

State of Connecticut  
FY 2020

# Sustainability Performance Plan

## Office of Early Childhood

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Approved by Beth Bye  
Commissioner



*This report was written in compliance with section 5 of Executive Order 1.*

# EO 1 Background

On April 24, 2019, Governor Lamont launched the GreenerGov CT initiative by signing Executive Order 1 (EO 1) which directs Executive Branch agencies to advance environmental leadership and cost savings for taxpayers by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other sustainability objectives in energy use in buildings and vehicles, water use, and waste disposal.

EO 1 calls on agencies to recommit to and expand the state's Lead by Example (LBE) program to reduce the operating costs and environmental impacts of state government facilities and operations. EO 1 builds on the foundation of the state's LBE program by setting new sustainability goals, listed below, for Executive Branch agencies and invoking deeper levels of commitment and participation.

## **GHG**

45% reduction in  
GHG emissions  
below 2001 levels

## **WATER**

10% reduction in  
water consumption  
from a FY20 baseline

## **WASTE**

25% reduction in  
waste disposal from a  
FY20 baseline

Since the GreenerGov CT initiative was launched, significant progress has been made towards laying the groundwork for expanded LBE initiatives in the future: governance structures were established, baseline data was collected, and financing and project strategies were developed. Additionally, agencies reported completing or making progress on 120+ sustainability projects in FY19 in the first annual agency Sustainability Performance Plans. Sustainability Performance Plans are plans drafted each year by Senior Sustainability Officers to detail agency progress and necessary goals, actions, and responsible parties to achieve the targets set in EO 1.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought significant changes to the operations of state agencies as agencies responded to the crisis. The impact of the pandemic on the sustainability goals of EO 1 is not yet known, but some effects will be documented in the FY20 Sustainability Performance Plans and the GreenerGov CT Progress Report.

# OEC and EO 1

## OEC's mission

To partner with families of young children to advance equitable early childhood policies, funding and programs; support early learning and development; and strengthen the critical role of all families, providers, educators, and communities throughout a child's life. We will assertively remove barriers and build upon the strengths of historically disenfranchised people and communities to ensure fair access to OEC resources.

## OEC's FY20 participation overview

Many practices and priorities changed dramatically in 2020 due to the public health emergency. Despite this, the Office of Early Childhood continued to enthusiastically support EO #1 goals as much as possible, and accelerated gains on several agency objectives. Formally, OEC participated in Sustainability Officer Steering Committee meetings, and communications related to GreenerGov public engagement.

## OEC staff involvement in EO 1

Christopher Lyddy  
Eileen McMurrer  
Mike Curley  
Sarah Normandie  
Sarah Poulin  
Gerald Mallison

# 3

## Sustainability Projects

including projects relating to infrastructure improvements or behavioral change that took place in owned, leased, or occupied space and were either in progress or completed in FY20

# Sustainability Projects

1

**Location:** OEC office building - 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford

**Project Type:** Behavioral - Combination

**Description:** "Project 26" was implemented in response to the public health emergency and a need for essential health care providers to secure safe, high quality child care for their young children, even as many licensed centers were closing their doors. OEC prioritized expansion of child care capacity within three miles of hospitals to reduce the length of travel for essential provider parents' commute between home, child care, and work. In total, 319 children accessed 28 new nearby child care centers to serve essential workers at 29 hospitals, reducing their commute and staving off a reduction in hospital workers due to diminished child care capacity as a result of OEC's Project 26.

**Status:** Completed in FY 2020

**Benefits Summary:** Reduction in motor travel and related fuel consumption.

2

**Location:** OEC - 450 Columbus Blvd., Hartford

**Project Type:** Behavioral - Combination

**Description:** OEC supported Governor Lamont's priority to keep CT citizens and employees safe by converting to telework functionality for all but the bare minimum of essential workers. OEC had approximately 50 staff with approved telework plans in 2019, and expanded that number by almost 250% to more than 120 staff in 2020.

