

Program Background

NYSERDA's Single Family Residential Program, EmPower+ provides incentives for energy efficiency work based on household income. Households identified as Tier 1, are considered low-income, meaning the household earns 60% or less than the Area Median Income. Tier 1 households were previously served through the EmPower New York Program. Tier 3 households are considered moderate income, making 80% or less than the State or Area Median Income. Tier 3 Households were previously served through Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®.

EmPower+ assists New Yorkers in improving the energy performance, durability, comfort and safety of existing one-to-four-family homes throughout New York State.

The objectives of EmPower+ are to enhance the delivery of building performance services by using state-of-the-art diagnostic tools and building science principles to cost-effectively achieve goals which include decreasing energy consumption and costs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and enhancing building stock resiliency while simultaneously addressing health and safety issues pertaining to indoor air quality.

Implementation Contractors

NYSERDA relies upon the following implementation and external contractors to provide program support services:

- Intake Implementation Contractor (Shared Services)
 1. Provide Customer Support for prospective customers
 2. Review and approve EmPower+ applications
 3. Oversees the Call Center and Help Desk Ticketing intake and triage up to the workscope
- Technical Services Contractor
 1. Assign Participating Contractors to households
 2. Provide account managers who are assigned to each Participating Contractor and provides Program and technical support as needed
 3. Review and approve project worksopes
 4. Oversee Participating Contractor customer concerns and quality assurance compliance
 5. Review Participating Contractor performance in the Program
 6. Review and approve Participating Contractor project completion paperwork for payment.
- Loan Originator - Currently SlipStream (formerly Energy Finance Solutions or EFS)
 1. Review and approve loan applications
 2. Review and approve loans for Tier 3 (Moderate-Income) projects

3. Distribute loan payments to Participating Contractors for completed projects
- Quality Assurance - Currently Honeywell
 1. Schedule Quality Assurance inspections for 15% of project completions and for households who requested them within one year of project completion
 2. Perform in-field quality assurance inspections and report findings to Participating Contractor and Technical Services Implementor

External Contractors

- Loan Servicing - Currently Concord
 1. Following the completion of a project with a loan, the loan and associated project completion work is transferred from SlipStream to Concord, who will then collect the loan payment from the customer
 2. Maintains the loan and payment processing until the loan obligation is fulfilled
 3. [Regional Clean Energy Hubs](#) Help residents, businesses, and multifamily building owners reduce their energy use and energy costs and make informed energy decisions. NYSERDA's partners are dedicated to helping New Yorkers save money and live or work more comfortably.
 4. Work with households to complete Program paperwork and foster them through NYSERDA's residential programs

How the Program Works

Shared Services

- [EmPower+ Application](#)- Households looking to participate in the Program must complete the application and provide any requested documents. Shared Services Implementor reviews and approved applications will be designated either Tier 1 (Low-Income) or a Tier 3 (Moderate-Income) eligible.

Technical Services

- Participating Contractor Assignment- Approved applications will be assigned to a Participating Contractor if one was identified by the applicant. Otherwise, the next available contractor serving the region will be assigned. Participating Contractors can accept or defer assignments based on current capacity.
- Home Energy Assessments- Following the assignment of a Participating Contractor, the Participating Contractor will coordinate with the household a time for performing a home energy assessment. The home energy assessment is no cost to the household with the Participating Contractor identifying eligible energy upgrades for the household. In addition to the home energy assessment, Direct Install measures, as explained in Section 5.14 of the [Program Manual](#), are available at no cost to Tier 1 (Low-Income) and Tier 3 (Moderate-Income) households.
- Work Scope Development and Approval- Following the home energy assessment, the contractor will identify a work scope based on the home's needs and using eligible

program measures. The work scope will be reviewed (either through auto-approval or by Shared Services Implementor) and once it meets Program standards, approved. Participating Contractor must have the necessary certifications per Section 5.2 of the [Program Manual](#) for the work being performed or use a sub-contractor with the appropriate certifications.

- Project Completion-Upon approval of the work scope, Participating Contractor will schedule and perform the work and work with the household to get required project completion documents signed.
- Project Close Out/Payment- Participating Contractor submits completion documents to the program, who reviews and if complete approves project for payout. Invoice packages are processed by NYSERDA twice per week.
- Quality Assurance- If selected for Quality Assurance, contractor will be notified and will be provided with the opportunity to join the inspection. A report of the field inspection will be provided, and the Participating Contractor will be required to address any significant deficiencies noted.

Customer Incentives

For additional information of customer incentives, please refer to Section 3.1 in the [Program Manual](#).

- All Tiers
 1. Free Home Energy Assessments
 2. Free Direct Install Measures
 3. Access to Quality Assurance for completed projects
 4. Available to both renters and homeowners in 1-4 unit residential buildings
- Tier 1 (Low-Income) Households
 1. Incentive up to 100% of project costs with project caps based on the number of eligible units.
 2. Set pricing- Since the Program pay for 100% of the project costs, set pricing has been established for eligible measures with an Upstate/Downstate cost structure. Please refer to Section 5.5 of the [Program Manual](#) for current Tier 1 (Low-Income) pricing.
 3. Referrals- NYSERDA receives referrals from multiple organizations including, but not limited to, utilities, The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Offices for the Aging (OFA), other Participating Contractors, and other local community groups. NYSERDA's program implementer staff will distribute these referrals based upon geographic location of the referred household to the next available Participating Contractor.
- Tier 3 (Moderate-Income) Households

1. Incentives for approved energy efficiency measures- Households qualify for a discount covering 50% of the cost of eligible energy measures with project caps based on the number of eligible units.
2. Participating Contractor/customer negotiated pricing- Participating Contractor works with the household to develop a workscope and fair pricing for submission and review by the Technical Services Implementor
3. Access to low-interest financing- NYSEERDA offers two loan options to help Tier 3 (Moderate-Income) households pay for the upfront cost of energy efficiency upgrades. Both loan options are available for up to \$13,000 per applicant, and up to \$25,000. For further information please visit NYSEERDA's [finance web page](#).

Please see Section 5.15 of the [Program Manual](#) for a list of eligible measures for Tier 1 (Low-Income) and Tier 3 (Moderate-Income) Households.

Benefits of Contractor Participation

- Free Home Energy Assessments and Direct Install- Provides Participating Contractors with an opportunity to provide in-home services to households and potentially provide additional comprehensive services through the Program.
- Contractor Assignments- Participating Contractors can receive assignment/referrals from the Program providing them with the opportunity to serve households without prior outreach.
- Third-party Quality Assurance- Participating Contractors can provide “peace of mind” to households with the added option of third party quality assurance to ensure the project was installed to Program requirements.
- Technical Assistance- Participating Contractors have access to Technical Assistance for work scope development and navigation of Program components.
- Opportunities to participate in other NYSEERDA pilot initiatives (i.e., programs, studies) as needs arise.
- Access to the web based Portal for project submission and tracking and other NYSEERDA platforms for program communication and Program assistance.
- Prompt payment of eligible incentives upon successful approval of project completion paperwork.