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NOTICE

IN THE MATTER OF DEVELOPING INTEGRATED DISTRIBUTED ENERGY RESOURCE PLANS TO MODERNIZE NEW JERSEY'S ELECTRIC GRID

Docket No. QO24030199

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In response to Governor Sherrill's Executive Order No. 2 (January 20, 2026), the Staff of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities ("NJBPU" or "Board") hereby requests the state's four Electric Distribution Companies ("EDCs"), Atlantic City Electric, Jersey Central Power & Light, Public Service Electric & Gas, and Rockland Electric Company, to provide written responses to this Request for Information ("RFI") regarding the following within 30 days:

- A. Address how the company is endeavoring to achieve complete compliance with BPU's regulations at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5;
- B. Identify opportunities for the BPU to modify or waive existing regulations in order to improve efficiency and speed of interconnecting new projects;
- C. Address how the company can improve hosting capacity maps and ensure projects can connect to 34.5 kV distribution lines;
- D. Identify constrained circuits within the company's service territory that should be upgraded to expedite and support interconnection of DERs; and
- E. Address other means of supporting development of DERs on constrained circuits.

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

There is an urgent need for new electricity generation and capacity resources within the PJM region and the United States as a whole due to unprecedented projected load growth from data centers, which has led to high electricity rates across the nation. On January 20, 2026, New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill declared that a State of Emergency exists throughout the State of New Jersey and directed the Board to take a number of actions to ensure that electricity does not become an even greater financial burden for residents.¹

¹ Executive Order No. 1 (Sherrill, 2026); Executive Order No. 2 (Sherrill, 2026).

New Jersey, historically a net importer of electricity, has an opportunity to combat these high energy prices by increasing the amount of energy generated in-state by allowing distributed energy resources (“DER”), such as solar photovoltaic systems, and energy storage systems (“ESS”), to interconnect to the distribution grid and support sources of load at an accelerated pace. New Jersey has seen a rapid expansion of solar deployment, which supports the transition towards in-state renewable energy generation, through Board initiatives for large projects such as the Community Solar Energy Program and Competitive Solar Incentive program. This progress, however, is hindered by an electric distribution grid with severe hosting capacity constraints on key circuits. Hosting capacity is the amount of DER that can be accommodated on an electric grid without adversely impacting safety and reliability² and can be increased by infrastructure upgrades, such as substation upgrades, and tailored control configurations.

The Board has taken measures to increase the number of DERs interconnected to New Jersey’s electric distribution grid, such as the adoption of amendments and new rules at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5, which governs interconnection requirements and protocols. The procedural history of this rulemaking, Notice of Proposal, Notice of Proposed Substantial Changes Upon Adoption, First Notice of Adoption, Second Notice of Adoption, and all associated stakeholder comments can be found at BPU Docket No. No. QO21010085 - In the Matter of Modernizing New Jersey’s Interconnection Rules, Processes, and Metrics.

On January 20, 2026, Governor Mikie Sherrill issued an Executive Order No. 2, which directed the Board to require New Jersey’s EDCs to submit memoranda or filings within 30 days indicating their compliance with the Board’s recently updated interconnection regulations at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5, opportunities to modify or waive regulations to improve interconnection efficiency, suggestions with respect to improving hosting capacity maps and interconnecting projects to 34.5 kV lines, the identification of constrained circuits, and generally supporting development of DERs on constrained circuits. This RFI was published in order to comply with the Executive Order No. 2.

QUESTIONS

A. Address how EDCs are complying with Board's interconnection regulations at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5:

1. Describe how the company is complying with BPU regulations concerning interconnection of renewable energy projects to the distribution system, including compliance with N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.1 to -5.12.
2. What has the company done to date to implement a Pre-Application Verification and Evaluation (PAVE) process as described at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.10, and what, if any, actions are needed to fully implement one;
3. What measures is the company taking to ensure that DERs with export-limiting capabilities are being processed according to the regulations at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.2;
4. What has the company done to date to implement the interconnection of ESS pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.2(m), and what, if any, actions are needed to fully allow ESS interconnection;

² Electric Power Research Institute. *The Hosting Capacity Process*, (3002019750) Oct 21, 2020. <https://www.epri.com/research/programs/108271/results/3002019750> (Accessed Feb 2, 2026).

