

Notice of Availability of Grants

New Jersey Board of Public Utilities Availability of Grant Pursuant to the Global Warming Solutions Fund

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU or Board) hereby announces the availability of a grant as authorized under N.J.S.A. 26:2C-37 et seq. and 26:2C-45 et seq.

Name of program:

Residential Electric Limited Income Emergency Fund (RELIEF) Program

Purpose:

To administer a program that provides emergency assistance toward payment of electric bills and engages in client referral to appropriate energy efficiency program(s). The beneficiaries of such assistance will be customers, hereinafter referred to as "Limited Income Households:" (i) in the low and moderate income residential sectors; (ii) not enrolled in or eligible for either the Board's Universal Service Fund (USF) program or the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); (iii) having a household income that does not exceed 400 percent of the federal poverty level; and (iv) facing crisis situations that include a documented notice of overdue payment of electric service. Grantee must be able to coordinate distribution of funds for Limited Income Households found eligible for assistance directly to electric utilities and coordinate client referral to applicable energy efficiency program(s). Grant will preferably be awarded to one grantee for a state-wide program to maximize administrative efficiency, but multiple grants may be awarded by region, if to do so would be in the best interests of the program. Eligibility of Limited Income Households for assistance will depend on: 1) proof of financial hardship; 2) receipt of overdue payment notice by household applying for assistance; and 3) history of regular payments toward electric bill.

Goal:

To aid eligible Limited Income Households with the payment of electric bills in order to avoid disconnection of service and its related hardships and help reduce future energy costs by linking clients to energy efficiency services. Money from the Global Warming Solutions Fund must be made available to eligible customers as quickly as possible to assist in preventing shut-offs, especially given the current state of economic recession. Equally important is ensuring integrity of the program and consistency of eligibility criteria.

Background:

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a "cap-and-trade" program, entered into by New Jersey and nine other states, capping emissions of carbon dioxide from power plants within the RGGI region. Plants must purchase emissions credit, known as an "allowance," for each ton of carbon dioxide they emit. A limited amount of allowances are made available each year, and the RGGI states determined to sell, via auction, most or all of their share of the allowances to be issued.

On January 13, 2008, Governor Corzine signed into law an act, N.J.S.A. 26:2C-45, et seq. (P.L. 2007, c.340, the Act), concerning the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Among other things, the Act established the Global Warming Solutions Fund to hold the 1) moneys received as a result of any sale, exchange, or other conveyance of allowances through a greenhouse gas emissions allowance trading program; 2) such moneys as are appropriated by the Legislature; and 3) any return on investment of any moneys deposited in the fund. N.J.S.A. 26:2C-50. After appropriation for administrative costs, 60 percent of the Fund shall be allocated to the Economic

Development Authority, 20 percent to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and 20 percent to the BPU.

The BPU is authorized to use its share of the Fund for the following purposes:

to support programs that are designed to reduce electricity demand or costs to electricity customers in the low-income and moderate-income residential sector with a focus on urban areas, including efforts to address heat island effect and reduce impacts on ratepayers attributable to the implementation of [the Act].

[N.J.S.A. 26:2C-51(b)(2).]

The BPU determined at its January 28, 2009 agenda meeting that the money allotted to the BPU through the Global Warming Solutions Fund (the Fund) from the first Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative auction held on December 17, 2008, would be allocated to assisting Limited Income Household electric customers in crisis situations. A notice of grant availability was widely distributed and published, and after review and recommendation by an evaluation committee, the Board made an award to New Jersey SHARES at its April 3, 2009 agenda meeting. At that same meeting, the Board determined to release a notice seeking public comments regarding the options for using its allocation of the Fund for calendar year 2009 (CY2009), which includes quarterly auctions held in March, June, September, and December of 2009.

At its May 14, 2009 agenda meeting, the Board, after review and discussion of the comments received, determined to award the funds for CY2009 to assist Limited Income Households in paying for electric service when crisis situations arise. The Board also found that Limited Income Households that receive financial assistance shall be referred to applicable energy efficiency programs as identified by Staff, including but not limited to the Home Performance with Energy Star program.

GRANT SOLICITATION PROCESS

Amount of funds available in the program:

The full amount of the grant cannot be determined at this time, as three of the four auctions for CY2009 have not yet been held. The BPU's allocation of the proceeds from the March 2009 auction is at least \$3,086,425.00. The three additional CY2009 auctions will be held in June, September and December 2009. BPU's allocations from these auctions could be higher or lower than BPU's allocation from the March 2009 auction. After each of the forthcoming auctions, the grant recipient(s) will be notified of the additional allocation. If multiple awards are made under this solicitation, each grant recipient will receive from BPU's allocation of the proceeds of each subsequent CY2009 auction a percentage share equal to the percentage share it received from the proceeds of the March 2009 auction.

