



**Maryland**  
Energy  
Administration

Wes Moore, *Governor*  
Aruna Miller, *Lt. Governor*  
Paul G. Pinsky, *Director*

## **Funding Opportunity Announcement (Revised)**

### **Energy Efficiency Equity Program**

### **Fiscal Year 2024 Grant Program**

**Program Description:** Available to nonprofit organizations and local governments, the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) Energy Efficiency Equity Program (Program), formerly known as the Low-to-Moderate Income Energy Efficiency Grant Program, will again be offered competitively on a regional basis for State Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24). This Program is designed to support energy efficiency projects and activities that benefit Maryland residents experiencing low or moderate income.

**Program Type:** Competitive within each region

**Application Deadline:** Friday, February 16th, 2024, by 5 PM EST **\*Revised 2/7, please ensure application is submitted as a XLS file\***

**Overall Program Budget:** A total of \$19.5M is anticipated to be available in FY24, of which \$5M is initially reserved for new applicants.

*Regional allocations:* To ensure an equitable distribution across the State, Program funds are first allocated to each Maryland region based on the number of households experiencing low or moderate income within the respective region. Grants will then be awarded competitively within the applicant pool for each region.

**New this year, please complete one application for each project category that is being applied for, summarizing work for all regions and counties in the state.**

Example: an applicant applying for both Residential Whole Home/Building Retrofits and Limited Upgrades to Existing Commercial/Residential Buildings in the Central and Baltimore City Regions. Previous fiscal years would require separate applications for each proposed region. For FY24 an applicant would instead need to submit two applications, with one application for the whole house residential retrofits (capturing the proposed work for all desired regions) and one application for the limited residential upgrades program type (also capturing the proposed work for all desired regions), noting within each application the amount requested by region.

*New grantee allocations:* New in FY24, \$5 million of the total \$19.5 million will be initially reserved for awards for applicants who have not previously received an award under the MEA Low-to-Moderate Income Energy Efficiency grant program, the former

name of this year’s Energy Efficiency Equity Program. The \$5 million new grantee initial allocation will be distributed regionally using the same methodology as the remaining \$14.5 million.

If MEA does not receive sufficient funding requests for competitive projects from new grantees in each region, the amounts initially reserved for new grantees will become available first to all returning applicants within the region, and then to returning applicants at large.

The map below shows each region’s anticipated allocation of funds, based on the \$5 million set aside for new applicants<sup>1</sup> and the remaining \$14.5 for returning applicants, which together totals \$19.5 million for FY24. New applicants may also apply to compete for the remaining regional allocation, should the application totals exceed the initial new grantee set aside. The map and funding allocation was updated for FY24 to reflect the updated income data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

