

## How to Become an EmPower+ Participating Contractor

### EmPower+ Participation Requirements

Contractors interested in providing energy efficiency services to Tier 1 (Low-Income) and Tier 3 (Moderate Income) households through [EmPower+](#) (Program), must be approved by NYSERDA for program participation.

Currently, NYSERDA is only reviewing contractor applications for contractors serving the following counties within these regions:

- **North Country** (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence)
- **Capital Region** (Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington)
- **Hudson Valley** (Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester)
- **New York City** (Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, Richmond).

For counties/regions selected, the participating contractor shall dedicate sufficient staff with Program approved certifications for each approved service territory. The participating contractor shall employ at least one individual meeting the certification requirements of Section 5.2 of the Program Manual per 75-mile radius.

Interested contractors should review the current Participation Agreement found in Section 2 of the [Program Manual](#). Prior to applying, contractors should review this document and Section 5.2 of the [Program Manual](#) to ensure they meet the certification and application requirements for Program participation. It is expected that businesses/organizations applying to become a Participating Contractor are well established with the equipment and knowledge necessary to deliver high quality home performance services.

EmPower+ is supported by CLEAResult and TRC, who serve as NYSERDA's program implementors. Contractors interested in joining the Program should send an email to [support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov) with their company name, primary contact, address, and a request for information regarding EmPower+ participation.

### Application Materials

Contractors meeting the participation requirements can complete and submit a Residential Programs Contractor Application found in Section 2 of the [Program Manual](#) along with all of the supporting document identified below.

The applicant must provide NYSERDA the information below when submitting the Residential Contractor Application, as requested by NYSERDA, or when there are changes or updates to the information previously provided.

- **Completed Residential Programs Contractor Application:** The Applicant must read and submit the completed Agreement Application Signature Form to NYSERDA indicating agreement with its terms. The Residential Programs Contractor Application must be submitted by an individual with the full power and authority to enter into an Agreement on behalf of the company.

- **Detail of company and staff experience in the energy efficiency sector.** This is a requirement for all new applicants and for returning applicants at NYSERDA's request.
  - Employee roster of both certified and non-certified employees providing work experience, previous firms worked at and training. The contractor must provide sufficient information for Program staff to decide on the qualifications of a contractor to perform work through the Program. It is NYSERDA's sole discretion to request additional information as necessary for determining the eligibility of an applicant in meeting the requirements for participation.
  - Home performance contractors should provide documentation for a minimum of 6 months' experience for each type of specialty measure work they are looking to perform through the Program. If, for example, a contractor is looking to perform oil heat work through the Program, they should document how many installs they have performed for the past 6 months, type of equipment installed, and reference of the standards/procedures used (BPI, manufacturers, NORA) during a typical installation.
- **Certificate of Insurance**
  - For information about the insurance required, refer to Section 3.7 of the Residential Contractor Participation Agreement found in Section 2.3 of the [Program Manual](#).
- **DBA form (if applicable)**
- **The company's current W-9 that matches the Employer Identification Number (EIN) listed on the Residential Programs Contractor Application.**
- **Certifications held by staff within the company.** Refer to section 5.2 of the [Program Manual](#) for a list of acceptable certifications.
  - Note, certifications related to services provided on the Residential Programs Contractor Application must be submitted. (i.e., if Heat Pumps are selected on the Residential Programs Contractor Application, the applicable Heat Pump certification(s) must be submitted as supporting documentation with the application.)
- **Supplemental Information Form.** To be completed to identify and add other contacts to program records.
  - Refer to section 2.6 of the [Program Manual](#) for a copy of this form.

## Application Process

1. **Program review of Application and required supporting documents.**
  - Once all required paperwork has been submitted, NYSERDA will confirm all necessary paperwork is complete, and review website (if provided), and crowd-sourcing websites.
  - Upon satisfactory review and submission of all required documents, a contractor on-boarding interview will be scheduled between CLEAResult, and the contractor. This interview may include staff representing other programs the contractor has applied to.
    - Contractor will be expected to provide an overview of their services and experience and answer any additional questions posed by Program staff or CLEAResult.
    - Contractor will be provided with the opportunity to ask questions about the Program.

