



Project Review Process

Q: Can jobs go back to the same reviewer when resubmitted?

A: Yes, but it is not always possible due to volume of projects submitted.

Q: What is the timing for reviews when returned?

A: The Program's goal is to review projects within 2 business days of project submission. Reviews occur on a first come-first served basis, regardless if it is a new project or a resubmission.

Q: Aren't workscope approvals automated?

A: Most Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® (HPwES) projects go through an auto-review process and approximately 40% (1536 of 3992) of the projects submitted are auto-approved. There are some items that will trigger a manual review (i.e., high savings, coordinated Assisted HPwES and EmPower New York projects).

Q: How many staff manually review projects?

A: There are currently 5 people dedicated to reviewing projects with the ability to add more as volume dictates. Ensuring your submission is complete and has detailed notes, will help move projects along efficiently.

General EmPower and Assisted Home Performance Questions

Q: What is required to be filled out on the Certificate of Completion (CoC) form?

A: The entire document needs to be completed. For EmPower New York, it needs to be initialed and signed as well.

Q: Can we use the new EmPCalc for audit only project?

A: Yes, an audit only project can be submitted using the new EmPCalc the same way we would for EmPower project. If it is determined that no work can be done, submit the EmPCalc with only the audit portion completed. Contact [Contractor Support](#) (800-284-9069) if you would like training on EmPCalc.

Q: How is market rate changing? Will it be Low- and Moderate-Income only?

A: The market rate portion of HPwES will sunset at the end of 2019. Market rate homeowners will still be eligible for a no cost energy audit and will have access to financing by NYSERDA, as well as rebated programs by utility programs and NYSERDA pilots administered by a different team at NYSERDA. The EmPower New York and Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® (AHPwES) will be merged into one program in 2020.

Q: Any change to requirements for Area Medium Income (AMI) to State Medium Income (SMI)?

A: Income guidelines are reviewed and updated annually. An announcement will go out when changes are made.

Q: Who do I call [or email]?

A: In general, [Contractor Support](#) (800-284-9069) is the best option as you will be transferred to the best person that can answer your questions. For an urgent matter, call your account manager. Or, if your account manager is unavailable, call any that are listed in the [Technical Services Contacts](#) section of the contractor support website.



Q: How do referrals from Energy Finance Solutions (EFS) to EmPower work?

A: EFS determines income eligibility and sends the information to CLEAResult Shared Services in batches. Shared Services then processes the information, creates a project in NY HP Portal and assigns it out to a contractor. Tenant EmPower New York applications must have a signed Landlord Agreement before being approved and assigned.

Workforce Development

Q: Are there incentives for training our staff?

A: NYSERDA's Workforce Development & Training team can provide the current opportunities. For additional eligibility, funding and incentive information, visit [Clean Energy Workforce Development](#) or email wfinfo@nyserderda.ny.gov.

Q: Does the Program offer on the job training?

A: Yes, the Program can provide training and assistance at each stage of a project. For example, Account Managers can shadow auditors, assist with workscope development, provide EmPCalc training and review quality assurance plans. Additionally, the Learning Management System (LMS) is available to all staff and most of the courses offer BPI CEUs.

Q: When onboarding a new employee, what support is available?

A: Training and support at each project stage is available. [Contact your Account Manager](#) for assistance.

Quality Assurance (QA) Scores

Q: Air Sealing: What if no blower door test is done and there is a \$500 limit, but the house clearly needs more work. Will the QA inspector take this into account?

A: At workscope submission include notes in the NY HP Portal explaining any limitations. Exceptions can be made if a compelling case can be made.

Q: Quality Assurance (QA) results seem to be 1, 2 or 5 and rarely (never) 3, 4. Why?

A: The QA scoring is described in [Section 10.1 | Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures](#) of the [Contractor Resource Manual](#).

- Uninstalled measures will always be a major failure due to accountability to rate payers funding the program.
- Auditors should take pictures of pre-existing conditions that might affect the workscope.
- Health and safety measures should always be noted.