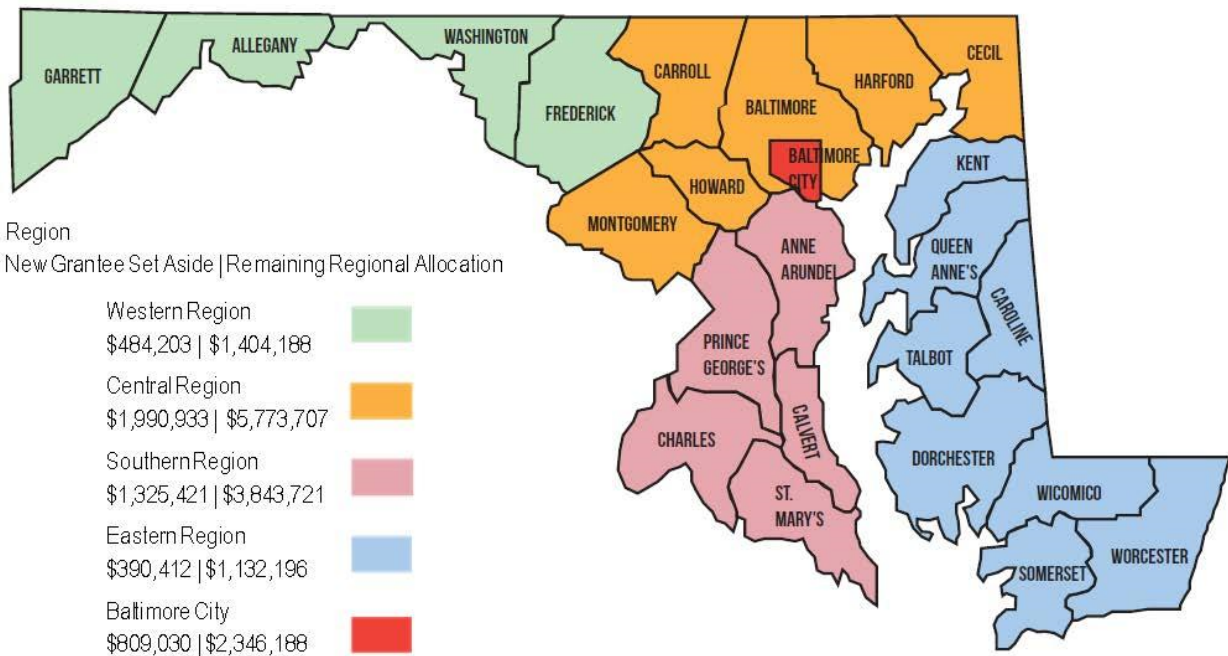


Figure 1: Initial Regional Allocations of FY24 Funding

**Eligible Applicants:** The following types of entities that run, or will run, a program serving Maryland residents experiencing low-to- moderate-income (LMI) are eligible to receive funding:

- Local governments (counties and/or municipalities)
- Incorporated non-profit organizations

<sup>1</sup> Or prior year applicants who have not received an award from MEA under the Program.

**Program Beneficiaries:** Energy efficiency projects completed under this Program must benefit residents experiencing low- or moderate-income.

### Program Income Limits

For the purposes of the FY24 Program application, households experiencing low- or moderate-income are defined as follows:

- A household is considered to be experiencing low-income with household income at or below 175% of the federal poverty level.
- A household is considered to be experiencing moderate-income with household income that is greater than 175% of the federal poverty level, but at or below 85% of median income for the county where the household is located.

Income limits for households experiencing moderate income are determined based on the county in which the energy efficiency upgrades are occurring, rather than where the applicant organization is located. The income limits for households experiencing moderate-income for 2023 can be found on the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) website.<sup>2</sup>

Income eligibility limits for households experiencing low-income, which are now defined as households with income at 175% or lower of the federal poverty level, can be found in the following table:

<b>Low Income Eligibility Limits<sup>3</sup> for Program Year FY24</b> <i>(Based on 175% of the Federal Poverty Level)</i>		
<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Maximum Gross Monthly Income Standards</b>	<b>Maximum Gross Yearly Income Standards</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>\$2,126</b>	<b>\$25,515</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>\$2,876</b>	<b>\$34,510</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>\$3,625</b>	<b>\$43,505</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>\$4,375</b>	<b>\$52,500</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>\$5,125</b>	<b>\$61,495</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>\$5,874</b>	<b>\$70,490</b>

<sup>2</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/HousingDevelopment/Documents/prhp/2023-MD-Income-Limits.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> From Maryland Department of Human Services: <https://dhs.maryland.gov/office-of-home-energy-programs/how-do-you-apply/>

7	\$6,624	\$79,485
8	\$7,373	\$88,480
<b>For Each Additional Person, Add</b>	<b>\$750</b>	<b>\$8,995</b>

**Eligible Activities:** All activities for each project selected for FY24 Energy Efficiency Equity Program grant funding should be able to be completed by **August 1, 2026**, with all invoices and project reports submitted to MEA no later than **September 1, 2026**.

Program funding can be used for qualifying energy efficiency measures, including the purchase and installation of eligible building materials and/or equipment.

**New in FY2024:**

- **MEA energy programs are now focusing on electrification and zero direct emissions technologies.** Therefore, beginning in FY24, the replacement of existing fossil fuel equipment (e.g., HVAC, water heater) with new fossil fuel equipment is ineligible for funding via the Program, even if the proposed new equipment has a higher efficiency rating.
  - However, repairs to existing fossil fuel HVAC and water heater equipment remain eligible if the purpose of the repairs is to improve safety or to reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions through improved efficiency.
- **Additional resources will be made available starting in FY24 to facilitate projects involving electrification that transition a home’s existing non-electric HVAC and water heating systems to electric heat pumps and water heaters.** Specifically, an additional allowance will be made available to help cover the cost of electric panel or circuit upgrades that may be needed to support a home’s conversion from fossil fuel to electric heating and water heating.

**Energy Efficiency Projects**

Proposed energy efficiency projects should fit one of the following categories. A sample scope of work is available below for all project types.

1. **Residential Whole Home/Building Retrofits:** A whole home/whole building upgrade consists of performing a [Building Performance Institute](https://www.bpihomeowner.org/home-energy-audit)<sup>4</sup>(BPI) energy audit on the residential home or building, and then installing cost-effective energy efficiency, electrification, and weatherization measures. For residentially metered buildings, an applicant should develop projects whose energy conservation measures (ECMs), in aggregate, have a simple payback that is 15 years or less. If projects involve the installation of heat pumps, an applicant should develop a project whose ECMs, in

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bpihomeowner.org/home-energy-audit>

aggregate, have a simple payback of 18 years or less.<sup>5</sup> Examples of possible energy efficiency measures include, but are not limited to, ENERGY STAR® qualified appliance upgrades, insulation improvements, air sealing, etc. For more information, please see the existing [FY24 Residential Whole Building Sample Scope of Work](#) document.

