



Commercial & Community Buildings Grant Program

FY27 Frequently Asked Questions

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Eligibility - Building Type

Are State universities eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings funding?

Public senior higher education institutions as defined in §10– 101(m) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland are ineligible to apply, as well as any institution of higher education for which funds were appropriated from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) in the FY27 budget.

Is Commercial & Community Buildings funding available to State agencies for state owned or leased facilities?

No. State agencies are ineligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings funding.

Are performing arts centers eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings funding?

Yes. Performing arts centers, as well as arts centers in general, are eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings grant funding.

Are private school student housing projects eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings funding?

Student housing is eligible to apply for grant funding as long as the building is owned by an eligible private school and is located on-campus.

Are warehouses eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

Yes, warehouses pursuing building decarbonization projects are eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings funding.

Are volunteer fire stations eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

Yes, volunteer fire stations are eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings grant funding.

Are religious institutions eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

Yes, religious institutions are eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings grant funding.

Are multifamily affordable housing buildings eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

No. Multifamily affordable housing buildings are not eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings. Instead, they're eligible for funding via the [Department of Housing & Community Development](#).

Are agriculture buildings eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

Yes. Agricultural buildings are eligible to apply for Commercial & Community Buildings as long as they're not classified as residential.

Eligibility - Project Type

Are electric-to-electric upgrades allowable?

Yes. Electric-to-electric energy efficiency projects are eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings funding.

Are there minimum energy efficiency standards or other requirements for equipment?

Yes. Appliance upgrades, such as commercial kitchen and refrigeration equipment, must be ENERGY STAR-certified to qualify for funding.

Are dual-fuel projects eligible for funding?

No, projects that include fossil fuel or other combustion technologies that produce greenhouse gas emissions are not eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings funding.

For buildings upgrading kitchen equipment, must the new units be induction to qualify for funding, or is electric acceptable?

New kitchen equipment can be either induction or electric as long as they're ENERGY STAR-certified.

Do water heaters need to be ENERGY STAR-certified to qualify for funding?

No. Water heaters do not need to be ENERGY STAR-certified to be eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings funding.

Do LEA's apply for school administration buildings in the LEAs Track?

Yes. LEAs should apply for school administration building projects via the LEA track.

Are major renovation projects eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

Yes. Major renovation projects may be submitted for Commercial & Community Buildings grant funding consideration.

Are both new construction projects eligible for Commercial & Community Buildings?

Only LEAs are eligible to apply for new construction projects under Commercial & Community Buildings. New construction is defined as the design and construction of new, ground-up buildings or significant additions.

Are roof upgrades an eligible measure in tandem with rooftop solar projects?

Yes. Eligible buildings may include roof upgrades in their proposed scope of work if their project includes the purchase and installation of rooftop solar systems.

What building types are eligible to apply for solar rooftop, solar ground mount, and/or solar canopy related funding?

- Only non-profits, local governments, and local education agencies are eligible to apply for solar rooftop, solar ground mount, or solar canopy funding.

Evaluation Criteria

Are the equipment spec sheets required to be submitted with the initial application or as the project is installed/completed?

Equipment spec sheets are required upon application submission. Please submit spec sheets for the equipment you're planning to install. If the equipment purchased changes from the time of application submission, updated spec sheets may be emailed to

CommercialCommunity.MEA@maryland.gov.

How do applicants assess baseline data for a building that is not currently occupied?

Please work with a verified service provider or vendor to help assess baseline data for currently unoccupied buildings. Please visit the [Maryland Clean Buildings Hub](#) for [Service Provider & Vendor Resources](#).

For rented or leased buildings, is there a standard letter of intent that can be submitted alongside the Commercial & Community Buildings application?

No. There is not a standard letter of intent for the building or property owners to utilize. A signed letter from the building/property owner is acceptable.

For applicants who own their building, is a signed letter of intent required?

No. A letter of intent is not required for building owners. Building owners only need to identify an individual with the authority to commit them to execute the grant's requirements.

Funding

Is the grant funding disbursed prior to work beginning or does the applicant need to pay upfront and then receive reimbursement?

Grant funding will only be disbursed to awardees in stages following the full execution of a grant agreement. Funding will only be issued as reimbursement for completed work upon proof of purchase via detailed invoice documentation and project status updates provided to MEA throughout the performance period.

Once commitment letters have been signed, can a grantee get started with purchase orders (POs) before signing the official grant agreement?

Yes. As long as no payments are being made, grantees who have signed commitment letters but have not yet signed the official grant agreement can proceed with POs at their own risk as long as they reach out to MEA first for approval.

Are engineering and design services eligible for grant funds?

Yes. Engineering and design services are eligible for reimbursement and must be listed as a line item in the proposed budget.

Are applicants allowed to apply for multiple Maryland Energy Administration Grant Programs for the same project?

Applicants cannot receive funding for the same equipment or upgrade from more than one program; but they may apply to several Maryland Energy Administration Grant Programs as long as each request covers a distinct upgrade.

How should prospective applicants provide total project costs for eligible building improvements if pricing will likely not be finalized until after the Commercial & Community Buildings application deadline?

Applicants are encouraged to provide the most accurate cost information as possible for their upcoming projects. Once grant applications are submitted, changes cannot be made, and will be evaluated based on the included cost details. Once grants are awarded, the grant amount cannot be increased to accommodate any changes in the project.

Vendors & Service Providers

Are there any contractor procurement rules regarding Commercial & Community Buildings funding?

No, there are no contractor procurement stipulations.

Is there a "preferred-vendor" list based on the type of installation or upgrade?

There is no preferred-vendor list, but those interested are encouraged to visit the [Maryland Clean Buildings Hub](#) for [Service Provider & Vendor Resources](#) to review a list of possible Service Providers and vendors for their projects.

What are the steps to become a vendor?

There are no vendor requirements for Commercial & Community Buildings projects. All grantees are encouraged to thoroughly research their vendors and Service Providers to ensure companies are fully insured, licensed, and verified to perform and complete the planned project upgrades.

Miscellaneous

How does the reporting process work once a grant agreement is fully executed?

Once the grant agreement is fully executed, grantees must provide a project status update alongside any detailed invoices (if applicable) on a regular basis as determined by the Program's reporting requirements throughout the period of performance.

What timeframes should be kept in mind for awarded Commercial & Community Buildings projects? When must projects start and be completed by?

Grantees who are awarded funding may only apply it to activities that occur after the grant agreement is fully executed. Once the grant agreement is executed, grantees have a specified number of months (see the Funding Opportunity Announcement for details) to complete their

project. An extension for good cause may be requested by a grantee and must be justified with written documentation explaining the need for an extension.

How many applications/calculators must be submitted for projects that contain both solar ground mount/rooftop AND canopy solar installations?

One application/calculator should be submitted for projects that contain both types of solar upgrades.

Are applicants required to pay contractors first and then request reimbursement?

Yes. Commercial & Community Buildings operates on a reimbursement basis. Applicants must cover project costs upfront, including contractor payments, and then submit invoices and required documentation to MEA for reimbursement once the project is complete. Applicants who need financing or bridge loans to cover upfront project costs should refer to the Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) for potential financing assistance.