## 2. Contractor Review

- Following on-boarding interview, the Program will determine if the contractor meets the Evaluation Criteria outlined below and is accepted for participation in the Program.

### Evaluation Criteria for Contractor Acceptance

NYSERDA will evaluate the information provided on the Residential Programs Contractor Application and review all submitted documentation prior to approving an Agreement. NYSERDA will not decide on Contractor acceptance until all the requested information is received by NYSERDA from the applicant. The decision to fully execute an Agreement is at NYSERDA's sole discretion.

For both new applicants and returning applicants, key evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to the following:

1. An on-boarding interview. This requirement may be waived for returning applicants, at NYSERDA's discretion.
2. The applicant's commitment to fair and ethical business practices as demonstrated through references and review of other resources including, but not limited to, the Better Business Bureau, NYS Department of Labor, and crowd-sourcing websites.
3. Confirmation that applicant has been in business for a minimum of six months, with documentation of three recently completed energy efficiency projects.
4. Documented experience with advanced building science methods, as demonstrated through proof of professional certifications, training certificates, awards, and review of provided company information and information publicly available.
5. Documented prior relevant experience, such as references for completed projects, or participation in other NYSERDA programs or the Weatherization Assistance Program.
6. Documentation for certifications to related trainings (such as BPI, SPFA, NATE, NORA, manufacturer's installation certification).

For returning applicants, the past performance of the applicant and/or certified individuals in the Program or other similar programs which may include but is not limited to:

1. The quality of workmanship documented through the Program's Quality Assurance (QA) / Quality Control (QC) processes.
2. Demonstration of the applicant's ability to properly, and consistently, follow Program policies and procedures, including minimum production requirements.
3. Satisfactory and expedient resolution of non-conformances discovered during QA field inspection(s).
4. Satisfactory and professional interaction with Program Staff, Program participants, other contractors, and Program implementation contractors.
5. Satisfactory record of fair and ethical business practices.
6. Responsiveness to Program participant complaints, Program implementation contractor inquiries, and NYSERDA directives.
7. Contractors who have been suspended or terminated from the Program or other NYSERDA Programs.

## Program Review and Contractor Notification

### 1. Contractor Review

Following on-boarding interview, the Program will decide if the contractor is accepted for participation in the Program based on the evaluation criteria referenced above.

### 2. Contractor Notification

Following the contractor review, NYSERDA Program staff will determine if the contractor is accepted in the Program and communicate this decision to the contractor and Shared Services Implementor. The notification will be provided via email and will outline next steps and request any additional information needed to set up the contractor for program participation.

### 3. Participating Contractor Status

Once approved for Program participation, the Participating Contractor shall have the participation status of 'Provisional' during, at a minimum, the first six months of participation. During this time, NYSERDA may limit the number of projects a Provisional Contractor can submit to the Program as determined based on reported and founded customer complaints or failed QA field inspections, or other compliance issues deemed by NYSERDA as cause for limitation. For additional information on Participating Contractor statuses, please refer to Section 10.1 of the [Program Manual](#).

## New Contractor Onboarding Training

If approved, the contractor's primary contact will need to register for six (6) New Contractor Onboarding Training classes. The classes are hosted by the Implementation Contractors and attendance by at least one (1) (no more than two) member of the company is required. The classes typical schedule is as follows:

- Week 1, Class 1: Program Overview
- Week 1, Class 2: EmPower+ Customer Applications
- Week 2, Class 3: New York Home Energy Portal Live Demo, EmPower+
- Week 2, Class 4: New York Home Energy Portal Live Demo, Comfort Home (optional)
- Week 3, Class 5: Quality Assurance and Partner Portal
- Week 4, Class 6: Customer Concerns

Upon completion of all six (6) classes, the company will be provided with login credentials for the Workflow platform. Additionally, office hour sessions will be scheduled, and companies are encouraged to attend.

For additional questions about the Program or questions on how to join please reach out to [support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:support.residential@nyserda.ny.gov).

Additional Program information, including access to webinars and Program announcements can be found at <https://hpwescontractorsupport.com/> and information on all NYSERDA offerings can be found at <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All- Programs.>