- MEA grant funding can reimburse costs to repair and make safe any existing fossil fuel appliances but will not fund the replacement of existing fossil fuel equipment with new fossil fuel-fired equipment.
  - o Suggested whole home/building retrofit projects could include the energy measures outlined in this section coupled with:
    - Conversion of a space heating or water heating system fueled by gas, propane, or heating oil to an ENERGY STAR electric heat pump system.
    - Conversion of a space heating system fueled by gas, propane, or heating oil to a dual fuel space heating system, with the existing furnace or boiler retained to provide backup heating to an ENERGY STAR heat pump. The existing furnace system must be less than 10 years old and have an annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE) of 90 or greater.
    - Replacement of an electric resistance space or water heating system with an ENERGY STAR heat pump
  - o **New in FY24:** For projects that involve fuel switching, Grantees will need to inform participating households of the post-retrofit energy and cost implications of fuel switching.

**2. Whole Building Commercial Retrofits:** Like the residential retrofits noted above, an energy audit on a commercial building is first performed, followed by the installation of cost-effective energy efficiency and weatherization measures to achieve an aggregate simple payback of 20 years or less, based on the energy audit results. Examples of possible energy measures include control upgrades, insulation improvements, air sealing, etc. See the existing [FY24 Commercial Whole Building Sample Scope of Work](#) for more details. FY24 funding shall not be used to replace existing fossil fuel equipment with new fossil fuel equipment, even if the replacement would result in increased efficiency.

- o For multifamily projects, measures that shift energy burden from a centralized meter paid for by a landlord or building owner to individual residents will not be funded.

**3. New Construction with Incremental Efficiency Upgrades:** To be eligible, a new construction project must be designed to improve efficiency to above the levels required by the most current version of the energy code in effect in Maryland. Additionally, only the incremental purchase cost of building assemblies and electric equipment upgrading to

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<sup>5</sup> The Mid-Atlantic Technical Reference Manual, Version 10 developed by the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership assumes an anticipated equipment life of a heat pump is eighteen years. See <https://neep.org/sites/default/files/resources/Maryland-MidAtlantic%20TRMv10.pdf>, page 87.

a higher level of energy efficiency is reimbursable under the Program. See the existing [FY24 Incremental Costs Project Sample Scope of Work](#) for more details. FY24 funding shall not be used to install fossil fuel equipment even if it is more efficient equipment than current energy code requirements.

- 4. Limited Upgrades to Existing Commercial/Residential Buildings:** This type of project on an existing building/home does not require an energy audit, but rather seeks to make limited cost-effective upgrades to improve the performance and efficiency of the home/building. When a single energy efficiency measure is proposed in this category, the individual measure should have a simple payback that is less than the anticipated equipment life. Where applicable, MEA will use the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership (NEEP) Mid-Atlantic Technical Reference Manual (TRM)<sup>6</sup> resources to determine anticipated equipment life.

Examples of possible limited upgrades include, but are not limited to:

- HVAC replacement - Projects under this category may implement standalone HVAC replacements, if it can be demonstrated that weatherization has already been done within the past five (5) years. In FY24, MEA will not fund the replacement of existing fossil fuel equipment with new fossil fuel equipment. For projects that involve fuel switching, Grantees will need to inform participating households of the post-retrofit energy and cost implications of fuel switching.
- Lighting upgrades - Projects under this category may implement standalone lighting upgrades in commercial or residential buildings. The application should include a lighting schedule of the current wattage and types of lighting and the proposed type and wattage of the replacement equipment. Hours of operation for the light fixtures shall also be included.
- Energy kits - Measures included in energy kits must provide cost effective energy savings without the need of an energy audit. Examples of energy kits could include installation of LED light bulbs, low-flow shower heads, smart power strips, etc.

**Note:** While energy audits may not be required under the limited upgrades category, applicants must still adhere to relevant safety testing protocols per the relevant industry standards (i.e., BPI combustion safety), if applicable, as required based on the energy measures being considered for implementation.

#### Simple Payback Formula

Simple payback is the time, in years, it will take to recover the initial investment in an efficiency measure through energy cost savings. The formula for simple payback is the total cost of the project divided by the anticipated annual energy savings, in dollars per year.

