

INCOME VERIFICATION PROCEDURES

December 2024

LMI-Accessible Community Solar Gardens must reserve at least 30% of capacity for LMI Residential Subscribers. These subscribers are, at the time the community solar garden subscription is executed, either a low-income household (as defined under section 216B.2402, subdivision 16) or a household whose income is 150 percent or less of the area median household income.

Subscriber Organizations should consult the Commerce-provided “Area Median Income Look-Up Table” on the program website to find current HUD income levels by county and household size. The table is updated annually, typically in April. Subscriber Organizations must use the AMI data that is current at the time.

Verification Pathways

Subscriber Organizations may qualify households as income-eligible using one of the three pathways below. A subscriber’s income eligibility only needs to be verified once over the length of the subscription contract.

Pathway A

Verify that the household participates in an approved categorical program, as listed on the LMI-Accessible CSG Program’s webpage. The Subscriber must provide a card, letter, statement, or other documentation to prove that at least one member of the household has participated in an approved income-eligible program within the past three years.

Pathway B

Verify that the household’s total annual income is at or below 150% of the area median income, as reported in the household’s most recently filed Tax Return-IRS Form 1040. Forms 1040-SR and 1040-NR are also acceptable. If there are multiple filers within a household, these forms need to be collected for all tax filers in the household. Subscriber Organizations must determine if households fall under the 150% AMI threshold by using “Total Income” as reported on the 1040 and 1040-SR, which is found on Line 9 of the 2023 forms. When using the 1040-NR, use “total effectively connected income,” also on Line 9 of the 2023 form.

Pathway C

If the household is unable to provide a Tax Return-IRS Form 1040, it may instead provide recent documentation for all income sources of more than \$1,000 per year for all adults permanently residing in the household. Eligible documents include W2 or other paystubs/wage statements, IRS Form 1099, and letters or statements showing retirement benefits and/or government benefits not included in Pathway A (such as Social Security Income, Social Security Disability Income, and Unemployment Insurance).

Pathway Documentation

Regardless of which pathway is used, LMI Residential Subscribers must complete and sign the “Attestation of Income-Based Eligibility for the LMI-Accessible CSG Program” form and submit it along with relevant supporting documents to the Subscriber Organization.

For all submitted supporting documentation, the Subscriber should delete or redact Social Security Numbers and other sensitive information that is not needed by the program. The only information needed by the program for verification of income eligibility are name, address, household size, document dates, income amounts (for Pathways B and C), and the name of the approved income-eligible program the household participates in (for Pathway A). Subscriber Organizations may redact documents on the Subscriber’s behalf, provided that the Subscriber Organization does not retain any records on behalf of the Department of Commerce that contain SSN data.

Document Retention

Subscriber Organizations must retain signed Attestation of Income-Based Eligibility and supporting documentation for all LMI Residential Subscribers. (Attestations are not required for LMI Subscribers who signed subscription contracts before 2025 and who were qualified using Pathways A or B.) These records must be stored confidentially and be available for the Program Administrator to audit. Please see the Subscriber Organization Code of Conduct for additional information about the protection and security of customer information. The Program Administrator will provide guidance on post-audit document retention requirements at a later date.

Questions

For questions about income verification procedures, please contact the Program Administrator at their direct email or at CommunitySolar@state.mn.us.