**Status:** Completed in FY 2020

**Benefits Summary:** This dramatic increase in telework arrangements decreased on-site utility and water use, and accelerated adoption of digital communications across consumers, providers, and staff thereby producing significant cost reductions related to purchasing/ delivering/storing and ultimately discarding office supplies and paper products/waste. Legal hearings moved exclusively to a virtual platform, eliminating use of office building lights, heat, water, paper and supplies that were previously consumed during in-person, on-site agency hearings. Similarly, notifications were completed electronically for >90% of communications with individuals seeking child care licensure and other provider communications.

**Savings:** 2020 printer/copying costs shrank from 2019 expenditures by 25% (\$9,080 in 2019 down to \$6,796 in 2020). Other cost reductions were not assessed.

3

**Location:** OEC Office, 450 Columbus Blvd, Hartford, CT

**Project Type:** Behavioral - Combination

**Description:** Digital Resources were developed to replace paper-dependent child care background check requirements. OEC licenses several thousand family home and child care center facilities. Part of obtaining and maintaining a license involves federal and state requirements to complete comprehensive, fingerprint-supported background checks on staff and volunteers. In 2020, OEC worked to provide online versions of the two required paper forms. Additionally, OEC contracted to provide digital fingerprint collection services across CT.

**Status:** Completed in FY 2020

**Benefits Summary:** Widespread electronic promotion of these digital resources reduced paper-dependency, associated mailing product consumption, and minimized agency waste removal services.

# Performance Data

The following data was pulled from EnergyCAP, the state's utility tracking software, on March 15, 2021. Note that utility data on agencies occupying space owned by another state agency may or may not be linked to their EnergyCAP accounts.

## Total Utility Costs

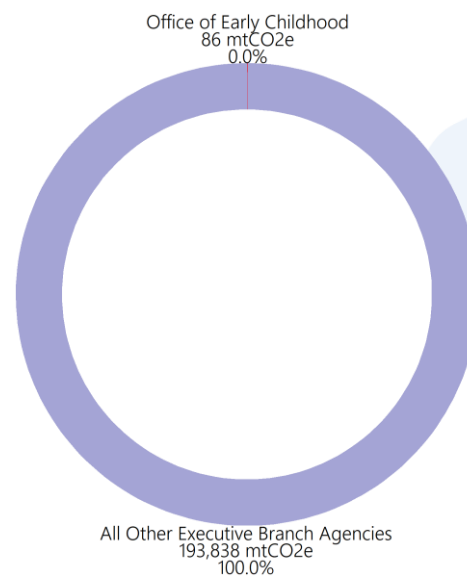
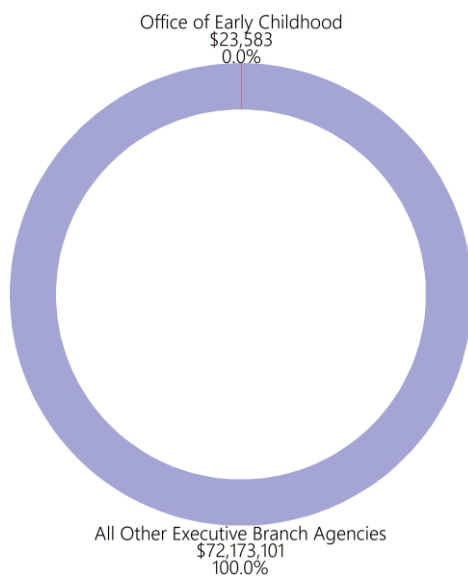
| Commodity                  | Unit          | Use        |           |               | Cost            |                 |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
|                            |               | FY19       | FY20      | Change        | FY19            | FY20            | Change        |
| Electric & Natural Gas     | MMBtu         | -          | -         | -             | -               | -               | -             |
| Other Building Energy      | MMBtu         | -          | -         | -             | -               | -               | -             |
| Vehicle Gasoline           | Gal           | 14,767     | 9,950     | -32.6%        | \$37,952        | \$23,583        | -37.9%        |
| Vehicle Diesel             | Gal           | -          | -         | -             | -               | -               | -             |
| <b>Total GHG Emissions</b> | <b>mtCO2e</b> | <b>128</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>-32.5%</b> | -               | -               | -             |
| Water                      | Kgal          | -          | -         | -             | -               | -               | -             |
| <b>Total</b>               | -             | -          | -         | -             | <b>\$37,952</b> | <b>\$23,583</b> | <b>-37.9%</b> |