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<sup>6</sup> Depending on the measure, MEA will use versions 9 and 10 of the Mid-Atlantic TRM: See [https://neep.org/sites/default/files/resources/Mid\\_Atlantic\\_TRM\\_V9\\_Final\\_clean\\_wUpdateSummary%20-%20CT%20FORMAT.pdf](https://neep.org/sites/default/files/resources/Mid_Atlantic_TRM_V9_Final_clean_wUpdateSummary%20-%20CT%20FORMAT.pdf) and <https://neep.org/sites/default/files/media-files/trmv10.pdf>

*Note: When calculating the simple payback for a project, applicants should include all costs and savings associated with the installed energy measures. For leveraged or matching funds, costs associated with non-energy measures (e.g., administrative, or indirect costs, leveraged funds, etc.) that do not result in energy savings should not be used in estimating the simple payback. For the purposes of this grant program, applicants should calculate simple payback as follows:*

$$\text{(Total Project Cost (\$/))} / \text{(Total Energy Savings (\$/))} = \text{Simple Payback (Years)}$$

### Eligible Costs:

1. For Whole Home/Building Residential Retrofit projects not involving an HVAC upgrade, no more than \$7,000 per home energy retrofit is reimbursable under the Program.
  - This limit is increased to \$9,000 per home when heat pump water heaters are installed as part of the scope of the project.
  - For home energy retrofits incorporating an HVAC upgrade, the maximum reimbursable cost per home under the Program for a home energy retrofit including an eligible HVAC upgrade is \$18,000. All health and safety costs, which are capped at up to \$1,500 per home, and costs for electrical upgrades, which are capped at up to \$3,000 per home, are included in the overall cost and count towards the reimbursable MEA limits.
    - In FY24, MEA will not fund the replacement of existing fossil fuel equipment with new fossil fuel equipment.
    - HVAC upgrades are only allowed in homes that have been weatherized within the past five years and can provide proof of weatherization; or propose weatherization as part of the project.
2. For appliance replacements in existing homes or buildings, only ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances, including water heaters, qualify for the Program in FY24.
  - Refrigerator replacements: The maximum reimbursable cost per ENERGY STAR® qualified residential refrigerator is \$1,000 under the Program.
  - Water heater replacements: ENERGY STAR® qualified heat pump water heaters are eligible under the Program. ENERGY STAR® fossil fuel water heaters are ineligible in FY24.
3. Grant Administration and Indirect Costs
  - a. If an applicant is selected for a grant under the FY24 Energy Efficiency Equity Program, MEA will allow a grantee to claim up to 15% of the total Grant Amount for Grant Administration Costs and reimbursable Indirect Costs combined.
    1. Indirect Costs are reimbursable as indicated below in Section 5 “Implementation of Indirect Costs” and may only be billed in proportion to the Direct Costs for which reimbursement has been sought at the time of billing.
  - b. For the FY24 Energy Efficiency Equity Program, the following definitions shall be used:
    1. Direct Costs: Incurred costs for which the Grantee seeks reimbursement from MEA for:

- a. the energy equipment being installed in or on a home or building, as well as any necessary labor and supplies to install the energy measures.
  - b. energy auditing.
  - c. health and safety measures that are necessary to enable the energy upgrade being funded by the grant, as applicable and allowable under the Program.
  - d. Grant Administration Costs
2. Grant Administration Costs: Salaries and wages for personnel managing the project and/or conducting outreach and recruitment of participants, or supplies purchased to administer the grant (e.g., flyers advertising the program).
  3. Indirect Costs: MEA will use the definition of indirect costs provided in the Federal Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (i.e., Indirect costs are costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefited, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. To facilitate equitable distribution of indirect expenses to the cost objectives served, it may be necessary to establish a number of pools of indirect (F&A) costs. Indirect (F&A) cost pools must be distributed to benefitted cost objectives on a basis that will produce an equitable result in consideration of relative benefits derived).
    - a. For the FY24 Energy Efficiency Equity Program, examples of allowable indirect costs include portions of the cost of the Grantee's rent, utilities, and/or administrative staff time.
  4. Grantees shall be required to provide documentation, which may include timesheets or other records, to MEA justifying the amount of Grant Administration Costs and Indirect Costs being requested for reimbursement under a grant.
  5. Implementation of Indirect Costs:
    - a. A grantee that is tax exempt under §501(c)(3), (4), or (6) of the Internal Revenue Code who has negotiated and received an indirect cost rate under a direct federal grant, or from a non-federal entity based on the cost principles in Subpart E of OMB Uniform Guidance, will be allowed reimbursement of indirect costs as outlined in [§ 2-208\(b\)\(1\) of the State Finance and Procurement Article](#) at the negotiated indirect rate.
      - i. Documentation of a negotiated indirect rate must be provided to MEA upon request, prior to execution of the Grant Agreement.
      - ii. If a grantee that is tax exempt under §501(c)(3), (4), or (6) of the Internal Revenue Code who has negotiated and received an indirect cost rate under a direct federal grant that is greater than the percentage identified in section 3a, then the grantee will be allowed reimbursement at the federally negotiated rate. In this situation, no Grant Administration Costs would be reimbursable.
    - b. Indirect costs reimbursement for any other non-profit organization applicant without a negotiated indirect rate, or a local government grantee, will be capped at a maximum of 10% of the grant.
  6. The percentage of indirect costs that will be claimed by the Grantee will be identified prior to execution of the Grant Agreement and stated in the terms of the Grant Agreement.



