

# Expanded Solar for All

Leveraging community solar to provide savings to over 160,000 National Grid EAP customers

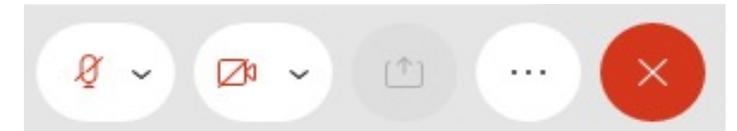
July/August 2021



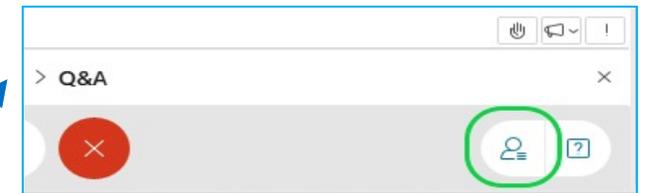
# Meeting Procedures

## Before beginning, a few reminders to ensure a smooth discussion:

- > Today's webinar is being recorded
  - A copy of the recording and presentation slides will be posted to NY-Sun's [Resources for Contractors](#) page
- > Members of the public will be muted upon entry
- > Submit questions through the **Q&A feature**. Questions will be monitored and answered at the end of the presentation.
- > Commenters have the option to indicate if you would like to ask your question verbally. To do so, add "**(request to speak)**" at the end of your question. Each commenter will have 2 minutes to ask their question.



You'll see  when your microphone is muted



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[Dylan.Cunningham@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:Dylan.Cunningham@nyserda.ny.gov)

# Today's Presentation

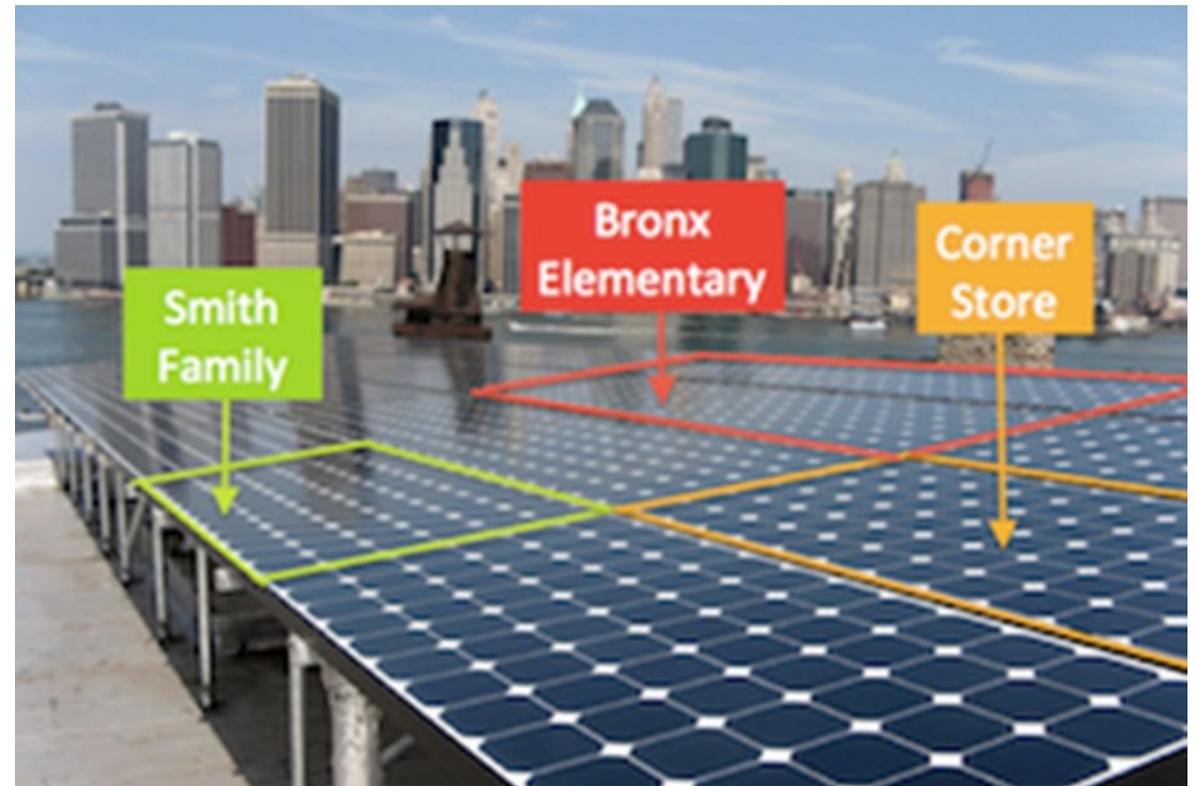
- > Overview of the Proposed Program
- > Customer Benefit and Experience
- > Petition Timeline
- > How to submit comments

