

Statewide Solar for All (S-SFA) Dual Participation Resource Plan

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I. Introduction

In its May 16, 2024 Order Approving Statewide Solar for All Program with Modifications (“S-SFA Order”),¹ and its October 16, 2024 Order Implementing Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program (“REACH Order”),² the New York Public Service Commission (“PSC” or “Commission”) directed each investor-owned utility to implement a Statewide Solar for All (“S-SFA”) program, and REACH program, respectively, where a portion of the net revenues from the production of renewable energy projects will be distributed through bill credits to low-income customers participating in the individual utility’s Energy Affordability Program (“EAP”) and residing in Disadvantaged Communities (“DACs”). The S-SFA Order calls for utilities to “develop a shared dual participation resource plan to be used by each utility that includes training materials for utilities to proactively encourage dual participation.”³

In this Dual Participation Resource Plan (“Plan”), the Joint Utilities⁴ describe the training and customer awareness activities planned by utilities to encourage dual participation in S-SFA and other Statewide programs and opportunities, including opt-in Community Distributed Generation (“CDG”). This includes training materials for utility customer service personnel, and resources for EAP customers such as Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”) and dedicated utility S-SFA EAP webpages. Since eligible EAP customers will be automatically enrolled in both S-SFA and REACH, this Plan combines training, customer awareness, and education activities for these programs. Additionally, these efforts will be aligned with broader EAP awareness strategies to support effective and consistent messaging to EAP

¹ Case 21-E-0629 et al., *In the Matter of the Advancement of Distributed Solar*, Order Approving Statewide Solar for All with Modifications (“S-SFA Order”) (issued May 16, 2024).

² Case 24-E-0084, *Petition of New York Power Authority to Establish Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program*, Order Implementing Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program (issued October 16, 2024).

³ S-SFA Order, p. 29.

⁴ The Joint Utilities are Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation (“Central Hudson”), Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (“Con Edison”), New York State Electric & Gas Corporation (“NYSEG”), Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid (“National Grid”), Orange & Rockland Utilities, Inc. (“O&R”), and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (“RG&E”).

customers. Finally, successful implementation of the Plan is crucial to supporting the success of the S-SFA and REACH programs, as well as encouraging eligible EAP customers to access additional energy affordability benefits through participation in other programs.

II. Training

The Joint Utilities will develop training materials and other resources to be used by customer service personnel to effectively address customer questions about the S-SFA and REACH programs, as well as other community solar offerings available to them. These materials include comprehensive shared FAQs that can be used by utilities to provide information to customer service personnel about dual participation opportunities, and other resources available through each utility's knowledge sharing platforms. These resources may include a Customer Service Representative Training Manual, sample template provided in Appendix C with detailed background information on S-SFA, REACH and opt-in CDG programs, such as, program eligibility, differences between programs, how to enroll, and how bill credits will be displayed. Examples of customer service personnel-facing FAQ template for CDG (also referred to as "Community Solar") and a training manual template are provided in Appendix B and Appendix C.⁵

The Joint Utilities will use various methods to train customer service personnel to bring awareness to program offerings and available resources to assist customers inquiring about S-SFA/REACH and dual participation in opt-in CDG. These methods may include email communications and in-person meetings. The Joint Utilities plan to update training materials and resources on an ongoing basis, as necessary, based on feedback received from customer service personnel.

⁵ Appendix C may vary for each utility.

III. Informational and Educational Materials

The Joint Utilities will use various channels to share materials with customers participating in the S-SFA and REACH programs to generate awareness about additional statewide programs and opportunities, including dual participation in opt-in CDG. These materials will include customer-facing FAQs, including S-SFA and opt-in CDG (see Appendix A), and webpage updates. The Joint Utilities will work together to create consistent messaging across customer-facing materials and communications, including, as applicable, in bill messaging, standalone communications by mail, and various digital platforms. For inquiries regarding a customer's DAC status, the Joint Utilities plan to direct customers to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's ("NYSERDA's") Disadvantaged Community website.⁶ Additionally, each utility will update its EAP webpage with S-SFA and REACH related program information, including links to Energy Advisor, DOE's Low-Income Clean Energy Connector tool, and NYSERDA's Find a Community Solar Project tool. Additional details on utility and program specific customer outreach and awareness activities are provided in each utility's Enrollment and Awareness Plan.

⁶ <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/ny/disadvantaged-communities>

IV. Appendix

A. Customer Facing Community Solar FAQ Template

Community Distributed Generation (CDG) FAQ

What is Community Distributed Generation (CDG)?