Entities which may apply for funding under the program:

Nonprofit organizations [(501(c)(3) organizations] with service location(s) located, or to be located, in New Jersey that have experience in administering financial assistance programs.

An application may only be submitted by the eligible agency/entity itself.

Qualifications needed by an applicant to be considered for the program:

Applicants for funding must have staff and resource capability, expertise and experience in awarding public or private monies to individuals through some type of assistance program in order to perform the proposed work.

Proposal Instructions

Proposals must be submitted in triplicate and may be hand-delivered or delivered via US Mail or Overnight to:

NJ Board of Public Utilities
Two Gateway Center
8th Floor
Newark, NJ 07601
Attn: Samuel Wolfe, Chief Counsel - GWSF

Proposals should also be sent via email in MSWord format to:

board.secretary@bpu.state.nj.us

All proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. on **June 25, 2009**. Please direct email inquiries to board.secretary@bpu.state.nj.us. All inquiries and questions with regard to this Notice of Availability of Grants shall be submitted by **June 22, 2009**. Applicants shall receive a Notice of Award or letter declining such award after Board approval of the *Residential Electric Limited Income Emergency Fund* grant, on or before July 10, 2009.

Proposal Preparation

This section of the solicitation is designed to guide applicants in organizing their proposals in a consistent fashion to facilitate evaluation. Applicants should demonstrate within the relevant sections how their proposed program meets or exceeds the goals and purposes identified above. Each proposal should include the following sections:

- a) Program description and proposed scope of work;
- b) Program eligibility requirements;
- c) Previous experience with programs similar in scope;
- d) Methods of informing the target audience of the grant availability;
- e) Brief explanation of how applicant intends to work with electric utilities;
- f) Brief explanation of how the applicant would work with energy efficiency programs;
- g) Distribution methodology;
- h) Process for ensuring eligibility requirements are met;
- i) Brief explanation of how the proposed work will be managed and evaluated for effectiveness along with appropriate metrics;
- j) Program budget, including a breakdown of estimated administrative costs;
- k) A copy of the applicant's most recent annual report and operating budget;
- l) Program Staff Contacts with Staff time specified by title of each person to work on the task and their cost, based on the number of hours which they will work on the task multiplied by their hourly rate. All calculations must be shown; and

- m) Other costs (for example, consultant, specific supplies, and travel) must also be included.

Proposal Timeline

Applicants shall submit a “time-line” and include projected dates for distribution of financial assistance based upon receipt of grant money.

Program Team

Proposals should include an organizational chart listing all team members, including the program manager and any subcontractors and other sponsors involved in the program, showing their roles and responsibilities. Proposals should also state the program team’s individual and combined expertise that will enable successful implementation of the program.

Progress Reporting and Metrics for Evaluation

Quarterly progress reports will be required, including but not limited to, the number and amount of financial assistance grants distributed to Limited Income Households by electric utility and when the grants are distributed.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by a Grant Review Committee consisting of Board Staff according to the following criteria:

- General program approach and plans to meet the requirements of the Notice of Availability of Grants (20 pts)
- Detailed approach and plans to expeditiously perform the services required by the scope of work of this Notice of Availability of Grants (20 pts)
- Detailed program budget and cost effectiveness relative to grant award (20 pts)
- Documented experience with administration of assistance programs and their demonstrated results (20 pts)
- Qualifications & experience of key personnel (10 pts)
- Ability to implement program on a statewide basis (10 pts.)
- Demonstrated record of success in working with electric utilities (10 pts.)

The State of New Jersey and the Board of Public Utilities reserve the right to conduct interviews with applicants or request additional details and clarification, if necessary.

Grant Award

The Grant Review Committee will recommend funding commitment decisions, as described above, to the Board. The Board may reject or accept in part or in whole the recommendations for funding award made by the evaluation committee. Grant funds will be awarded by the Board to the program(s) that is deemed most beneficial to the State according to the application materials submitted in relation to the criteria contained herein. The Board reserves the right to make no award if in its sole discretion no acceptable proposal is received.

The decisions of the Board will be communicated to applicants by the Office of the Secretary. Applicants shall designate a Program Manager in the proposal who shall become the point of contact with the Office of the Secretary.

After Board approval of the award, a grant agreement will be developed between the Board and the grantee. Applicants will be required to comply with Treasury Circular Letter (07-05-OMB) which provides some but not all of the terms and conditions that will be made part of the grant agreement. To download a copy of Circular Letter 07-05-OMB and the template agreement go to <http://www.state.nj.us/infobank/circular/cir0705b.pdf>.

Audit Requirement

This grant is covered by the audit requirements of the Department of the Treasury Circular Letter 0404-OMB, Single Audit Policy for Recipients of Federal Grants, State Grants and State Aid.