

# Indiana Home Energy Rebate Listening Sessions

## Virtual Statewide Kickoff Q&A

This document includes responses to questions received during Indiana’s Statewide Virtual Kickoff Listening Session for the Home Energy Rebate programs held on April 30, 2024.

*Some questions were combined or modified for wider 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).*

### **Program Design**

**1. Will the rebate programs be structured so that low-income households do not need to shoulder the entire up-front cost? (i.e. rebates up front or thru contractor)**

*a. OED intends to eliminate in most cases the need for a low-income household - defined as 80% Area Median Income (AMI) or less - to shoulder any burden while awaiting reimbursement for a qualified project.*

**2. For the Home Efficiency Rebates (HOMES), are you considering allocating a higher percentage of the rebate funds beyond the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) rebate minimums for low- and moderate-income (LMI) and multi-family categories?**

*a. Per federal guidance, Indiana’s minimum allocation of rebate funds is 40% for low- and moderate-income (LMI) and 10% for multi-family. OED welcomes any feedback or suggestions on higher percentage allocations on this [form](#).*

*i. To learn more about the HOMES minimum percentage allocations, please see question 87 on [DOE’s FAQ page](#).*

**3. Are these instant rebates for homeowners, or will homeowners be required to submit for reimbursement on purchase?**

*a. OED is in the early phase of designing the specific program elements and no final decisions have been made regarding this question. OED looks forward to hearing from stakeholders on these design elements and encourages interested parties to submit feedback to this [form](#) to assist in the planning process.*

**4. How will you decide who to prioritize when awarding rebates? Will the program be “first come, first serve?” Will counties be given proportionate funds based on their populace?**

*a. The program intends to be open to all who qualify until all funds are exhausted. However special care is being given to examining how to ensure funds are equitably available throughout the state as part of the program design.*

- i. *Those with suggestions or feedback on distribution are encouraged to submit comments to this [form](#) to assist in the planning process.*

## **Contractor Requirements**

### **5. Is there an incentive for High Performance Home building to ZERH or PHIUS Passive certification levels?**

- a. *The Home Energy Programs does not provide incentives specifically for building to ZERH or PHIUS Passive certification levels, but the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR) Program allows for Qualified Electrification Projects as part of new construction projects. These projects could support achieving those certification levels.*
  - i. *HEAR program income eligibility is limited to up to and including 150% AMI so the homes built to those levels would need to be occupied by those with incomes less than that threshold for at least two years.*

### **6. Is OED considering using third-party rebate aggregators as an option to complete rebate paperwork on behalf of contractors?**

- a. *OED is considering all options at this phase of the program design process and has not made a final decision regarding the option of including third-party aggregators in its program design.*
  - i. *To learn more about Aggregators, please see question 15 on [DOE's FAQ page](#).*

### **7. Will Building Performance Institute (BPI) certification be required for contractors to offer rebates to their customers?**

- a. *DOE program requirements state that modeled energy savings, calculated as part of the modeled program path for the Home Efficiency Rebates (HOMES) program, must be consistent with BPI 2400 standards. These energy modeling standards are different from BPI certifications. BPI certification is under consideration for contractors under OED's program.*

- 1. *The program requirements provided by the U.S. DOE can be viewed [here](#).*

### **8. Assuming contractors will bear the burden of carrying the rebates until receiving payment from the state, what is the anticipated timeline that contractors can expect to receive payment?**

- a. *The State is exploring program pathways to minimize this timeline. Contractor engagement strategies are currently being developed as part of the implementation planning process.*

**9. Are there any certifications required for insulation contractors?**

- a. *Certifications and requirements will include industry accepted home performance industry credentials, training requirements, business insurance and licensure, skills standards, and labor standards. We will provide updates as this portion of the program design is further defined.*

**10. How will the program verify that insulation and air sealing have been done in a proper way?**

- a. *The program will require post-installation documentation and verification to be conducted. This will include post-installation on-site inspections and testing.*

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

**11. When will the program start and when will I be able to submit my application?**

- a. *OED anticipates launching the program in late 2024 or early 2025 depending upon when the State of Indiana receives program approval and release of funds from the U.S. Department of Energy. The applicant portal will open upon program launch. OED is considering opportunities for a soft launch prior to a full statewide launch to ensure a smooth program rollout.*

**12. Where can I find the state's program application?**

- a. *The state application, which includes the implementation plans, is still in development and will be publicly posted upon approval of the program plan by the U.S. Department of Energy.*

**13. What will be on the agenda for the public sessions? Will you be doing presentations or provide an overview of the programs at those meetings? Are there any priority aspects of the program that you are hoping to get input on from the public? What input from the public would you find most helpful in finalizing the blueprint?**

- a. *OED is looking forward to sharing an overview of the programs, as well as hearing comments and questions from meeting attendees to help us continue to design the best program for Indiana residents. We will be providing a survey after each session to gather input on some specific topics as well.*