Q: Why is it a QA failure for not air sealing the basement if the space is semi-conditioned?

A: A blower door test will help determine how connected the space is. QA failures can be contested with an explanation via QACSS.

Q: How do you find the "real" score?

A: The score will be on the dashboard in QACSS.



Q: How do you see scores after they are contested?

A: The report enters the contested workflow and after a decision is made any updates to the score will appear on the dashboard.

Installation Questions

Q: Why isn't fire rated foam allowed around a chimney?

A: Although fire rated foam is rated at high burn temperatures, it is still combustible.

Q: Is it acceptable to use spray foam against metal dryer venting?

A: Yes, but only against metal venting. It is not acceptable against other venting materials.

Q: What if a contractor has concerns about attic ventilation based their assessment?

A: Reach out your account manager to discuss the concerns and potential solutions.

Q: Can corners or near system peripherals like a plenum or 4" high capacity filter housing be included on heating system installs on Assisted Home Performance projects?

A: Plenums and near boiler piping can be included in the cost of the heating system. However, items such as furnace humidifiers and air cleaners are only available for financing. For additional information refer to [Section 6.3 Eligible Measures and Accessories](#) in the [Contractor Resource Manual](#).

Q: Can the NYSERDA Multifamily Performance Program (MPP) serve 5+ buildings or should EmPower New York?

A: Multifamily/multibuilding projects should be directed to the [NYSERDA MPP Program](#).

Q: Can pre-existing insulation be removed and paid for by the EmPower New York program?

A: If the pre-existing insulation is heavily damaged the removal cost may be considered for payment, otherwise it is not cost-effective to remove and isn't covered.

Q: Can vermiculite removal be covered by EmPower New York or HPwES?

A: Program incentives are not available for abatement of vermiculite. However, a portion of the cost could be financed if the loan meets cost effectiveness requirements. For additional information refer to the document in [Section 6.3 Eligible Measures and Accessories](#) in the [Contractor Resource Manual](#).

Q: Can an attic area with vermiculite be insulated (thermal boundary change)?

A: No, all vermiculite should be assumed to contain asbestos and not disturbed.

Q: How do you insulate behind a chimney close to an eave?

A: Depending on space, air seal around the chimney with sheet metal and fire caulk, construct a dam out of non-conductive material 6" away from the chimney, then add insulation. If the insulation has to be in contact with the chimney rockwool can be used.

Building Owners and Tenants

Q: Are building owners motivated to have work done? Are building owners interested in high efficiency equipment?

A: Building owners are commonly interested and look for free services. EmPower New York could be a good fit.



Q: Do building owners reach out for services?

A: Yes, building owners do reach out and should follow the same process as homeowners.

Q: How would you identify building owners?

A: NYSERDA reviews previous customer's referrals to help identify building owners.

Q: What are the challenges of deployment to building owners and tenants.

A: Consideration of the occupants and access to apartments should be made.

Q: Does NYSERDA actively market to condominiums?

A: Not generally, market awareness is limited.

Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP) Community Energy Advisors

Q: How can Community Energy Advisors (CEA) help contractors?

A: CEAs can connect residential, multifamily and small business customers to energy contractors who can implement clean energy projects and help connect customers to financing and other resources to fill funding gaps.

Q: How many leads are generated by a CEA?

A: The [Community Energy Engagement Program](#) tracks the number of customers assisted with clean energy applications and resources. These referrals to NYSERDA and non NYSERDA programs, referred to as opportunities, for residential, multifamily and small business customers are tracked as a whole; they are not tracked per home performance contractor. As of September 31, 2019, there have been 4,101 opportunities self-reported by the CEA's.

Q: Can contractors attend events with CEAs?

A: Yes, contractors can attend events with CEAs. CEAs represent NYSERDA and are encouraged to work with contractors to help customers better understand and make decisions about clean energy projects and assist in completion of clean energy projects. Working with CEAs does not guarantee leads.

Q: What kind of events do CEAs attend?

