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FY25 Maryland Solar Access Program

Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions are asked frequently regarding the upcoming [FY25 Maryland Solar Access Program](#) (“the Program”), which was established by the Brighter Tomorrow Act of 2024 ([Chapter 595, 2024 Acts of Maryland, 2024 S.B. 783](#)¹) as the “Customer-sited Solar Grant Program”. This document is provided as a **guidance document only** for future FY25 Maryland Solar Access Program applicants and interested parties (“FAQ Document”). **None of the information in this document should be construed as professional consultation. Further, this document does not override the eligibility requirements of the Program, which will be posted on the Program webpage in a Funding Opportunity Announcement (“FOA”) later in calendar year 2024.** Please direct any questions that cannot be answered by this FAQ Document to the Maryland Solar Access Program Team by sending an email to SolarAccess.MEA@Maryland.gov.

When will the Maryland Solar Access Program be available?

Answer: The Maryland Solar Access Program will accept Step 1 applications for Reservation Certificates in January 2025, per the requirements of the Brighter Tomorrow Act of 2024.

What is the budget for the FY25 Maryland Solar Access Program?

Answer: The program has a budget of \$15,000,000.

When will the Maryland Solar Access Consumer Protections Policy be published?

Answer: The Maryland Solar Access Consumer Protections Policy Request for Information is posted through November 26, 2024. The finalized version of the Maryland Solar Access Program Consumer Protections Policy will be published in December 2024.

What does it mean to be a Participating Contractor for the Maryland Solar Access Program?

Answer: MEA will require each solar PV installation contractor who wishes to participate in the Program to apply and be posted on a Participating Contractor List. This list will help ensure that Maryland Solar Access Program-eligible contractors meet the statutory requirements under the Brighter Tomorrow Act.

¹ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0783>

If I use an installation contractor that is not posted on the Maryland Solar Access Program participating contractor list am I still eligible for a grant?

Answer: No.

Can I apply for a Maryland Solar Access Grant for a solar PV system that will be installed before the Maryland Solar Access Program is open for applications?

Answer: No. Maryland Solar Access grants must be applied for before a qualifying solar PV system is installed.

If I sign a contract with a contractor before January 1, 2025, but have not installed the system am I still eligible to apply for a Maryland Solar Access Grant?

Answer: No. The Maryland Solar Access Program will only accept executed solar contracts dated from January 1, 2025, and after.

After I apply for and receive a Step 1 Reservation Certificate, how long do I have to submit a Step 2 Completion Certificate?

Answer: Per the Brighter Tomorrow Act of 2024 the solar installation must be completed within 180 days of the Step 1 Reservation Certificate. An extension request process will be available.

How much are the grants from the Maryland Solar Access Program?

Answer: Grants will be based on the size of the solar system, at \$750/kW, up to a maximum total individual grant of \$7,500. This is per the requirements of the Brighter Tomorrow Act of 2024.

Can I get a Maryland Solar Access Grant for an existing or expansion to a solar PV system?

Answer: No. Maryland Solar Access grants will be available for new solar PV systems only, and the application for a Maryland Solar Access grant must be submitted prior to installation of the system.

Will the Maryland Solar Access Program be an income-qualified program?

NOTE: This question was updated on November 26, 2024.

Answer: MSAP grants are limited to eligible applicants whose annual household income does not exceed the limits in the table below, based on household size. An applicant is required to attest that they meet these income requirements as part of the application. **Note:** MEA reserves the right to verify household income requirements upon request². The FY25 MSAP income limits

² Any income verification activities will be in compliance with the Act.

are 150% of the average median income for the State of Maryland, in accordance with the Act. MEA calculated these amounts based on state income data published by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD”)³.

Household Size	Maximum Gross Yearly Income
1	\$128,430
2	\$146,715
3	\$165,090
4	\$183,375
5	\$198,090
6	\$212,715
7	\$227,430
8	\$242,055

How do I calculate the maximum gross yearly income for my household?

Answer: Household annual gross income can be calculated by adding up the total income from all sources of every household member over a 12-month period, using the most recent income information available, and adjusting based on household size. MEA refers to the DHCD definition of allowable versus excluded income when calculating gross income.⁴

Allowable Income	Excluded Income
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money, wages, and salaries before any deductions; • Net receipts from non-farm or farm self-employment (receipts from a person's own business or from an owned or rented farm after deductions for business or farm expenses); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital gains, • Any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank; • Money received from the sale of a property, house, or car; • One-time payments from a welfare agency to a family or person who is in temporary

³ Income limits are calculated by multiplying the household income amounts on the “Statewide” row of the “100 Percent of Area or State Median, Adjusted for Family Size 1-8 Person Households” table on page 14 of DHCD’s 2024 [Income and Rent Limits Tables](#) by 150%.

