

**SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC MULTIFAMILY
CAPACITY-BASED INCENTIVE (CBI) PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

These guidelines govern the procedures and qualifications for Austin Energy’s Solar PV Multifamily CBI Program and are subject to change. Incentive requests that do not meet all program requirements may be denied.

I. Multifamily Capacity-Based Incentive Program

In the Solar Multifamily Capacity-Based Incentive program, property owners can receive an upfront installation incentive payment to install a system where the tenants will benefit from ongoing Value of Solar bill credits based on the solar production. This program is for multifamily properties that are served by residential meters. Solar systems for commercial meters on multifamily properties can apply for Austin Energy Commercial Solar Programs.

	Nonprofit	General
System Size (kW-ac)	Any	Any
Rebate Level (\$/W-dc)	\$1.00	\$0.60
Maximum Rebate Amount	\$2,500 per unit	
Payment Calculation	[System Size (W-DC)] x [Rebate Level]	
Payment Method	One-time check at project completion	

II. Eligibility and Funding

- A. This incentive is intended for new and existing multifamily properties in the Austin Energy service territory that have, or will have, electric service through Austin Energy at the service address. The proposed system must be installed and interconnected at the service address.
 - i. For the purposes of this program, a multifamily property is defined as a single street address with 2 or more residential units.
 - ii. Commercially metered common spaces and facilities at the address are not eligible for the multifamily rebate but may be eligible for an incentive through our commercial solar programs.
 - iii. Multifamily customers applying for a rebate may submit projects as one building per enrollment. Properties with multiple buildings will require multiple enrollments.
- B. The Applicant must fall into one of the following categories and provide all necessary documentation during the initial application stage:
 - i. Electric Account Holder or an Authorized User designated in the billing system
 - ii. Property Owner – verifiable in the Travis Central Appraisal District database
 - iii. Property Manager – with a provided Letter of Authorization (LOA) from the party in (ii)
 - iv. Parent Company or Subsidiary – with a provided W9
 - v. Property Tenant(s) – with a provided Letter of Authorization (LOA) from the party in (ii)
 - vi. For city/state/federal department ownership can be verified internally
- C. If the Applicant is not the property owner, they must submit installation approval documentation from the property owner and Homeowners Association (HOA), if applicable. Property deed restrictions and HOA regulations must not prohibit the installation of a solar system.
- D. For nonprofits, please visit <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/applying-for-tax-exempt-status> for more information on tax exempt status
- E. The system must be electrically interconnected and attached to a non-mobile structure on a permanent foundation. Ground mount and pole mount installations are permitted. All projects must conform to permitting processes and Installation Requirements as detailed in Section V.G., below.
- F. Rebate program participants are responsible for ensuring that the roof on which the system is installed must have a minimum of 10 years of usable, warranted life remaining.
- G. The multifamily property cannot be registered with the [City of Austin’s Repeat Offender Program](#).
- H. The system must remain functioning and interconnected and to Austin Energy’s electrical grid for the useful life of the system (a minimum of 20 years or longer based on the modules’ warranty length), otherwise the Applicant may be required to forfeit any incentives received from Austin Energy.

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- I. Customers participating in this program are **not** eligible for smart meter opt-out.
- J. While the CBI is an up-front incentive available to eligible Applicants (see B, above), it is the tenants of a benefitting property will receive the ongoing solar production credits to their monthly electric bills. Benefiting residential accounts who will be credited according to Austin Energy's [Value of Solar](#) rate.
- K. The Applicant must own the system. *Leased systems are not eligible for the incentive.*
- L. To qualify for the **nonprofit incentive**, Applicants must:
 - i. Provide proof of nonprofit status (acceptable forms of proof listed in Section VI, B.iii., below)
- M. All CBI Multifamily incentives are special limited obligations of the City of Austin, payable solely from the revenues of Austin Energy, and not from any tax revenues of the City. Customers and their contractors will receive a Letter of Intent to Fund (LOI) via email to notify them when funding has been allocated for their project. The rebate amount will be specified in the letter once the application is approved. Funding will not be allocated to projects that have been installed prior to receiving a LOI. Refer to Section IV.D of this document.

III. Eligibility – Shared Solar

- A. With Austin Energy's Share Solar billing, multiple residential accounts can benefit from solar credits generated from a single solar system. The Shared Solar billing functionality is available to multifamily buildings with a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 500 benefitting residential units contained at one address. Shared Solar billing is restricted to residential units located on the same property as the solar installation.
- B. The benefitting residential units must be sub-metered. Commercial meters are not eligible.
- C. The property must be a participant in the [Austin Energy Multifamily Partnership Program \(MPP\)](#).
- D. The system must be interconnected on the utility side of the meter (see Section V, Installation Requirements).
- E. Allocations of Shared Solar bill credits must be calculated per the instructions on the Shared Solar Bill Credit Allocation Form, which is available in the [Energy Efficiency Collaboration Platform \(EECP\)](#).
- F. To enroll in Shared Solar billing, there is a one-time set up fee of \$17 per unit.
- G. To be enrolled in MPP there is a separate one-time fee of \$20 per unit.

