



Maryland Energy Administration

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Home Energy Rebate Programs Frequently Asked Questions

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) provides these FAQs as general guidance on the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Home Energy Rebate Programs. This information does not serve as professional advice or override official program requirements. For additional questions, contact the IRA Rebates team at irarebates.mea@maryland.gov.

What are the IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs?

The IRA includes two rebate programs for home energy efficiency and electrification projects. Together, these are referred to as the **Inflation Reduction Act Home Energy Rebate Programs**:

- **The Home Efficiency Rebates Opportunity Program (HERO)** for eligible whole-home energy efficiency upgrades that reduce home energy usage by at least 20%.
- **The Home Electrification & Appliance Rebates Program (HEAR)** for eligible conversions of fossil-fuel appliances to electric appliances (e.g., switching from fuel oil or propane heating to an electric heat pump) and some supporting upgrades, like electrical panel upgrades.

You may see different names for these programs elsewhere, but the above are Maryland's official program names.

What is electrification?

Electrification means replacing fossil fuel-powered systems and appliances with electric alternatives, such as switching from a gas furnace to an electric heat pump or replacing a gas water heater with an electric one. Electrification enhances home health and safety, increases energy efficiency, improves indoor and outdoor air quality, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

When will these rebates be available in Maryland?

The Maryland Energy Administration is working to advance the state's applications for the IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs and gain program approval from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The Maryland Energy Administration cannot confirm a program launch date at this time as the proposed programs must ultimately be approved by DOE. Broadly speaking, MEA anticipates these programs becoming available in Maryland in 2025.

How can I determine if I'm eligible for these programs?

The Maryland Energy Administration cannot confirm the details of program eligibility at this time as the proposed programs must ultimately be approved by DOE. However, Maryland Energy Administration's plans for both programs are detailed in the resources below:

- [9/27/24 Public Comment Session](#)
- [10/1/24 Public Comment Session](#)
- [Presentation PDF](#)

Will these rebates be available for projects that have already been completed?

HERO Program: since states must establish programs that ensure compliance with the IRA in addition to their own requirements, it will be difficult to offer rebates for projects completed before program requirements are fully defined and programs are operational.

HEAR Program: The IRA does not allow HEAR rebates to be provided retroactively.

I need a home energy upgrade now. What should I do?

The Maryland Energy Administration does not recommend that households wait to accomplish needed home energy upgrades. While the IRA Home Energy Rebates are not yet available, you may qualify for other federal, state, local, and utility-sponsored energy efficiency programs, if applicable based on project specifics, including:

- [EmPOWER Maryland](#) residential efficiency incentives:
 - [Potomac Edison service territory](#)
 - [Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative service territory](#)
 - [Baltimore Gas & Electric service territory](#)
 - [Pepco service territory](#)
 - [Delmarva Power & Light \(DPL\) service territory](#)
- [Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development \(DHCD\) Energy Efficiency Programs:](#)
 - [EmPOWER Maryland Limited Income Energy Efficiency Program](#)
 - [Weatherization Assistance Program](#)
 - [Maryland Energy Assistance Program](#)
 - [Multifamily Energy Efficiency and Housing Affordability Program](#)
 - [BeSmart Energy Efficiency Loans for Homeowners](#)
- [Maryland Energy Administration Energy Efficiency Equity Grant Program:](#) Contact an Energy Efficiency Equity grantee serving your geographic area to determine if you are eligible for grant-funded home energy efficiency upgrades. A list of service organizations and service territories is available [here](#).
- [Federal Energy Efficiency Home Improvement Credit](#) (Note: The Maryland Energy Administration is unable to give tax advice. Please consult a tax professional for any tax-related questions.)
- [Maryland Clean Energy Advantage Loan Pilot Program](#) through the Maryland Clean Energy Center

What has the Maryland Energy Administration done since the IRA passed to launch these programs?

The Maryland Energy Administration recognizes the high demand for the Inflation Reduction Act Home Energy Rebate programs and has been working diligently to launch them. The following timeline details key milestones in this process:

- **August 2022:** The president signed the IRA into law after it gained approval from both houses of Congress.

- **July 2023:** DOE released program application guidance to states for the IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs requiring states proceed through an application process for program approval.
- **November 2023:** The Maryland Energy Administration released a Request for Information for public input on the IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs.
- **January 2024:** The Maryland Energy Administration submitted an application for IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs administrative funding to hire new staff.
- **July 2024:** DOE approved the Maryland Energy Administration's administrative funding request.
- **September 2024:** The Maryland Energy Administration hired two new IRA Home Energy Rebate Program Managers.
- **September/October 2024:** The Maryland Energy Administration hosted two public comment sessions on the IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs, which included an overview of the agency's proposed approach to both programs.
- **October 2024:** The Maryland Energy Administration submitted Maryland's application for the HEAR Program to DOE.
- **December 2024:** The Maryland Energy Administration submitted Maryland's application for the HERO Program to DOE.
- **January 2025:** DOE granted conditional awards to the Maryland Energy Administration for both IRA Home Energy Rebate Programs. The Maryland Energy Administration is working to meet the remaining DOE requirements so these conditions may be lifted.

The application process, as required by the IRA and DOE, ensures state programs meet federal standards, provide public benefit, and foster innovative energy efficiency and electrification solutions.

Can the HEAR Rebates be used to replace an electric appliance with a more efficient electric appliance?

The IRA prohibits HEAR rebates for the replacement of an electric appliance with another electric appliance (e.g., like-to-like/electric-to-electric replacements). DOE requires that all appliance replacements rebated under this program are fossil fuel to electric conversions.

How can I stay updated on these programs?

For the latest information, visit the [IRA Home Energy Rebates](#) website.