**14. What can local citizens do to help you along with this process?**

- a. *OED encourages interested parties to provide feedback, submit questions, and participate in future events throughout the program planning phase.*
  - i. *Comments, suggestions, and questions about the design of Indiana's Home Energy Rebate programs can be submitted to this [form](#).*

**15. Could you please provide contact information for the speakers tonight?**

- a. *Please submit any questions regarding Indiana’s Home Energy Rebate Program to [rebates@oed.in.gov](mailto:rebates@oed.in.gov) directly to receive a prompt response. To submit a comment or provide feedback, please fill out this [form](#).*

**16. Will the in-person events include a Q&A?**

- a. *OED will provide additional information at each session based upon progress made throughout the planning process. We anticipate offering an opportunity for Q&A during each session.*

## **Workforce Development**

**17. Will the workforce development include door-to-door engagement hires to help get the word out?**

- a. *OED is in the process of planning its community outreach strategies, which will be impacted by feedback from the public engagement sessions. These strategies and tactics will be incorporated into our final program plan submitted to the U.S. DOE for approval.*

## **Retroactivity**

**18. Where would I send my receipt to get a rebate for the appliance I just purchased?**

- a. *The federal law does not authorize states to offer retroactive rebates under the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate (HEAR) program.*
- b. *The federal law does authorize states to provide retroactive rebates under the Home Efficiency Rebate (HOMES) program for projects begun on or after the enactment of the law on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. However, it is important to note that qualified rebate projects must meet all federal compliance and reporting requirements. Due to the complex nature of the federal regulations associated with this program, OED does not recommend expecting to receive a rebate for equipment or work completed prior to the start of the state implementation date of the programs.*
  - i. *To learn more about federal retroactivity requirements, please see question 29 on [DOE’s FAQ page](#).*
  - ii. *To learn more about other tax credit-related opportunities for a qualifying purchase, please visit our website at <https://www.in.gov/oed/grants-and-funding-opportunities/homeowner-incentives/> or the IRS at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).*

## **Eligibility**

### **19. How will the income levels be verified and who will be responsible for the verification?**

- a. *Income verification will be an essential part of the applicant process and program design for determining eligibility for participation in the program. Households will be required to provide income documentation for all adult household members before assistance is provided. Income levels are determined based on Area Median Income (AMI). AMI is determined by location (county) and household size.*
  - i. *Any applicant may be eligible for the HOMES program, but applicants below 80% AMI will qualify for a higher rebate amount.*
  - ii. *Applicants eligible for the HEAR program must have a combined household income below 150% AMI; applicants below 80% AMI will also qualify for a higher rebate amount under this program.*
- b. *OED is considering the use of categorical program eligibility to fulfill income verification.*
  - i. *To learn more about categorical program eligibility, please see question 37 on [DOE's FAQ page](#).*
- c. *Contractors will not be responsible for vetting and determining income eligibility; instead, homeowners will be responsible for this during the application process.*
  - i. *To learn more about income eligibility requirements, please see question 24 on [DOE's FAQ page](#).*

### **20. I currently rent my home, am I able to participate?**

- a. *Both programs are open to single- and multi-family rental properties whose tenants meet the eligibility requirements. It is important to note that the building owner or landlord will need to provide approval for certain upgrades. OED is currently developing its plans for this process.*
  - i. *If you are an owner of a renter-occupied building, you may also apply for rebates. To learn more, please see question 33 on [DOE's FAQ page](#).*

## **Justice40 Initiative**

### **21. I don't live in a Justice40 community. Can I still participate in the program?**

- a. *Yes. Residence in a Justice40 community is not a criterion for program eligibility.*
  - i. *To learn more about how the Justice40 initiative interacts with the Home Energy Rebate Programs, please see question 82 on [DOE's FAQ page](#).*

**22. How do we make sure that our city and town collaborate with grassroots organizations in Justice40 communities?**

- a. *OED intends to develop a multifaceted strategy to engage Justice40 communities and welcomes collaboration with local units of government and community stakeholders.*

**23. How can we track the funding to make sure the population that the funds were intended for receive the funds? What transparency will there be for the Justice40 initiative?**

- a. *OED intends to create a transparent, publicly accessible dashboard to track various program metrics.*

## **Utilities**

**24. Has there been any discussion with utilities regarding how this program will overlap with existing programs and assessments utilities offer?**

- a. *OED is in very early discussions with several utilities on a variety of topics. While we do not have any information to share on this topic at this time, OED intends to collaborate with utilities throughout the State of Indiana.*

**25. How are utilities being engaged?**

- a. *Preliminary utility coordination has begun and is currently focused on simplifying the applicant experience.*

## **Interactions with Other Programs**

**26. Is Solar for All included in these programs?**

- a. *Solar for All is a different program, which is not administered by OED.
  - i. *Those interested in this program can learn more by visiting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [website](#).**
- b. *OED is exploring opportunities to braid or blend the home energy rebate funds with other programs in accordance with DOE guidance; however, there are several limitations set in federal law that OED must adhere to and be mindful of in order to build an efficient and effective program.*