IV. Participating Solar Contractor Obligations

- A. The Participating Solar Contractor agrees to follow Austin Energy's Contractor Handbook and [Austin Energy Code of Conduct and Ethical Requirements](#).
- B. The system must be contracted and permitted by the Participating Solar Contractor submitting the application on the customer's behalf. Participating Solar Contractors are listed on [Austin Energy's Solar Solutions website](#).
- C. Participating Solar Contractors are required to release customers from their contractual obligations upon request without penalty any time prior to the issuance of the Letter of Intent (LOI) to provide a rebate.
- D. Participating Solar Contractor must:
 - i. Be listed as the promisor on the solar installation contract with the Applicant or general contractor.
 - ii. Submit an incentive application via the EECP portal on the Applicant's behalf.
 - iii. Obtain and maintain the proper electrical permit(s) for installation of the system prior to inspection.
 - iv. Disclose subcontractors on the permit and on the Customer Agreement Form (CAF)
 - v. Provide a 10-year warranty (minimum) for the workmanship of the installation and transfer the equipment warranties to the system owner. Warranty statement must be signed by customer.
- E. Production models must be used to communicate expected annual production to customers. Production models shall include any production impacts due to losses from array azimuth, tilt, and shading specific to

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the project proposed. Austin Energy uses the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL) [PVWatts](#) tool as a baseline for internal review.

- F. Participating Solar Contractors must request a final electrical inspection for completed project within 180 days. Projects not completed within the allotted time require a new incentive application at the prevailing incentive level. It is the contractor's obligation to notify the customer if a rebate is cancelled or if they are no longer pursuing a rebate.

V. Installation Requirements

- A. There is no maximum size limit for systems, but Applicants are subject to incentive caps noted in Section I.
- B. The system must be sited in a location where a minimum average of 75% of the total solar resource fraction (TSRF) is available to the system. An on-site, in-person shade analysis must be made available within 10 business days upon request by Austin Energy or will result in a violation.
- C. Systems must be installed with a minimum 5-degree pitch.
- D. All installed system components must be new, listed by the [California Energy Commission](#), and under warranty for a minimum of 10 years (workmanship and equipment).
- E. All systems must be permitted and interconnected to Austin Energy's electrical grid, at the Customer's expense, in accordance with the [Austin Design Criteria Manual and Austin Energy's Distribution Interconnection Guide](#). It is the contractor's responsibility to pull the appropriate permit based on jurisdiction, property type, and system installation. Commercial buildings inside the City of Austin will require a separate building permit. Ground mount, pole mount, building-integrated and tilt-up systems will require a building permit. Utility-side connections for Shared Solar will require an additional permit and an Electric Service Planning Application (ESPA).
- F. Installation must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations, and in accordance with manufacturer's standards. Individual jurisdictions should be contacted for local requirements, the City of Austin may not be aware of other local jurisdictional requirements.

VI. Incentive Process and Required Documentation

- A. **Choose a contractor:** Qualifying Applicants (Section II), or their general contractor, must choose a contractor from the [Austin Energy's Participating Solar Contractors](#) list.
- B. **Application submittal:** The Participating Solar Contractor must initiate the application on behalf of the Applicant. Applications for solar incentives must be successfully submitted by the Participating Solar Contractor through the [Energy Efficiency Collaboration Platform](#) (EECP) under the Solar Multifamily CBI program. The following documents must be fully completed and uploaded by the Participating Solar Contractor:
 - i. Customer Agreement Form (CAF) and REC Agreement – filled out with system details, then endorsed by the primary contractor (if different from the solar contractor), subcontractor/Participating Solar Contractor (where applicable), and the Applicant.
 - ii. Proposed System Layout, including the following:
 - 1. Solar panel and inverter equipment details – make, model, quantity
 - 2. Panel orientation – azimuth and tilt
 - 3. North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) endorsement, with number and signature, from a certified PV Installation Professional or PV Design Specialist
 - 4. Customer name and address, including unit number, if applicable
 - iii. (As needed) Nonprofit status verification
 - 1. A reference to the Applicant organization's listing in the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) list of tax-exempt organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.