### Example:

A nonprofit organization has a federally negotiated rate of 12%. With the total amount of indirect costs and Grant Administration Costs capped at 15% of the total grant, the grantee could opt to:

1. Claim the full 12% federally negotiated indirect rate of 12%, and up to 3% for Grant Administration
2. Claim a lower indirect rate less than 12%, in order to prioritize a higher percentage of the grant for Grant Administration Costs (e.g., 5% indirect and 10% for grant administration)
3. Claim no indirect cost and use up to 15% of the grant for the Grant Administration Costs.

However, a nonprofit organization may not claim indirect costs at a higher percentage than either the nonprofit organization's negotiated indirect rate, or the 10% default indirect rate.

#### 4. Incidental/Health and Safety Repairs

- For projects involving whole home/building energy retrofits, health and safety repairs that enable or support energy efficiency upgrades are capped at \$1,500 per home.
- For commercial buildings in which kitchen and bath facilities are shared among multiple residents, health and safety repairs that enable or support energy efficiency upgrades are capped at \$5,000 per building, after first receiving approval from MEA.

For the purposes of this Program, MEA defines a home as “a residential unit that operates with independent systems, including its own HVAC system and kitchen and bath facilities.” The cost of the health and safety repairs must be included in the maximum budget per home.

To be eligible for Energy Efficiency Equity Program funding, health and safety repairs must fall into one of these four categories:

1. **Measures that enable the installation of an energy efficiency measure**, i.e., the repairs, are a prerequisite to the successful installation of the energy efficiency measure. For example, repairing a hole in a roof that must be patched before installing insulation in the attic would qualify. Items such as repairing a broken step in a stairwell would not qualify, as this repair has no connection to an energy efficiency measure being installed.
2. **Measures to install carbon monoxide (CO) monitors for homes with combustion appliances and/or an attached garage.**
3. **Measures to correct combustion appliance zone (CAZ) problems.**
4. **Measures to install mechanical ventilation measures required to comply with current building codes**, such as the installation of bathroom ventilation fans and controls and kitchen ventilation fans/hoods vented to the outdoors.

A grantee can pursue other sources of funding for health and safety repairs if the cost of those repairs exceed the allowable reimbursable amount from MEA, or the repairs are not eligible for reimbursement under the program.

## **Other Eligible Uses of Funding**

### **Electrical Panel Upgrades**

- For projects involving whole home/building energy retrofits, electrical panel upgrades, electrical circuit upgrades, or repairs that enable or support fuel-switching energy efficiency upgrades to electrification are capped at \$3,000 per home.
- For commercial buildings electrical panel upgrades, electrical circuit upgrades, or repairs that enable or support energy efficiency upgrades to electrification are capped at \$5,000 per building, after first receiving approval from MEA.

### **Project-Related Training Assistance**

Consistent with MEA's mission of promoting affordable, reliable, and clean energy as well as to additionally support workforce development, program funding may be used for the cost to train energy efficiency workers supporting energy efficiency projects benefiting Maryland residents experiencing low-to-moderate income in the FY24 grant cycle. Training may be included as part of a proposed project, but it cannot be the entire scope of the project proposal.

- Training requests must be disclosed at the time of the application submission for consideration, and only applications that are recommended for an award and have training included in the grant agreement scope of work shall be eligible for this funding. Training will be limited to new certifications, and not applying for recertifications. Trained personnel must be granted staff who are active on the proposed project(s) and helping to enable energy efficiency upgrades benefiting low- and moderate-income Maryland residents.
- MEA can cover up to \$1,500 of training and exam fees per person, for grantees with a staff person that successfully completes one of the [Building Performance Institute \(BPI\) certifications](#), or equivalent on a case-by-case basis approved by MEA in advance. Other costs associated with training (i.e., travel costs) are not eligible for reimbursement.
  - MEA may consider covering the cost of training and examinations (up to \$1,500) for other third-party administered certifications that are similar in nature to BPI. Eligible applicants must describe the reason for such training at the time of the application submission, and training requests will be reviewed separately as part of the application review process. Such certifications must cover some or all the following topic areas: energy auditing of residential or commercial buildings, economic analysis of upgrades, combustion safety assessment and testing, and retrofit installations.

