-related activities.
- Coordinate with the Federal Investment Team and other climate-related interagency groups.
- Utilize the US Climate Alliance Grant to support the TA and grant applications for additional funding to support the Maryland Climate Corps.
- Leverage the partnership with Chesapeake Bay Trust to collect additional information on climate activities of service members in the state.

## Part 3: Considering Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions and Impacts on Disproportionately Affected Communities

Equity and environmental justice are at the center of DSCI's programs. Climate Corps Fellows are predominantly opportunity youth who are disconnected from the school, job, and training opportunities they need to succeed. The program provides these members with a job that pays \$15 an hour, a career coach, wraparound support, and a pathway into a well-paying green job.

The Maryland Climate Corps has a focus on prioritizing environmental justice strategies for low-income communities and communities of color who often face the worst effects of climate change. DSCI prioritizes host sites and applicants from low-income and underserved communities, has a focus on providing services in those communities, and works in partnership with those organizations to implement equity-based solutions.

In addition to the equity components outlined above, the Department of Service and Civic Innovation is proposing the following regulatory changes to the SERVE Act to better support service members from disproportionately impacted and underserved communities:

- DSCI is proposing changes to the Young Adult Service Year Option Pathway Fund to allow flexibility on funding towards the YA Pathway. (Pending legislative approval).
- DSCI is proposing expanding the eligibility of the YA Pathway to include up to the ages of 24 (pending legislative approval). By adjusting age, DSCI aims to include a more diverse pool of applicants, ensuring that young adults from various socio-economic backgrounds can participate.
- DSCI is proposing updating the salary requirements for The Program; given that the county minimum wage may increase quicker than the state minimum wage, we want to ensure that members receive the highest wage possible. Thus, DSCI proposes updating to applicable county or state minimum wage, whichever is greater. Furthermore, the changes to salary requirements, including setting a minimum wage floor, are intended to ensure that participants receive fair compensation, which is crucial for those from lower-income backgrounds (pending legislative approval).
- The proposed legislation is designed to positively impact equity by broadening access to the Department of Service and Civic Innovation's programs, particularly the Service Year Option (SYO) and Maryland Corps (MC) Pathways.

## Part 4: Resources for Implementation

### Implementing Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan

DSCI's goal is to sustain and ultimately increase the number of members in the Service Year Option program focused on climate related activities by September of next year. In order to meet this goal, DSCI will need additional federal, state, and philanthropic resources to cover increased costs related to member stipends, training, and completion awards. DSCI would ideally acquire this funding by Fall of 2025.

### Implementing this Climate Implementation Plan

Currently DSCI is supported by funding in the SERVE Act but in order to scale we will need to increasingly seek out federal sources of funding, state funding and philanthropic dollars through interagency partnerships. DSCI is utilizing US Climate Alliance Technical Assistance dollars to apply for more federal grant opportunities and bring additional funding into state government, including funding streams through the AmeriCorps Climate Corps, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

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## Part 5: Outcomes from Implementation

Through DSCI's scaling of the Service Year Option and the Maryland Climate Corps, the state plans to increase the number of members in the Service Year Option program by

more than 50% over the course of the next few years. This funding will cover funding for standalone service stipend slots that provide yearlong service opportunities to members that will partially cover a living stipend, apprenticeship training and certification for members, career coach support, workforce readiness training, and a stipend upon completion of the program.