CDG allows multiple customers to share the benefits of a single, large-scale renewable energy project, such as a solar farm. Customers receive credits on their electric bills based on their share of the energy produced by a CDG project. CDG is sometimes referred to as “Community Solar”.

Who can participate in a CDG project?

Residential and business customers who pay an electric bill are eligible to subscribe (“opt-in”) to a CDG project. Specific eligibility criteria may vary depending on the project and location.

Can I simultaneously participate in a CDG project if I am already receiving credits through the Statewide Solar for All (S-SFA)/Renewable Energy Access and Community Help Program (REACH) programs?

Yes, eligible EAP customers enrolled in the S-SFA/REACH programs may also subscribe to an opt-in CDG project.

How do I join a CDG project?

The project developer (sometimes also called a “**sponsor**” or “**host**”), or their marketing representatives can guide you through the enrollment process.

You can join by subscribing to a CDG project in your area. NYSERDA offers a find a community solar project tool⁷ that includes a list of providers and projects available to utility customers, as well as answers to frequently asked questions you can use while researching projects.

To further confirm your choices, you may review a list of Distributed Energy Resources (DER) providers, which are companies required to register with the New York State Department of Public Service to offer or market CDG⁸.

What are the benefits of enrolling in a CDG project?

- Access to renewable energy without installing equipment on your property.
- Potential savings on your electric utility bills through monthly credits.
- Support for clean energy initiatives and reduced carbon footprint.

Do I need to install solar panels or other equipment on my property?

No, CDG projects are off-site, so you don't need to install any equipment on your property.

How are CDG credits applied to my energy bill?

The energy produced by the CDG project is converted into credits, which are applied to your electric utility bill, reducing your overall energy costs. The amount of credit applied to your monthly

⁷ <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/NY-Sun/Community-Solar/Choosing-a-Project>

⁸ <https://documents.dps.ny.gov/PTC/der>

bill will depend on the amount of energy generated by your selected project and the amount allocated to each subscriber.

Can my CDG credits apply to any other sections of my utility bill?

Any bill credits that you receive from the CDG provider host/marketer will only apply to your electricity bill (both delivery and supply). They cannot be applied to gas charges, nor can they be used to pay off past due balances. The CDG credits are non-transferable and can never be cashed out in the form of a direct payment.

How do I unenroll from a CDG project?

Any questions, issues, or changes to your community solar subscription must be directed to your CDG host/marketer. The utility cannot make changes to your CDG subscription plan.

What happens if I move?

If you move within the same electric utility service area, you will lose your CDG subscription unless and until you contact your CDG host/marketer to update your account number. The CDG host/marketer must submit a new allocation request with the utility to continue your subscription. If you move outside of your current electric utility service area, you will need to find a new CDG host/marketer in that new utility service area.

Are there any costs associated with joining a CDG project?

Some projects may have subscription fees or other costs and requirements, including notice requirements to your CDG project sponsor if you plan to move residences. It is important to review the terms and conditions of a project before enrolling.

To find out more information about programs and services available to help income-eligible families and individuals. Please refer to the below websites.

<https://energyadvisor.ny.gov/>

<https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/NY-Sun/Community-Solar/Community-Solar-Map>

<https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/clean-energy-connector>

B. Customer Service Representatives FAQ Template

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How can customers join a CDG project?

Customers can join by subscribing to a CDG project in their area. NYSERDA offers a [find a community solar project tool](#)⁹ that includes a list of providers and projects available to utility customers, as well as answers to frequently asked questions that can be used while researching projects.

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<https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/NY-Sun/Community-Solar/Community-Solar-Map>

<https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/clean-energy-connector>

C. Customer Service Representative Training Manual Template

Statewide Solar For All / Renewable Energy Access and Community Solar

OVERVIEW

What is the Program?

Who is eligible?

How does the Program work?

DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES (DAC)

What is a Disadvantaged Community?

Identify Energy Affordability Program and Disadvantaged Community in CRM

Additional Information

PROJECTS

How to identify a project that is participating in the Program

Project Discontinuance

Project Cancel/Rebill

CUSTOMER CREDIT BILLING

How is the credit calculated?

Displaying the credit on customer bills

Additional bill print messaging

OPT-OUT AND OPT-IN

How to Opt-Out

How to Opt-In after Opt-Out

Examples of Letters

OPTIONAL COMMUNITY DISTRIBUTED GENERATION (CDG)

Eligibility for dual participation

Benefits to dual participation

Additional information

REFERRAL

Where to refer for additional inquiries