# Expanded Solar for All

- > Proposed program by NYSERDA and National Grid to provide **all** National Grid's electric customers enrolled in the Energy Affordability Program (low-income bill discount program, also known as EAP) with bill savings from community solar.
- > Up to \$10/month (once the program is fully implemented) in additional utility bill assistance for **~163,000 households**
- > EAP Customers would receive this bill savings with **no additional application or verification required**. Customers would receive the savings as long as they are enrolled in EAP.
- > **~600 MW DC** of solar will be dedicated to providing bill savings for low-income customers.
- > National Grid will take an **administrative fee of 1%** of the total solar credits generated (same as community solar net crediting) for managing the projects and customer allocations.

# What is Community Solar

- > Community solar allows anyone to benefit from solar energy, even if they can't put panels on a rooftop.
- > Panels are installed at an offsite location; customers can subscribe to receive a **"share" of the energy** generated by that offsite solar array.
- > Community solar is available to any customer **who pays an electric bill** in New York.
- > E-SFA will use community solar to provide **bill assistance** to Upstate National Grid EAP customers

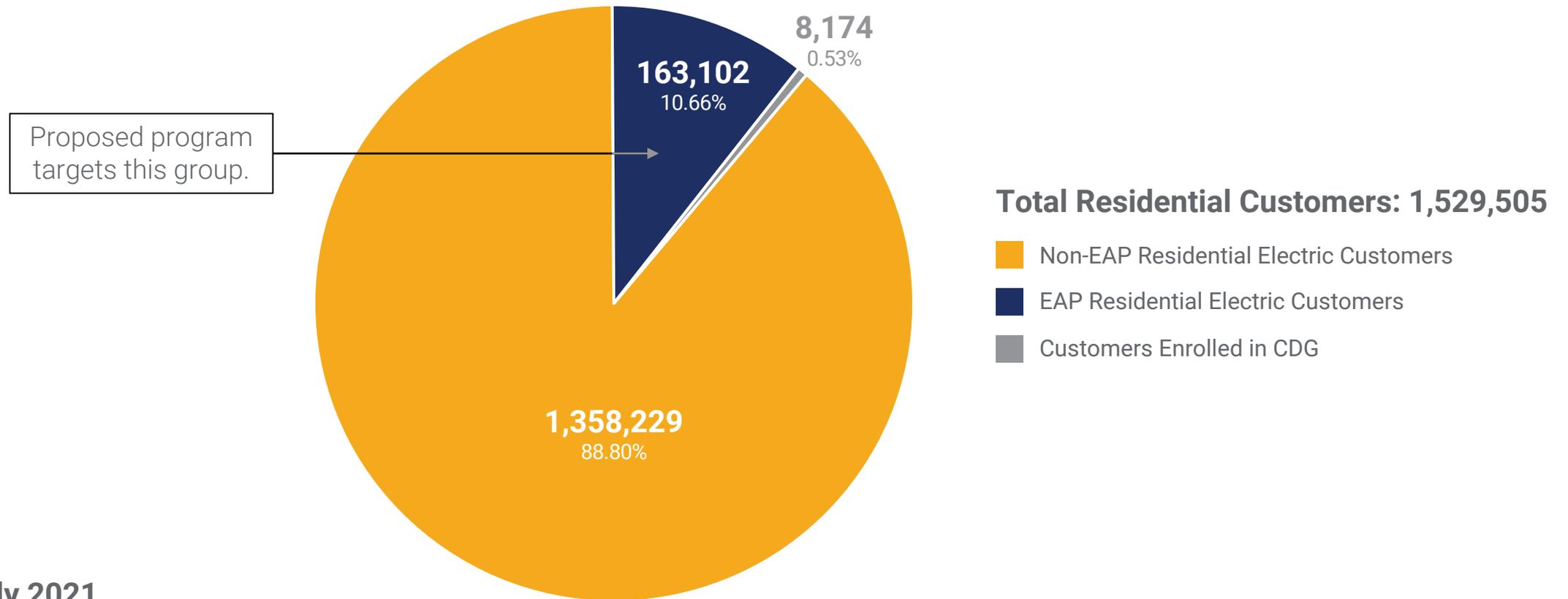


# How E-SFA Will Work



# Why E-SFA? Low Income National Grid Customers Remain Underserved by Community Solar

## All National Grid Residential Electric Customers

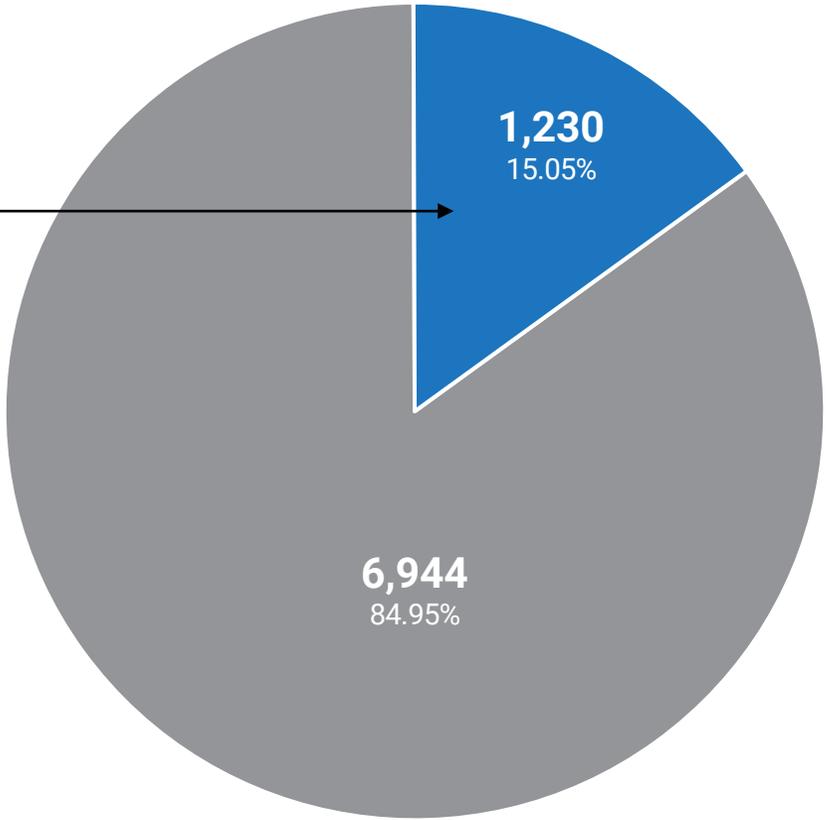


As of July 2021

# Low Income National Grid Customers Remain Underserved by Community Solar

## National Grid Residential CDG Subscribers

15.05% of National Grid residential CDG subscribers are also enrolled in EAP. Most are participants in NYSERDA's Solar for All program.



**Total CDG Subscribers: 8,174**

- Non-EAP Customers Enrolled in CDG
- EAP Customers Enrolled in CDG

As of July 2021

# Feature: Automatic Enrollment

- > Currently, National Grid customers that sign up for the Low Income Heating Assistance Program (HEAP) go through an **income verification process** and are also enrolled in the National Grid Energy Affordability Program (EAP)
- > In the proposed model, EAP customers will **automatically enroll** in the new community solar program
- > Immediate access to community solar and bill savings with **no additional verification process or paperwork**
- > Integration with EAP offers customers reassurance that **other benefits (HEAP, etc.) won't be impacted**

