

## EmPower+ Project Assignment Process

Upon receipt of a completed [EmPower+ Application](#), implementation staff will review the application and based upon the provided income documentation, assign the project as either Tier 1 (Low-Income) or Tier 3 (Moderate-Income). Once a program tier has been assigned, the household is only eligible for services and incentives provided to that Tier.

Applicants submitting an [EmPower+ Application](#) can select a participating contractor during the application process. If the household has selected a participating contractor, implementation staff will prioritize the project assignment to that contractor. If a participating contractor was not selected during the application process, the next available contractor serving that geographic region will be selected. Once a household has been approved for services, the program implementation staff sends a correspondence to the household, informing them of program approval, and providing the name and contact information of the participating contractor and NYSERDA's program implementor.

Participating contractors are responsible for checking program assignments through NYSERDA's NY Home Energy Portal on a routine basis. Participating contractors must make every effort to promptly pursue a referral and complete the necessary work. If the participating contractor fails to properly respond to a referral within 5 business days, the referral may be reassigned to another participating contractor by NYSERDA. Through the New York Home Energy Portal (NYHEP), the participating contractor can request an additional 5 business days if needed. Future referrals may be affected by a failure to promptly respond to referrals.

Upon accepting a household, the participating contractor must review provided customer documentation and, when available, energy usage information, directly from the NYHEP. Prior to the visit, the participating contractor should review this data to identify energy usage patterns and potential measures.

Following review of the customer documentation, the participating contractor must then contact the household to schedule a visit. During this contact, the participating contractor may:

- A. Verify interest
- B. Schedule the home energy assessment
- C. Clarify directions
- D. Discuss the need to gain full access to the dwelling
- E. Request copies of utility bills (if not provided at the time of application submission)
- F. Provide a brief overview of the home energy assessment process and the anticipated timeframe for completion.



The participating contractor must make at least three attempts to contact the household at various times of the day and evening using provided contact information. Participating contractor should try multiple types of contacts (i.e. if email and phone number is provided, send an email, and call the household). If no response is received, the participating contractor must send a letter to the household requesting contact from the household by a given deadline and providing appropriate phone numbers including program implementor's number, 866-NYSERDA. If the household does not respond by the deadline, the participating contractor should document their outreach efforts in the NY Home Energy Portal.

If an appointment is scheduled more than a week in advance, participating contractor must contact the household a day or so before to remind them of the appointment, thus reducing the likelihood of a no-show appointment.

### **Tier 1 (Low-Income) 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.

Participating contractors shall accept referrals from the Program and shall make every reasonable effort to encourage applicants to participate in the Program and, when providing Program services to these referral leads, do so in accordance with the Program guidelines, the Participation Agreement, and the Program Manual. Participating contractors found to be actively discouraging their customers from participating in the Program, including options for free or partially incentivized services for low- and moderate-income customers through alternative contractors, will be subject to the disciplinary measures detailed in Section 10. 1 of the [Program Manual](#).

### **Contractor Participation**

NYSERDA has a defined budget to serve EmPower+ Program participants and reserves the right to limit the number of contractors approved to provide programmatic services to EmPower+ Program participants, and the number of projects assigned to approved participating contractors.

Currently, EmPower+ is only accepting new contractor applications from the following areas:

- a. North Country
  1. Includes Lewis, Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton, and Essex Counties
- b. Capital Region
  1. Includes Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Albany, Greene, and Columbia Counties
- c. Mid-Hudson
  1. Includes Sullivan, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester Counties



- d. New York City
  - 1. Includes Bronx, New York, Richmond, Kings, and Queens Counties

EmPower+ will evaluate budgets and participating contractor regional coverage every 6 months and adjust as needed to ensure Program's ability to effectively serve New York State is maintained.

### **Project Assignment**

For participating contractors, the number of referrals/project assignments will fluctuate month-to-month based on the volume of referrals and applications received and the contractor capacity of the participating contractor's service territory. Approval of a participating contractor for Program participation by NYSERDA does not guarantee that projects will be assigned to the participating contractor. NYSERDA and its program implementor cannot guarantee assignments to participating contractors.

**Contractor Capacity:** It is the responsibility of the participating contractor to manage their work assignments accordingly between self-referrals and customer assignments from the Program. participating contractors with a maintained backlog of production may have referrals reassigned to a participating contractor in need of additional work. It is expected that the participating contractor will complete services within 120 calendar days; if services are not provided in a timely manner, and alternative production arrangements have not been agreed to, NYSERDA reserves the right to re-allocate incomplete work to another Participating Contractor.

- 1. Program Compliance:** Participating contractors that follow program guidelines will be eligible to receive referrals. Participating contractors demonstrating a lack of knowledge about program guidelines, have a high rejection rate of project work scopes or invoices, or are non-responsive to NYSERDA or the program implementer's requests will be considered out of compliance with the Program. The participating contractor will be notified in writing and required to correct the problem as prescribed. During this time Program referrals may be limited until the issue is satisfactorily rectified.
- 2. Contractor Assignment:** The ability of a participating contractor to receive referrals/project assignments may be impacted if that contractor is under disciplinary action as established through terms of Probation or has been Suspended from the program.

### **Service Territories**

Project referrals and project assignments are determined in part by a participating contractor's identified service territory. Participating contractors may choose to serve specific market regions, counties, or a defined radius from their office. 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.

The participating contractor shall only offer Program services in approved Program service territories identified on the fully executed Participation Agreement on file with NYSERDA or as approved through a separate communication submitted to NYSERDA. The participating contractor shall not offer or provide Program incentives in other territories where it does not have prior approval from NYSERDA. The participating contractor may submit a request to provide services to additional locations outside their approved Program service territories. The decision to allow a participating contractor to expand its Program service territory is at the sole discretion of NYSERDA.

## Version History

March 2025- Added current Program Participation areas for new contractors. Removed references to refrigerators/freezers.