



## 'Green Recovery For All' Toolkit

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# I. Introduction

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Since President Obama signed the economic recovery package on February 17, our phones at Green For All have been ringing off the hook. Thousands of people want to know how their communities can access the billions of dollars the federal government is about to invest in green jobs and job training.

The short answer is: it's up to you. We know which agencies will get which resources to invest. We know roughly when those agencies will decide what to invest in. But how they make those decisions is not written in stone. There is no law saying this money will get to our communities, our programs, our people. There is no law saying it won't. **It is up to you to take your place at the table, through "I'm ready" rallies, community roundtables, meetings with local leaders and other tactics. Your actions will determine if this is truly a green recovery for all.**

A couple of things are certain:

1. President Obama's recovery package is the best chance we've ever seen to create green jobs for everyday people.
2. If we want this to be a green recovery, not just for a few but for all, we cannot leave it up to local politics and business as usual.

We have to get organized and head to City Hall, ready to work and ready to serve our communities.

It's not like you haven't done this before. After all, it's how you earned this opportunity. Tens of thousands of you organized rallies, made phone calls, sent emails, and some even lobbied on Capitol Hill. On February 17, Washington responded with a nearly \$800 billion bill, which promises more than \$50 billion for green jobs and \$500 million for green job training.

Now the battle moves from Capitol Hill to City Hall.

Big business and political insiders are already making their case to your Mayor why they should get this federal money. But we are all in this together. We all need this green recovery to work. Our communities are ready to work, ready to serve, and ready to help implement a local green recovery plan that doesn't leave anyone behind.

We can do it. You know it — it's why our phones are ringing off the hook. The questions are: How do we get a seat at the table? How do we ensure a green recovery for all?

We designed this toolkit to answer those questions.

## II. The Commitment: A Green Recovery for All

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We all have a stake in a successful green recovery. By connecting the people who most need work to the work that most needs to be done, we can fight pollution and poverty at the same time.

Low-income communities and communities of color across the country stand ready to help. We are ready to work and ready to serve. We want a plan for a local green recovery that includes our communities and benefits our communities. We want a seat at the table so we can bring our knowledge and expertise to the recovery effort.

We are committed to implementing a successful local recovery that creates jobs and improves the environment. We want our local officials and government leaders to join us in this Commitment to a Green Recovery for All.

**Suggestion for Action:** Prepare a 'Green Recovery for All' commitment statement and ask your elected officials to sign it.

The commitment could be as simple as:

*I [Official's Name] will work with the community to ensure that the Recovery dollars create green jobs and opportunities for low-income people and people of color.*

You could also add specific bullet point in the commitment, like:

*I [Official's Name] commit to:*

- 1. Showing the public a plan by [insert date] for how local recovery dollars will benefit low income communities and communities of color;*
- 2. Creating seats at the table for members of community organizations to help develop and implement the local green recovery plan; and*
- 3. Working with leaders from low-income communities and communities of color to develop and regularly update metrics that will measure our progress toward a green recovery for all in real numbers over time.*

Your commitment statement could also be a longer and include principles about the substance of the local green recovery, such as:

- Create quality jobs with family-supporting wages and benefits;*
- Commit adequate resources for career training and support pathways out of poverty into self-sufficiency;*
- Maximize job training and supportive services for people of color and women;*
- Use a community-based planning process with accountability measures.*

Your local version of a "Commitment to a Green Recovery for All" can take many forms. The most important thing is that you use it to get your voices and your contributions into the local recovery planning.

Share your commitment statement with thousands in the Green For All Network using the 'Get Local' tool at <http://www.greenforall.org/recovery>.

# III. Three Key Recovery Programs

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There are billions of dollars in the recovery package flowing to communities across the country for green jobs and training programs. For in-depth information and strategy tips see our new report, *Bringing Home the Green Recovery: A User's Guide to the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (available at <http://www.greenforall.org/recovery>).

Here are three green recovery programs that we think are important to get involved in locally.

## 1. WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

There is 6 billion dollars in the recovery package to weatherize homes to make them leak less energy, which lowers utility bills, cuts carbon emissions, and requires lots of people working on lots of homes.

The money is going mostly to the Community Action Agencies that have been responsible for implementing this program for decades. But this year is different. Local weatherization budgets will now be as much as 25 times what they were in the past. That means 25 times more homes to fix up; 25 times more people to employ and train.

How is weatherization money being spent in your area? How are these recovery dollars providing job and training opportunities to low-income people? How are they supporting existing community efforts around job training, youth development, or energy efficiency?

Find out who administers the federal weatherization program in your area and ask these questions. Offer your assistance. Ask for their commitment to a green recovery for all.

## 2. ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANTS

Under a new program in the recovery package every city, county, state, and tribe in the country will receive some portion of over \$3 Billion to spend on projects that reduce energy use or conserve resources.

What is your city's plan for spending this money? Will their projects create good paying jobs? Will those jobs be available to low-income people and people of color? Will your city use these block grants to support job training program for people in poverty, including the formerly incarcerated or others with barriers to employment?

Ask your mayor, city council members and county commissioners these types of questions. Offer your assistance. Ask for their commitment to a green recovery for all.

## 3. GREEN JOBS TRAINING GRANTS

The federal recovery package allocated \$500 million to be given out in competitive grants for green job training programs across the country. There will be grants available for advanced skills training and for pathways out of poverty programs.

How are local leaders planning to prepare a winning application to the Department of Labor? Who is convening all the necessary stakeholders from government, business, community, labor, and education? How can community groups get involved to be sure that they are

helping design and implement training programs that move people out of poverty and into good green jobs and careers?

Ask you local leaders these questions. Offer your assistance. Ask for their commitment to a green recovery for all.

For more detail on these and other green program in the recovery package see *Bringing Home the Green Recovery: A User's Guide to the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (available at <http://www.greenforall.org/recovery>).

