

# Indiana Home Energy Rebate Listening Sessions

## Fort Wayne In-Person Q&A

This document includes responses to questions received during the in-Person Listening Session hosted in Fort Wayne for the Home Energy Rebate programs on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

*Some questions have been combined or modified for broader application. If you have any additional questions, or do not see your question listed, please contact [rebates@oed.in.gov](mailto:rebates@oed.in.gov).*

### **1. Can an applicant use categorical eligibility to verify their income for both programs?**

*Yes. Categorical eligibility can be used under both programs as an automatic verification of income eligibility for households with less than 80% of Area Median Income. To learn more about what programs are included under categorical eligibility, please see question 38 on the [DOE FAQ page](#).*

### **2. Who will review the applications?**

*Application reviews will be conducted by case managers, who will be employed and trained by the program implementation team.*

### **3. Will I be able to speak to someone directly if I call the call center?**

*Yes. The call center is being designed with the goal of ensuring trained staff can offer comprehensive assistance at a single point of contact.*

### **4. Are you planning to coordinate with other programs?**

*We are exploring ways to coordinate funding from different sources, including other federal programs and utility programs. The Home Energy Rebate programs have certain restrictions and requirements regarding coordination of other funding. Indiana is seeking ongoing guidance from the Department of Energy to ensure that any integration of funding sources is done effectively and in accordance with regulations. Collaboration is a priority throughout planning and implementation efforts to optimize the approach and ensure maximum benefit for our communities.*

**5. Will contractor prices be standardized?**

*OED's approach to contractor reimbursement rates focuses on identifying eligible improvements based on DOE guidelines. Indiana is conducting a market analysis to refine the list of eligible measures that are desirable to be included in Indiana's program. The market analysis aims to establish to set fair pricing and rates for these specific upgrades considering variables like effort level through collaboration with contractors. The goal is to streamline the process while ensuring homeowners have options in selecting energy improvements.*

**6. How can I find a map of disadvantaged communities near Allen County?**

*You can access a detailed version of the map using this [link](#) where you can zoom in to see locations identified as disadvantaged communities within Fort Wayne and throughout Allen County.*

**7. How do you plan to engage with trusted community organizations and leaders from Allen County to share information on this program?**

*There have been many 1-on-1 conversations with a variety of organizations in the Fort Wayne area and across the state of Indiana. We recognize the importance of collaborating with local stakeholders in Allen County to build community trust in the Home Energy Rebates program. We will continue to build upon these efforts and relationships to seek input from the community on how best to utilize local networks to spread awareness about the program.*

**8. What is the timeline for developing your qualified contractor network?**

*Program implementation will involve a ramp-up period to provide onboarding for selected contractors. Establishing this criteria and vetting interested contractors will occur after federal approval of the implementation blueprints. We are working behind the scenes to streamline processes for a prompt launch post-DOE approval. Initial steps are anticipated to begin in late 2024, with full scaling expected into early 2025.*

**9. What is the estimated number of households you're planning to serve?**

*It is difficult to provide an estimate of the number of households this program will serve given the variation of rebate amounts allowed in addition to each home's characteristics and energy-saving needs. For example, the measures and associated costs needed to achieve a 20% energy savings under the HOMES*

*program will vary across each home and can only be identified on a house-by-house basis. The program does require a 40% set aside of rebate funds for low-income households in Indiana. In addition, 10% of rebates funds are set aside low-income multifamily units. Required allocations per state can be found under Appendix A of the [federal program requirements](#).*

**10. Will this program pay contractors directly?**

*We are exploring methods to facilitate direct payment to contractors to simplify the process. This approach aims to eliminate the need for homeowners to pay upfront or manage rebate reimbursements. Our goal is to make the process as straightforward and efficient as possible for participants and contractors alike.*

**11. What kind of equipment is eligible under this program? How do ENERGY STAR requirements apply?**

*The equipment selected for the program will adhere to Energy Star requirements set by the Department of Energy (DOE), which are mandated for both programs. The DOE has recently introduced some flexibility regarding equipment options, and we are monitoring how this evolves. In addition, efforts are on-going and will be in place to ensure contractors remain focused on approved equipment options and maintain program integrity. While specifics are being finalized, we aim to ensure the selection of eligible measures and equipment aligns with federal guidelines under the Inflation Reduction Act and all measures implemented are readily available and benefit Indiana residents for the long term.*

**12. Can the rebate program be utilized in conjunction with federal tax credits?**

*The program can potentially be used alongside tax credits, but we cannot provide specific tax advice. It is incumbent upon the taxpayer to follow IRS rules regarding the applicability of tax credits, especially if any subsidy, rebate, or incentive was received for the upgrade. Specific guidance on tax credits should be sought from the IRS or a tax advisor. IRS resources have comprehensive information on tax credit eligibility and utilization.*

**13. How will households be informed about financing opportunities if they still owe some cost share for the project?**

*Case managers will inform households about potential cost gaps if rebates don't cover all expenses. They will be trained to identify other funding options such as loans or grants to bridge these gaps. The approach ensures compliance with federal program requirements while maximizing the available funding opportunities to the homeowner.*

**14. Can I apply for rebates each year?**

*The program will operate on a per-participation basis. By federal law, participants cannot receive multiple rebates for the same energy upgrade or investment and there are limits on how much total rebates a household can receive.*

**15. What's the timeline for program applications to be approved?**

*The timeline for application approval is currently being developed to ensure an efficient and streamlined process. As the program ramps up, continuous monitoring and refinement will occur to optimize the application and approval process over time.*

**16. Will there be a public platform to see how these dollars are being spent?**

*Yes, there will be a public platform to see how the funds are spent and distributed.*

**17. Will there be additional funds available for other home improvements like roofs?**

*The Home Energy Rebates program focuses on specific energy efficiency measures funded by federal dollars. Roofs are not an eligible improvement under the program. While we are exploring ways to utilize additional funding sources to support Home Energy Rebates project delivery, there will be limitations on projects and funding outside the scope of the program.*

**18. What is “stacking and braiding”?**

*Stacking and braiding refers to the strategy of integrating multiple funding sources, such as weatherization programs, tax credits, and utility incentives, into the delivery of energy efficiency program. We are working closely with the DOE and various organizations to determine how best to weave these funding streams together effectively to provide as much financial support as feasible.*