⁴ <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Documents/wap/EnergyEfficiencyProgramOperationsManual.pdf>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular payments from social security, railroad retirement, unemployment compensation, strike benefits from union funds, worker’s compensation, veteran’s payments, training stipends alimony and military family allotments; ● Private pensions, government employee pensions (including military retirement pay), and regular insurance or annuity payments; ● Dividends and/or interest; ● Net Rental income and net royalties; ● Periodic receipts from estates or trusts; and ● Net gambling and lottery winnings. 	<p>financial difficulty;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tax refunds; ● Gifts, loans, or lump-sum inheritances; ● College Scholarships; ● One-time insurance payments, or compensation for injury; ● Non-cash benefits, such as the employer-paid or union-paid portion of health insurance; ● Employee fringe benefits, food or housing received in lieu of wages; ● The value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms; ● The imputed value of rent from owner-occupied non-farm or farm housing; ● Depreciation for farm or business assets; ● Federal non-cash benefit programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, school lunches, housing assistance; ● Combat zone pay to the military; ● Child Support Payments;*; ● Reverse mortgages; and ● Payments for care of Foster Children.
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*A common income exclusion for DHCD is child support.

My household income will likely exceed the income limit for the Program. Are there any incentives that I can apply for if I’m considering solar energy for my home?

Answer: The Maryland Solar Access Program is a statutorily-mandated income-qualified program. While MEA will not provide an FY25 residential solar incentive for households that exceed the Maryland Solar Access Program income limit, the federal government’s solar investment tax credit is still available. The credit is presently set at 30% of the installed cost of the solar system as of the publication date of this FAQ Document. For more information, please visit the U.S. Department of Energy [Homeowner’s Guide to the Federal Tax Credit for Solar Photovoltaics page](https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/homeowners-guide-federal-tax-credit-solar-photovoltaics)⁵. **Note: MEA does not administer or have authority over the federal solar investment tax credit.** Additionally, an owner of a residential solar PV system, regardless of income, is still eligible for solar renewable energy credits (“SRECs”, sometimes referred to as “solar renewable energy certificates”). Please visit the Maryland Public Service Commission

⁵ <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/homeowners-guide-federal-tax-credit-solar-photovoltaics>

(PSC) [Renewable Portfolio Standard frequently asked questions webpage](#)⁶ for more information on SRECs, and how to register for them. **Note:** MEA also does not administer the SREC program. This is fully under the Maryland PSC's jurisdiction.

I applied for and received a solar Residential Clean Energy Rebate from the Maryland Energy Administration Residential Clean Energy Rebate Program, or I'm thinking about applying for a solar rebate through that program while the solar rebate portion is still available. Can I also get a Maryland Solar Access Grant for the same solar system?

Answer: No. MEA cannot award a Maryland Solar Access Grant to a solar PV system that has received a Maryland Energy Administration Residential Clean Energy Rebate. No exceptions.

I'm thinking about installing solar. Should I wait for the Maryland Solar Access Program to become available?

Answer: The Maryland Energy Administration is an executive Maryland State agency and cannot advise you on when to install a solar PV system. This is a largely subjective decision, and there are many factors to consider. If you are new to solar energy, the Maryland Energy Administration *strongly encourages* you to review our comprehensive consumer solar guide, [A Maryland Consumer's Guide to Solar](#)⁷. If you believe that your decision to go solar will be largely impacted by the availability of the Maryland Solar Access Program, it is likely worth waiting to install solar until the program opens for applications.

Can you recommend a solar installer?

Answer: No. The Maryland Energy Administration is an executive Maryland State agency beholden to the Maryland State Ethics Law, and as such, we cannot recommend, endorse, promote, or otherwise give a competitive advantage to any installer. A quick search using a mainstream search engine should be able to provide you with information about available installers.

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<https://www.psc.state.md.us/electricity/maryland-renewable-energy-portfolio-standard-program-frequently-asked-questions/>

⁷ <https://energy.maryland.gov/Reports/A%20Maryland%20Consumers%20Guide%20to%20Solar.pdf>