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2. A copy of a currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate.
 3. A statement from a State taxing body, State Attorney General, or other appropriate State Official certifying that the Applicant organization has a nonprofit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
 4. Any of the above proof for a State or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the Applicant organization is a local nonprofit affiliate.
 - iv. (As needed) Designated Applicant verification – Any LOAs or W9s as delineated in Section II.B., required for incentive recipient eligibility.
 - v. (As needed) Written consent for installation – Required in the case where the Applicant is not the property owner or a designee of the property owner.
 - vi. (As needed) Written HOA approval for installation – Required if there is an HOA.
 - vii. Required for Shared Solar:
 1. Current and continued [Multifamily Partnership Program \(MPP\)](#) participation
 2. Shared Solar Bill Credit Allocation Form (available in EECF)
- C. **120 Day Encumbrance Letter:** This letter, sent to both the submitting contractor and the Applicant, confirms the Applicant's eligibility and potential incentive amount for the proposed project. This letter does not guarantee funds, but encumbers the funding pending the submittal of the following documents:
- i. Installation Contract – this document should match the installation details entered on the CAF and entered into EECF. The contract should contain:
 1. Customer (i.e., the Applicant) name, email, and installation address
 2. Participating Solar Contractor name and contact address
 3. Total solar installation price – costs not eligible for the Federal Tax Credit or local incentives must be itemized separately
 4. System details – major solar components (make, model, quantity, and total system size)
 5. Minimum 10 year warranty statement, initialed by the Applicant (as detailed in Section III.C)
 6. The contract must be endorsed by at least two of the signatories on the original CAF (Applicant, general contractor, subcontractor, or Participating Solar Contractor)
 - ii. (For Shared Solar Installations) Distributed Generation Planning Application (DGPA) form and Electric Service Planning Application (ESPA) form
 1. Filled out with system details consistent with those on the CAF and the application
 2. Complete with required endorsements per [Austin Energy's Distribution Interconnection Guide](#)
 3. Generators 1 MW or larger will be subject to a more rigorous interconnection process, including a screening study, Full Interconnection Study (FIS), Quarterly Stability Analysis, and other requirements.
 - iii. Rebate amounts exceeding the City Manager Spending Authority requires Austin City Council approval. Austin Energy will submit the project for approval on behalf of the Applicant. Allow 60 days for approval.
- D. **CBI Solar Installation Letter of Intent (LOI):** This letter, sent to both the submitting contractor and the Applicant, confirms the incentive amount is locked in for the Applicant pending:
- i. Project completion within the 180-day timeline. Project installation completion is defined as the project is ready for final inspection and final inspection has been requested.
 - ii. Installation meeting all eligibility requirements outlined in the Austin Energy's Solar Multifamily CBI Program Guidelines
 - iii. Final inspection passed by Austin Energy solar inspectors

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- iv. All final required documentation submitted. Any changes that occur after the LOI is issued which result in a change of system size (kW) or system performance (kWh) must be submitted through EECP and may result in disqualification from the CBI.
- v. Any changes that occur after the LOI is issued which result in a change of system size (kW) or system performance (kWh) must be submitted through EECP and may result in disqualification from the proposed CBI. LOI Extensions may be requested to solar@austinenergy.com and are subject to program review. Extensions request approvals are not guaranteed.
 - 1. Extensions must be requested before LOI expires
 - 2. Extensions must provide Austin Energy with a reason for project delays
 - 3. Extension must provide a timeline for completion
- E. **Installation:** The contractor has 180 days from the date of the LOI to install the system and request final inspection. An optional Pre-Construction (100) meeting to ensure compliance with federal, local, and program guidelines may be requested prior to installation.
- F. **Final Inspection:** Once the installation is complete the Participating Solar Contractor must:
 - i. Ensure that all applicable permits are open and have not expired.
 - ii. Request inspection through the [Austin Build + Connect Permit Portal](#)
 - iii. Submit the following documentation:
 - 1. (As needed) Final System Layout and/or Change Orders – if the installed system differs from the original application and CAF. Please note that changes made to the system size and production must remain consistent with the eligibility requirements listed in this document. System changes may result in disqualification for the incentive and should be considered *prior to* implementation.
 - 2. Final system Invoice, all costs eligible for the Federal Tax Credit or incentives must be itemized.
 - iv. The Installation workflow step in EECP.
 - v. The installation will be inspected for its compliance with national, local, and program guidelines. The customer will be notified of the inspection results via email. Successful pass of final inspection is required for system operation.
 - vi. During the Quality Assurance process, contactors must update any documentation and address any comments no more than 2 weeks after a request for updates has been sent.
- G. **Incentive Payment:** The incentive check will be issued by the City of Austin and mailed to the Applicant at the mailing address provided in EECP once the system has passed city inspection and all project documentation has been approved.
- H. **REC Retirement:** Austin Energy will retain the renewable energy credits (RECs) and other environmental attributes (other than tax credits) from energy generated by systems receiving Value of Solar bill credits. For any interconnected system over 1 MW, Applicants must coordinate with ERCOT and Austin Energy on REC requirements. RECs will not be specifically retired on the Applicant's behalf, though Applicant requests to have RECs retired on their behalf may be considered.-Exceptions may be granted in cases where RECs are required for reporting or sustainability program certification. The Applicant *must* contact REAdmin@austinenergy.com to request an exception.

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