

Notice of Fund Availability
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
Availability of Grant

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“BPU” or “Board”), located at 44 South Clinton Ave, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, hereby announces the availability of a grant using funds from the New Jersey Clean Energy General Fund.

Name of Program: COMMUNITY ENERGY PLAN GRANT (“CEPG”) PROGRAM

Purpose:

In 2019, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board” or “BPU”) created the Community Energy Plan Grant (“CEPG”) program with the purpose of providing funds to New Jersey municipalities to develop localized energy plans that are aligned with the goals of New Jersey’s Energy Master Plan.¹ New Jersey’s Energy Master Plan established that community-level action is necessary to achieve the state’s goal of 100% clean energy by 2050.

In 2021, BPU’s Office of Clean Energy Equity evaluated the program’s first year to implement improvements to the program, which ultimately included prioritizing assistance to low- and moderate-income communities and addressing barriers to participation for all communities.

The Board approved the second program year of CEPG in October 2021, with a grant term spanning from June 2022 to November 2023.²

In November 2023, the Board approved the opening of the third program year of CEPG.³ As part of Board approval of the third program year, the following changes were made:

1. The grant term was shortened from eighteen (18) months to twelve (12) months;
2. The criteria for determining overburdened municipalities was (“OBM” or “OBMs”) expanded to maintain a steady pipeline of OBMs eligible for participation.

In February 2025, the Board approved the fourth program year of CEPG.⁴ The program structure stayed mostly the same, with the following changes being made for the new round of grants:

1. CEPG participants must publish the final approved plan to their official municipal website as part of the grant closeout process.

¹ In re the Clean Energy Programs and Budget for Fiscal Year 2019 Trued Up and Revised Budget, BPU Docket No. QO18040393, Order dated March 29, 2019. See also New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, 2019 New Jersey Energy Master Plan: Pathway to 2050, https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/NJBPU_EMP.pdf.

² In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2022 Community Energy Planning, BPU Docket No. QO21091113, Order dated October 6, 2021.

³ In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2024 Community Energy Plan Grant Program, BPU Docket No. QO23090714, Order dated November 17, 2023; In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2024 Community Energy Plan Implementation Grant Program, BPU Docket No. QO23100729, Order dated November 17, 2023.

⁴ In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2025 Community Energy Plan Grant Program, BPU Docket No. QO24120873, Order dated February 12, 2025.

2. CEPG participants must promote the completed plan on the official municipality social media channels to raise municipal resident awareness of the completed plan.

Grantees in the fourth program year must comply with both new requirements to successfully complete the grant program.

Goal:

The goal of this grant program is for municipalities to create energy plans that address the needs of their respective communities, while also helping the state reach the goals established by the New Jersey Energy Master Plan.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Available Funding: A total of \$900,000 is available for this program.

Eligible Entities: All New Jersey municipalities are eligible to apply for funding.

Qualifications needed by an applicant: All New Jersey municipalities are eligible to apply for this grant. Municipalities applying for this grant must submit an administratively complete application to be considered for an award under CEPG.

Application Instructions:

Municipalities applying for this grant must submit an administratively complete application through SAGE in order to be considered for funding. The sections and subsections that must be correctly filled out in order for an application to be deemed administratively complete are as follows:

A) Application

- a. Applicant Information
- b. Vendor Information
- c. Officer and Directors List
- d. Program Details
- e. Objectives
- f. Background History/Capacity/Financial Management
- g. Agency Minority Profile
- h. Personnel Expenses
- i. Personnel Justification
- j. Consultant Services Costs
- k. Other Cost Categories
- l. Cost Summary
- m. Required Documents (to be attached in SAGE)

B) Contract

- a. Application for Grant Funds Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension
- b. Application for Grant Funds Certification Regarding Lobbying
- c. Certification Sheet

A CEPG grant guidance packet will be available to all interested applicants at www.njcleanenergy.com/cep.

Any questions regarding the program and/or application can be directed to community.energy@bpu.nj.gov.

Application due date: All applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, July 11, 2025.

Reporting Requirements:

Upon project completion, all awardees must submit the completed Community Energy Plan, a fully executed Resolution adopting the plan, one (1) final financial report, one (1) final performance report, proof of the plan being published on the municipal website, and proof of promotion of final plan on social media by the end of the one (1) year grant term.

Additional reporting requirements for CEPG vary based on grant award amounts. Awardees receiving a \$25,000 grant award must submit three (3) quarterly financial reports and one (1) final expenditure report. Awardees receiving a grant award of \$10,000 are required to submit one (1) final expenditure report at the end of the grant term. The financial reporting requirements shall begin three (3) months following receipt of grant awards.

Evaluation Criteria:

Administratively incomplete applications will not be considered for evaluation. An application will only be considered administratively complete if it meets the criteria outlined above. In the event that BPU receives more administratively complete applications than there is funding available, the following factors will be considered in funding determinations:

- 1) Priority to OBMs
- 2) Equitable distribution across all regions of the state
- 3) Municipalities who have not yet participated in the CEPG program

Grant Award:

All New Jersey municipalities are eligible to receive a \$10,000 grant award. Municipalities identified as being OBMs are eligible to receive a \$25,000 grant award. All municipalities participating in this program are eligible to receive technical assistance from Sustainable Jersey; however, OBMs will receive priority technical assistance during the application and plan development stages. A list of OBMs can be found at www.njcleanenergy.com/CEP and in the application packet.

Grant funds must be used exclusively to develop Community Energy Plans and to fund activities that support the creation of said plans.

Applicants will receive notice of award within 365 days of the close of the application window.

Awardees will be required to comply with Treasury Circular Letter 07-05-OMB, Grant Agreements-Agency Contracts, which provides many of the terms and conditions that will be made part of the grant agreement. Circular Letter 07-05-OMB and the template grant agreement are accessible at <http://www.state.nj.us/infobank/circular/cir0705b.pdf>.