### **Technical Assessments, Licenses, Engineering, and Training**

- A limited amount of grant funding may be requested for the costs of technical assessments, licenses, engineering, and/or training that support or enable energy

efficiency. To be considered by MEA as an eligible cost, an applicant must include in its application a description of why such a use of grant funding would be necessary or beneficial to the proposed project.

- If an applicant is selected for award, any technical assessments, licenses, engineering, and/or training costs identified to be necessary or beneficial must be included in the grant's scope of work to be eligible for reimbursement.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Program grants are competitively awarded for energy efficiency projects that generate significant energy savings **and pass on the benefits of the savings to Maryland's LMI residents**. All submitted complete applications will be evaluated based on the review criteria established by the MEA EE Program and outlined below.

**Minimum Criterion:** To be eligible, each project will first be reviewed for **Project Feasibility and Scope**. Projects must be feasible in scope while also falling within the Eligible Activities section of this FOA. An applicant should ensure the project application presents a clear, detailed description of project feasibility as part of the project's description.

For each region, the MEA review team will then evaluate eligible applications using the following evaluation criteria.

1. **Annual energy consumption reduction per dollar of MEA investment.** MEA is looking for projects that maximize potential energy unit savings. MEA will rank projects that maximize the anticipated energy unit savings per dollar of MEA investment more favorably than those that do not under this criterion. Applicants are encouraged to leverage all funds available to them including Utility EmPOWER Programs and the Department of Housing and Community Development's [Weatherization Assistance Program \(WAP\)](#)<sup>7</sup> and [Maryland Limited Income Energy Efficiency Program \(LIEPP\)](#)<sup>8</sup>.

Please note that the review team will consider the accuracy and transparency of energy savings and cost information for the proposed project as part of this metric. Savings estimates may be adjusted by the review team to reflect energy best practices and standard assumptions, such as the formulas contained in the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership's Maryland/Mid-Atlantic Technical Reference Manual.<sup>9</sup> The assumptions and methodology behind an applicant's energy and associated energy savings estimates should therefore be clearly and concisely explained.

Questions that an applicant should ask while formulating these estimates include:

- How accurate are the estimates?
- Are assumptions behind the numbers clearly stated in a manner allowing the review team to evaluate the project?

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<sup>7</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/wap/Default.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/liepp/default.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> <https://neep.org/sites/default/files/media-files/trmv10.pdf>

2. **Annual greenhouse gas reductions per dollar of MEA investment.** MEA is looking for projects that maximize potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. MEA will convert energy saving estimates into greenhouse gas reductions and then rank projects that maximize the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per dollar of MEA investment more favorably than those that do not under this criterion. Greenhouse gas emission reductions will be calculated by MEA using standardized greenhouse gas emission factors, based on the annual energy savings for the proposed project.
3. **Cost Effectiveness of MEA investment.** MEA is looking for projects that maximize the investment made by MEA. MEA will rank projects that maximize impact without factoring in leveraged funds.
4. **Impact on Maryland's low-to-moderate income residents.** MEA is looking for projects that maximize benefits to low-to-moderate income residents served with Program grant funding. Direct and indirect benefits that will accrue to LMI Marylanders as a result of implementing the proposed project should be clearly explained and defensible.
5. **Applicant's recent past performance complying with MEA Energy Efficiency Equity Program requirements.** With regard to any prior awards made to an applicant under the prior Low-to-Moderate Income Energy Efficiency Grant Program, MEA will consider the execution of past projects under an MEA award (including the proposed number of home upgrades compared to the actual number of completed upgrades), the final simple payback of the past project(s), expended award amounts, any extensions necessary to complete a project(s), accuracy and timeliness of reporting, the past project's ability to achieve economies of scale, and the results of compliance monitoring (if applicable). (Applies only to grantees who have received MEA grants in the past two fiscal years.)
6. **Method of delivery of energy products and services and whether the proposed method will provide the best value to the State of Maryland.** MEA is looking for projects that implement industry best practices and successful cost-effective energy conservation measures. Applicants shall clearly explain how their proposed measures will incorporate best practices.
7. In addition, MEA may factor in geographic diversity when evaluating grant applications.

**Review Process:** The Program is competitive, which means that all applications will be reviewed against each other in the individual regions using the review criteria described above. Each eligible application that MEA receives by the application deadline is reviewed in the application's entirety by all members of the grant review team. Once initial application reviews are completed by each review team member, the grant review team will meet to come to a consensus on which projects are recommended for funding.

