

Low-Income Forum on Energy 2019 Regional Meeting Series

AGENDA

May 16th – Capital Region – Malta, NY



**Low-Income
Forum on Energy**



Low-Income Forum on Energy

Welcome

On behalf of the LIFE Steering Committee, welcome to today's LIFE Regional Meeting, one of seven taking place around New York State this year. As the cost of energy continues to pose challenges to New Yorkers with low or fixed incomes, it is important to make available to community leaders and service providers useful, timely information to assist low-income consumers. Today's program will supply you with updates on key programs along with valuable information on available resources and will highlight certain regional best practices. Please also take advantage of the tremendous opportunity for networking at today's event. Often, it takes the right contacts to help serve your clients in the most effective and efficient manner. I hope that you enjoy today's meeting, and I'd like to thank you for participating in the LIFE dialogue!

– Monica M. Ferreri, LIFE Chair

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Registration and Networking

9:00 am – 9:15 am

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Christopher Coll, NYSERDA
Monica M. Ferreri, New York State Department of Public Service

9:15 am – 10:45 am

Session 1: Advancing Energy Affordability and Access to Clean Energy in New York State

New York State is advancing far-reaching clean energy initiatives to spur achievement of important climate and energy affordability objectives, including undertaking clean energy innovation and fundamental regulatory changes to bring new investments into the State that improve consumer choice and affordability. This session will provide an overview of and update on the primary initiatives guiding New York State's clean energy transition with specific focus on how New York is advancing energy affordability and access to clean energy solutions for lower-income and disadvantaged New Yorkers.

Speakers: Christopher Coll, NYSERDA;
Monica M. Ferreri, New York State Department of Public Service

10:45 am – 11:00 am

Networking and Exhibit Break

11:00 am – 11:30 am

Session 2: Utility Updates

Utilities have a long history of providing energy assistance to their low-income customers—from budget billing to efficiency programs. This utility updates session provides the most recent information on utility low-income energy efficiency and payment assistance programs currently being administered in New York State.

Speakers: Anne O'Connell, National Grid and
New York State Electric and Gas Representative

11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Session 3: Connecting People to Services: Using myBenefits.ny.gov as a Resource

myBenefits is an online tool for New York State residents. Users can check possible eligibility for multiple human services benefit programs; apply online for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP); recertify for SNAP or Temporary Assistance; report changes; and view case details. This session will demonstrate how myBenefits can be used as a resource to connect your clients to programs and services that will benefit them.

Speaker: Andres Vergara, Learning and Development Services (LEADS), Buffalo State College

12:00 pm – 12:45 pm

Luncheon

12:45 pm – 1:15 pm

Session 4: Consumer Protections: New York State's Residential Shared Meter Law

This session will cover a widespread consumer protection and utility affordability issue in New York: shared meter conditions. A shared meter condition exists when a consumer's electric and/or gas meter reports usage both inside of the dwelling and to areas outside of the dwelling. In other words, a residential customer in a shared meter condition is additionally paying heat for common areas or other apartments, which is prohibited under New York State law. These conditions can arise intentionally or accidentally and are most often associated with conversions of single-family dwellings into rentals or from owner-occupied multiple dwelling units to non-owner-occupied investor units. Presenters will discuss how to identify when such a situation is occurring, the consumer's rights, and the procedural and legal steps necessary to protect the consumer's rights and finances.

Speaker: Laurie Wheelock, Public Utility Law Project of New York

1:15 pm – 1:45 pm

Session 5: Focus on Environmental Justice: Statewide and Local Perspectives

As defined by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies. Environmental justice in energy policy intersects with the racial, economic, housing, health and other social justice issues which impact low-income residents and communities of color. Achieving equity in clean energy program design and implementation requires inclusive engagement with and representation of the impacted communities along with fair distribution of benefits and burdens while prioritizing those with the highest need. This session will provide local and statewide perspectives on environmental justice and the opportunity to learn about related projects led by local organizations.

Speakers: Michelle Andry, NYSERDA;
Arlene Way, Arbor Hill Development Corporation

1:45 pm – 2:00 pm

Afternoon Remarks

2:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Networking and Exhibit Break

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Discussion on Programs, Barriers, and Opportunities

Building on the discussions started during the 2018 Low- to Moderate-Income Public Forums hosted by NYSERDA and the NYS Department of Public Service, this stakeholder feedback discussion will focus on current initiatives and identify opportunities to improve the impact of energy and affordability programs in communities.

Thank you to the LIFE 2019 Regional Meetings Subcommittee members

The LIFE Steering Committee would like to thank our 2019 Regional Meeting Subcommittee members for their time and expertise in the development of the agenda for this meeting and in the facilitation of scholarship opportunities. Their commitment to the LIFE mission and the support from the organizations that they represent on the LIFE Steering Committee is greatly appreciated.

LIFE 2019 Regional Meetings Planning Subcommittee

Amy Barry, National Grid; Susann Brown, Orange and Rockland Utilities; Nancy Campo, PSEG-Long Island; Linda Eddy, PSEG-Long Island; Mishel Filisha, NYSERDA; Beth Monaco, Central Hudson Gas and Electric; Valerie Strauss, Association for Energy Affordability; Charlie Quinn, Regional Economic Community Action Program

LIFE 2019 Regional Meetings Scholarship Subcommittee

Connie Clouston, National Grid; Mishel Filisha, NYSERDA; Meshell Garcia, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance; Sherry Higgins, National Grid; Jackie Sykas, New York State Electric and Gas

Since the NYS Public Service Commission initiated LIFE in 1998, the LIFE Steering Committee has been an integral part of the growth and development of the program. The Steering Committee is comprised of the following organizations:

Association for Energy Affordability, Inc.

Cattaraugus Community Action, Inc.

Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation

Community Power Network of NYS

Consolidated Edison of NY, Inc.

HeartShare Human Services of New York

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation

National Grid

New York Power Authority

New York State Community Action Association

New York State Department of Public Service

New York State Department of State

New York State Electric and Gas Corporation

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

New York State Homes and Community Renewal

New York State Office for the Aging

New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

New York State Weatherization Directors' Association

Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc.

PSEG Long Island

Public Utility Law Project of New York State

Regional Economic Community Action Program

Rochester Gas and Electric

Solix, Inc.

The Low-Income Forum on Energy (LIFE) is supported by the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). For more information about LIFE, please visit our website at nyserdera.ny.gov/LIFE.

As part of our ongoing commitment to both environmental and fiscal responsibility, we will not be printing and distributing presentation handouts. Please support us in these efforts by going to nyserdera.ny.gov/LIFE after the meetings to download copies of available presentations. Attendees will receive an email notification when the presentations become available.

Save the Date!

The LIFE 2020 Statewide Conference will be held on May 19-20, 2020 in Albany NY. Further information will be available in late 2019.