\*Gasoline and diesel costs estimated based on average weekly cost from EIA.gov, \$2.37 for gasoline and \$2.96 for diesel in FY20 and \$2.57 for gasoline and \$3.18 for diesel in FY19.

\*\*Other Building Energy sources include oil, propane, steam, and chilled water.

## Share of Utility Costs and GHG Emissions

The two charts below display OEC's proportion of the FY20 total utility cost and the total GHG emissions of all agencies participating in EO 1.



# Future Planning

## GHG Reduction (energy/fleet related)

### Status of FY19 Plans

- ✓ **Progress has been made.**  
Progress has stalled.  
Plans have been completed.  
Stated plans no longer a priority.

### Planned FY21 Projects

- (1) Encourage staff understanding and utilization of public transportation and car pooling practices by providing information on Greater Hartford bus routes and EZ-Ride options
- (2) OEC is adopting Mobile Licensing, providing Licensing specialists with digital equipment and a secure software platform for recording child care provider inspection information. This will virtually eliminate dependence upon NCR forms, reduce other paper consumption and paper file storage, and significantly reduce transportation costs for travel between child care sites across the state and the OEC office in Hartford.

## Water Use Reduction

### Status of FY19 Plans

- Progress has been made.  
Progress has stalled.  
Plans have been completed.  
Stated plans no longer a priority.
- ✓ **Other: OEC does not own the building**

### Planned FY21 Projects

- Post notices in English and Spanish near sinks encouraging reduced water use

## Waste Reduction

### Status of FY19 Plans

- ✓ **Progress has been made.**  
Progress has stalled.  
Plans have been completed.  
Stated plans no longer a priority.

### Planned FY21 Projects

- Provide staff training on recycle/food scrap/trash receptacle use as part of reopening office activities

# COVID-19 Impact

## Impact of COVID-19 on agency's ability to make progress on the goals of EO 1 in FY20

It has accelerated OEC's move toward electronic communications and adoption of virtual meeting platform while decreasing over-utilization of printing and paper. Staff have been enabled to continue teleworking in a manner that does not jeopardize – and in many cases enhances – agency operations and programs.

COVID-19 changes that have led to a positive sustainability outcome that will continue after the pandemic

- ✓ **Strategically evaluating building footprint needed for agency work**
- ✓ **Reassessing agency fleet**
- ✓ **Holding virtual meetings as a more regular practice**
- ✓ **Increased telework as a regular practice**
- ✓ **Expanded use of digital forms and email communications**

No changes to report

# Resources Needed

Barriers encountered while making EO 1 progress in FY20

- Funding
- ✓ **Staffing**
- Technical expertise
- No barriers encountered
- Other

## Additional details on barriers encountered in FY20

Our swift move to teleworking and related adaptations needed to sustain operations and infrastructure commandeered significant amounts of agency staff time and talent. While OEC excelled in meeting these challenges, intentional prioritizing and achieving GreenerGov objectives became a lower priority than our need to support Connecticut essential workers, families, and children.

## Specific type of support or resources needed to make progress on future sustainability projects

Addition of designated staff to champion, monitor, and report on GreenerGov activities and outcomes is essential to sustain the progress that OEC has made and expand behavioral change in agency culture and individual staff practices.

## Additional info on OEC's participation in EO 1 during FY 2020

We look forward to strengthening our involvement in EO 1 this year and building upon GreenerGov collective successes.