**Partial or Scaling of Awards:** Partial awards are possible under the Program. Awards may be scaled either up or down in situations where there are requests for more funds than are available, or where funds available for a specific region are not fully depleted. For the purposes of the Program, “scaling a project” means increasing or decreasing the number of homes, buildings, or weatherization/energy efficiency measures to be carried out as part of a grant awarded under the Program.

The process for awarding, and criteria for determining the amount of, partial grant awards (i.e., an award at an amount less than the applicant’s original funding request) are as follows:

- The review team will first determine which application proposals are recommended for awards in a specific region based on the review criteria described in the Evaluation Criteria section. Then, the decision to issue a partial award will consist of the following criteria:
  1. Whether the application proposal is scalable.
  2. Whether the applicant has been recommended for awards in other regions under this Program.
  3. Project size and the requested award amount of applicant’s proposal.
  4. Whether the project is feasible at a lower or higher funding amount.
  5. Project type; and,
  6. Any possible impact on energy equity, including location of the project as it relates to underserved or overburdened communities; and,
  7. Any possible impact on energy efficiency workforce development.

**Required Application Documents:** Each applicant for the FY24 Program is required to submit the following:

1. **Complete and accurate FY24 Energy Efficiency Equity Program Application.** A blank copy of this application form is available on the [MEA Energy Efficiency Enabling Equity Grant Program website](#).<sup>10</sup>
2. **Energy Savings Estimate Supporting Documentation:** Applicants are also required to submit supporting documentation for the energy savings estimates indicated in their application. Applicants must submit one of the following:
  - A completed energy audit, or a sample energy audit indicative of the type of audit that will be completed on a home/building like the homes/buildings described in the project description.
  - A completed “FY24 Savings Estimates and Assumptions Worksheet”. This worksheet is available on the [MEA Energy Efficiency Enabling Equity Grant Program website](#).
    - This document is an example of a tool that can be used to estimate energy savings for commercial buildings and other specific energy efficiency measures.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://energy.maryland.gov/govt/Pages/CleanEnergyLMI.aspx>

- Other supporting documentation that meets the requirements outlined in Section III of the FY24 Energy Efficiency Enabling Equity Grant Program Application form.

**Note:** An applicant should only submit an audit, worksheet or other supporting documentation based on a sample home/building. An applicant proposing multiple homes/buildings can use the sample of one home/building to scale their estimates based on the number of homes/buildings in the proposed project.

3. **A complete, current, and accurate copy of the applicant's IRS Form W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification).** The name and address listed on the W9 form should match the name and address on the application. If selected for an award, this is the name and address that will be listed on the grant agreement and the name of the entity to which reimbursement payments will eventually be made.
4. **Supporting documentation for awarded, or applied for, utility and non-utility funding programs.** Examples include, but are not limited to, award letters, award agreements, and memorandums of understanding (MOUs).
5. **A detailed project timeline** that includes, at a minimum, estimated dates for project start-up, contractor selection, construction/project milestones, completed project scope, and final invoicing and reporting to MEA.
6. **For Non-Profits Only:** Proof of incorporation and non-profit status of the applicant organization.
7. **For Non-Profits Only (If Applicable):** A completed Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form. If a relationship that could be characterized as being closely affiliated exists between a non-profit organization and its contractor that will be performing work funded by the Program, the applicant must complete the [Conflict of Interest disclosure form](#) and attach a copy of your organization's Conflict of Interest Policy.
  - Note: Upon MEA's request, an applicant must provide additional information about the closely affiliated relationship, including a statement from the applicant's board attesting that the relationship has been reviewed by the board and found to be consistent with the non-profit organization's Conflict of Interest policy.

**Submission Instructions:** MEA is encouraging the use of electronic applications to streamline processing and reduce environmental impacts. If an applicant is unable to apply electronically, please contact MEA at 410-537-4068 no later than ten (10) business days prior to the grant deadline to determine an alternative method to submit an MEA Program application. Applications must be submitted no later than **Friday, February 16th, 2024, by 5:00 P.M.** Eastern Time. Unless an applicant has contacted MEA regarding an alternative method, an application must be submitted electronically to MEA's Program team at [lmireports.mea@maryland.gov](mailto:lmireports.mea@maryland.gov)

## Guidance for Submission

1. Unless the Applicant has contacted MEA regarding an alternative application method, email application and all supporting documents to [lmireports.mea@maryland.gov](mailto:lmireports.mea@maryland.gov).
2. **The application form should be saved as a XLS file. All supporting documents should be saved as XLS format and be less than 10 MB in size. Any file more than 10 MB may not be reliably delivered.**
3. Please include the name of the applicable region in the email's subject line, followed by the applicant organization's name (for example: "Western Region - XYZ Foundation").
4. If an application is submitted in parts, please number each email submission (i.e., Part 1 of 3, Part 2 of 3, etc.) so that MEA can verify that the entire application is received.
5. **Please be sure to not include any personally identifiable information (PII) in the application.** Examples of PII include homeowner names, social security numbers, and phone numbers.
6. The application must be signed by an authorized signatory from the Applicant Organization, even if the application is being submitted by a representative from outside of the Applicant Organization.