5. What has the company done to date with respect to filing a compliance tariff for standardized protocols governing system impact studies, facilities studies, etc., pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.2(t), and what, if any, actions are needed to fully implement such a tariff;
6. What has the company done to date with respect to adopting a common set of screens for Level 3 interconnection applications pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.6(a), and what, if any, actions are needed to fully implement a common Level 3 screening process;
7. What actions has the company completed to date with respect to developing a common hosting capacity mapping process pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.11(a) and updating the maps monthly pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.11(b) as modified by the August 13, 2025 Board Order.³

B. Identify opportunities to modify or waive existing regulations to improve efficiency and speed of interconnecting new projects:

1. Are there any existing BPU regulations, in N.J.A.C. 14:8-5 or elsewhere, that inhibit the EDC's interconnection of DERs to the distribution grid?

C. Address how EDCs can improve hosting capacity maps and ensure projects can connect to 34.5 kV distribution lines:

1. Is the company updating its public-facing hosting capacity maps on a monthly cadence pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:8-5.11(b) as modified by the August 13, 2025 Board Order.⁴ If not, why not?
2. Does your company's territory include any lines that are 34.5 kV? If so, are the lines considered distribution or transmission? If considered distribution, please indicate whether the company is following the regulations at N.J.A.C. 14:8-5 to interconnect DERs to these lines. If not following N.J.A.C. 14:8-5 for these lines, explain why not.

D. Identify constrained circuits within each EDC's service territory that should be upgraded to expedite and support interconnection of DERs:

1. Identify at least two key circuits that receive high numbers of interconnection application requests (either by total capacity requested or number of applicants), that are either closed or close to being closed due to voltage constraints, and whose hosting capacity could be improved by utilizing the "best of the best" smart inverter functionalities.
2. Indicate a testing process that the company expects to use to assess which functions offer the best results with respect to mitigating voltage violations while minimizing curtailment.

³ Order, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. IN THE MATTER OF THE COMMUNITY SOLAR ENERGY PROGRAM; IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPETITIVE SOLAR INCENTIVE ("CSI") PROGRAM PURSUANT TO P.L. 2021, C. 169; IN THE MATTER OF MODERNIZING NEW JERSEY'S INTERCONNECTION RULES, PROCESSES, AND METRICS, BPU Docket Nos. QO22030153, QO21101186, and QO21010085, August 13, 2025.

⁴ Ibid.

3. Provide a list of circuits with the worst reliability performance based on outage data that should be prioritized for infrastructure upgrades. Include the metrics, methods, and criteria used for selecting the worst-performing circuits.

E. Address other means of supporting development of DERs on constrained circuits:

1. Interconnection of Energy Storage Systems
 - i. Describe the company's current process for the analysis and interconnection of ESS as customer-generator facilities. For clarification, the Board Staff's expectation is that EDCs should interconnect all distributed ESS under the same terms and conditions as "customer-generator facilities" as described under Subchapter 5. As part of the response to this question, note any explicit barriers to processing energy storage system interconnection requests in this manner.
2. Utilization of Smart Inverter Functionalities
 - ii. Describe the company's current and planned utilization of smart inverter functionalities such as Volt/VAR, Volt/watt, or any custom curves utilized to assess the voltage impacts of new DER interconnections.
 - iii. What are the benefits or drawbacks, if any, of smart inverter functions (Volt/VAR, Volt/watt, and others) for grid reliability? Should any of these functions be adopted as a default statewide?
 - iv. Can the utilization of Volt/VAR and/or Volt/watt settings effectively increase hosting capacity? And how?
 - v. Are IEEE 1547-2018 and UL 1741 SA and SB standards sufficient to govern the communication protocol, standard, and certification requirements? What other protocols should be considered?
 - vi. How should smart inverter settings be integrated into interconnection application reviews? How does the setting influence the circuit's combined hosting and load-serving (integration) capacity?
3. Flexible Interconnection Protocols
 - vii. Does the company see the incorporation of flexible interconnection protocols, i.e., export-limited or curtailed distributed generation, as a feasible method to accommodate the interconnection of DERs on circuits where hosting capacity is limited? If so:
 1. Should there be different operational limits (e.g., export, import, curtailment profiles) for different DER types?
 2. What communication and control capabilities are necessary for reliable flexible operation? What are standards (IEEE, UL, etc.) or protocols that need to be required for better interoperability between DER customers, utilities, and system operators?

COMMENTS

All comments should be filed under [Docket No. QO24030199](#)

The deadline for comments on this matter is 5 p.m. on March 5, 2026.

Comments may be submitted directly to the specific docket listed above using the “Post Comments” button on the Board’s Public Document Search. Comments are considered public documents for purposes of the State’s Open Public Records Act. Only public documents should be submitted using the “Post Comments” button on the Board’s Public Document Search tool.



Sherri L. Lewis
Secretary of the Board

Dated: February 3, 2026