

State of New Jersey

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: NJBPU Approves State's First Community Solar Pilot Program Rules

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From the Board of Public Utilities:

Program will bring Solar to Underserved Communities and Residents

TRENTON - The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today approved the three-year Community Solar Energy Pilot Program Rules, a key component of Governor Phil Murphy's clean energy agenda. Community solar will make solar available to more state residents by allowing customers of an electric public utility to participate in a solar project not actually located on their property. Instead, the system can be located in the subscriber's electric utility service territory. In order to ensure that all New Jerseyans have access to solar, the Pilot will earmark 40 percent of the overall program capacity for low- and moderate-income projects.

The Pilot Program, which will generate crucial market information and implementation data, will ultimately inform the development of a permanent community solar program over the next three years. In developing the Pilot, staff created an innovative and flexible program that the Board may evaluate and adjust over the life of the program in order to maximize the program's success.

"Environmental justice for those who have been left behind is one of the cornerstones of my administration," said **Governor Murphy**. "The Community Solar Pilot Program will enable those who have not been able to access the benefits of solar to do so."

"Solar has been extremely successful in New Jersey – with the state having passed 100,000 installations in 2018 – but has not been accessible for everyone," said **NJBPU President Joseph L. Fiordaliso**. "The point of this pilot program is to take the first step toward ensuring that we change this dynamic."

In order to join, customers sign up for a community solar subscription, through which they either purchase an ownership share of the community solar system or sign up for a recurring monthly subscription. The benefit of participating is represented as a bill credit on each subscriber's utility bill. The application for the pilot program is being developed in consultation with a broad group of stakeholders and will be considered by the Board at a meeting in the near future.

The Community Solar Pilot has an annual capacity limit of 75 megawatts (MW) for the first year and at least 75 MW for the second and third years (roughly estimated enough to cover the electric usage of 45,000 residential homes).

Solar is a critical component of Governor Murphy's clean energy agenda. The Governor has a stated goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2050. This includes 3,500 MW of offshore wind energy by 2030 and the state's solar initiatives such as community solar and the transition to a new, more cost-effective solar energy program.

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