Each applicant will receive an email from MEA confirming receipt of their application. **If you do not receive an email confirming your submission within one (1) business day of submission, it is your responsibility as an applicant to contact Joanna Freeman ([joanna.freeman1@maryland.gov](mailto:joanna.freeman1@maryland.gov)) to ensure that your application was successfully sent from your organization's email system and received by the Program team.**

**Funding Provisions, Requirement, and Restrictions:** MEA grant programs are covered by general requirements that will be made part of the grant agreement between MEA and a grantee. A copy of the current [Grant General Provisions \(Version 3\)](#) is available on [MEA's website](#); these General Provisions will be incorporated into each FY24 grant agreement issued by MEA.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the general provisions, the following provisions, requirements, and restrictions apply to this program:

1. All projects funded through the Program must comply with the relevant provisions of the current version of the International Energy Conservation Code being enforced in Maryland.
2. All work must be completed by contractors and/or staff holding all necessary certifications and licenses to work in Maryland. Permits shall be obtained in a timely manner, when required. Additionally, all work performed pursuant to the Grant shall

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<sup>11</sup> <https://energy.maryland.gov/SiteAssets/Pages/all-incentives/General%20Provisions%20v3%202.11.22.pdf>

comply with all applicable local, State, and federal building codes and other applicable requirements.

3. MEA considers fuel switching as an energy efficiency measure if it can be shown to be cost effective and to result in a net reduction in overall energy expenditures or emissions reduction.
4. MEA encourages all applicants to focus on residential households that are ineligible for assistance through the [Weatherization Assistance Program](#)<sup>12</sup> (WAP) or the [EmPOWER Maryland Limited Income Energy Efficiency Program](#)<sup>13</sup> (LIEEP) run by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) whenever and wherever possible.
5. Low-income residents cannot be charged for participation in any program that receives Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) funding. This prohibition against charging for low-income participation applies to any project receiving grant funds through the Program.
6. **Renewable energy technologies are not eligible to receive funding from the Energy Efficiency Enabling Equity Grant Program.** See the MEA website for information on programs that provide [commercial](#) and [residential](#) renewable energy incentives.
  - For those who wish to pursue renewable energy photovoltaic (solar) panels on low-income homes, see the MEA [Solar Enabling Energy Equity Grant Program Application and Instructions](#) to learn eligibility for projects implemented by nonprofit organizations and local governments that provide solar renewable energy generation on low income Maryland homes. **This is a separate application from the MEA Energy Efficiency Enabling Equity Grant Program.**
7. The amount of grant funds that can be expended per home or per commercial building, as applicable, is limited under this Program as outlined in the section of this FOA titled *Eligible Costs*. If insufficient eligible applications are received in a region, funding may be reallocated to eligible projects in other regions.
8. If an applicant is selected for a grant award by MEA under the Program, each Applicant will be required to enter in a grant agreement with MEA. Prior to executing the grant agreement, MEA may opt to first execute a conditional grant commitment letter between MEA and the selected applicant.
9. The award will be issued to the name, address, and federal tax identification number provided by the applicant to MEA on the W-9 form. **Once a grant agreement or commitment letter has been fully executed between MEA and the applicant, the**

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<sup>12</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/wap/Default.aspx>

<sup>13</sup> <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/lieep/default.aspx>



**award cannot be reassigned to a new entity with a different federal tax identification number.**

10. Participation in MEA grant programs is voluntary. If selected for award and to ensure the secure transmission of grant funds, grantee recipients of MEA funding are generally required to receive electronic payments from the State of Maryland. Electronic payments are set up through the State of Maryland's Comptroller's Office. **Grantees must fill out and submit the "ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization for Vendor Payments Form X-10" to the Comptroller's Office via the submission methods outlined on the X-10 form.** ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization for Vendor Payment Form X-10 should not be sent to MEA.
- Failure to submit ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization Form X-10 may result in award reimbursement being delayed.
  - If an applicant is unable to receive ACH/Direct Deposit payments, MEA reserves the right to provide an exception to this requirement on a case-by-case basis, at the sole discretion of MEA.

**Questions can be directed to Joanna Freeman, [joanna.freeman1@maryland.gov](mailto:joanna.freeman1@maryland.gov), 410-537-4079**