A: CEAs attend farmer's markets, food lines, fairs, street festivals, public library events and other community events that reach potential customers. Additionally, CEAs partner with other locally based organizations, and/or individuals representing constituency groups to extend NYSERDA's engagement of residential, small business, and multifamily customers.

NYSERDA

Q: Where do you find all the Program Opportunity Notices?

A: NYSERDA's website: [Current Funding Opportunities](#)

Q: Why can't NYSERDA advertise?

A: Advertising, other than TV marketing, is allowed and NYSERDA's Marketing team continues to conduct targeted marketing for both EmPower and HPwES eligible individuals.

Q: Why doesn't NYSERDA work more closely with HEAP offices?

A: Working relationships with NYSERDA programs are at the discretion of each HEAP office.

EmPCalc Audit Report

Q: What software generates the EmPCalc audit report?

A: EmPCalc is a Microsoft Excel workbook. The audit report is generated in that software.

Q: Is there an average Saving to Investment Ratio (SIR) for the whole project?

A: The Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Program uses a project level SIR. In EmPower New York, a measure level SIR is used. SIRs may not always be the best way to serve a customer. The program has discretion to approve EmPower New York measures that fall below a 1.0 SIR.

Green Jobs-Green NY (GJGNY) Act of 2009 and market rate Residential Energy Audit Program

Q: Does this apply to Long Island?

A: NYSERDA has updated the standards of an energy audit for all programs that provide GJGNY audits, including PSEG Long Island. However, the new market rate Residential Energy Audit Program is NYSERDA's program offer, which does not cover PSEG Long Island electric customers.

Q: How do you access the new market rate Residential Energy Audit Program?

A: Effective January 1, 2020, customers can access the no cost Residential Energy Audit Program by contacting a participating auditor. The list of participating auditors will be available on NYSERDA's website on January 1, 2020.

Q: Will GJGNY still receive funding from SBC?

A: The new Residential Energy Audit Program, as well as audits provided through Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR and EmPower New York, are currently funded by the Clean Energy Fund, which comes from the SBC charge on utility bills. There are limited RGGI funds available and used for municipal electric customer participants.

Loan Fund Changes

Q: For credit applications, is it a hard or soft pull for customer information?

A: It is a hard pull at the time of application.

NYS Healthy Homes Value Based Program Pilot

Q: Will you require BPI Healthy Homes Evaluator certification?

A: Yes. Participating contractors will be required to obtain BPI Healthy Homes Evaluation certification prior to participating in the Pilot. Additional information about this pilot will be coming towards the end of the year.

Q: What metrics are you using to determine impact?

A: The Pilot is a partnership between NYSERDA and the NYS Department of Health. Metrics used to determine impact will include energy savings, utility bill savings, health outcomes for the target household participant, and estimated healthcare cost savings for New York State.

Q: If this is successful, will the measures be implemented into other programs?

A: Pilot results will be examined and considered by both NYSERDA and the NYS Department of Health (DOH). It is unknown at this time what impact Pilot outcomes will have on other NYSERDA or DOH programs.



Q: Are you looking at items like humidity and monitoring? What about particulates?

A: Environmental testing will occur as part of the Pilot, to the extent possible given the intervention.

Q: What triggers qualification?

A: Qualifying households are being identified by participating managed care organizations (i.e., health plans). Referrals will be provided to NYSERDA by DOH.

Clean Heating and Cooling Update

Q: Is there any restriction to the type of Heat Pump (i.e. air to water) installed?

A: See [NYSERDA's Air Source Heat Pump Program](#) website for more information.

Q: Will NYSERDA be pushing the market forward to bring advancements on air to water heat pumps from Europe?

A: Yes, but it is slow-going. Currently heat pumps that meet the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships Cold Climate Heat pump standard are eligible for the air source heat pump program.

Q: PSEG just put out its own heat pump program, [Home Comfort Program](#). Is it separate from NYSERDA's program?

A: Yes, NYSERDA programs remain separate from PSEG.