# Feature: Reliable Bill Savings

- > Proposed model applies lessons from Solar for All and the National Grid EAP program to provide a fixed monthly bill savings from community solar credits
- > Customers can budget and plan around their predictable community solar savings just as they can around their EAP bill discount
- > Initial program concept targets **\$10** per month savings, equivalent to **~15%** of the average EAP customer electric bill
- > A distinct line item will be added to customer bills to show the Community Solar Credit

SERVICE FOR Jane Doe 123 Sample Rd	BILLING PERIOD Apr 20, 2020 to May 18, 2020	PAGE 2 of 4
	ACCOUNT NUMBER 00000-00000	PLEASE PAY BY AMOUNT DUE \$ 7.56
<b>DETAIL OF CURRENT CHARGES</b>		
<b>Delivery Services</b>		
<b>Electricity Delivery</b>		
Service Period	No. of days	Current Reading - Previous Reading = Total Usage
Apr 20 - May 18	28	74674 Actual - 74323 Actual = 351 kWh
METER NUMBER 26507021	NEXT SCHEDULED READ DATE ON OR ABOUT Jun 19	
RATE	Electric SC1 Non Heat - EAP	
Basic Service (not including usage)		17.00
Energy Affordability Credit - Tier 3		-38.00
<b>Community Solar Credit</b>		<b>-10.00</b>
Delivery	0.05614871 x 351 kWh	20.83
SBC	0.005491 x 351 kWh	1.93
Legacy Transition Chrg	0.003305 x 351 kWh	1.16
RDM	0.00056321 x 351 kWh	0.20
Transmission Rev Adj	-0.00329 x 351 kWh	-1.15
Tariff Surcharge	3.09278 %	-0.18
	<b>Total Electricity Delivery</b>	<b>-\$ 8.21</b>
<b>Supply Services</b>		
<b>Electricity Supply</b>		
SUPPLIER National Grid		
Electricity Supply	0.03232 x 351 kWh	11.34
Merchant Function	0.00171521 x 351 kWh	0.60
ESRM	0.010606 x 351 kWh	3.72
Tariff Surcharge	1.0101 %	0.11
	<b>Total Electricity Supply</b>	<b>\$ 15.77</b>

# Reliable Bill Savings

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# Bill Savings: Ramp Up Over Time

- > Customers will receive a smaller monthly dollar amount at the initial program launch (~\$3/month)
- > As more community solar projects sign up to participate in E-SFA, that number will increase until we reach 600 MW
- > At ~600 MW, customers will receive \$10 month as long as they are enrolled in EAP

# Feature: Customer Education

- > E-SFA will address existing and perceived barriers that limit low income participation in clean energy
- > Program information will be integrated into messaging about National Grid's bill savings programs (HEAP, EAP, etc.)
- > Education conducted by National Grid's Customer Advocates
  - Broad, regional network
  - Existing relationships with customers and social service organizations
- > Leverage NYSERDA's existing outreach network: Community Energy Engagement Program (CEEP)

**Thank you for this opportunity to save on my electric bill while helping the environment.**

- SfA Customer, July 2020

The screenshot displays the National Grid website's 'Assistance Programs' and 'Payment Methods' sections. The 'Assistance Programs' section includes:

- Arrears Payment Plans:** National Grid is happy to assist you in finding a repayment method that best suits your current financial situation. Whether you need a short-term collection arrangement or a longer term deferred payment agreement, our agents can assist. Staying current on any plan will ensure the account has no collection action taken on it.
- Collection Arrangement:** A collection arrangement is a short term (40 days or less) repayment plan with flexibility to customize each installment's due date and amount. These payments would be in addition to your current charges. A collection arrangement need not be signed, but a written copy of your agreed terms will be provided upon request.
- Deferred Payment Agreements:** A deferred payment agreement is a longer term repayment plan with a fixed monthly installment amount over and above current charges. A deferred payment agreement must be signed. A standard deferred payment agreement generally requires a 15 percent down payment, with the balance payable in ten monthly installments. More lenient terms are available if you qualify financially. A more lenient agreement may provide for as little as zero dollars down and payments as low as \$10 a month. For a more lenient agreement, you may need to provide the appropriate income and expense related documents.
- Assistance Programs:** Energy Affordability Program: New York State's income eligible utility rate program can mean valuable savings for qualifying households. Customers that receive the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) are automatically enrolled in our low-income EAP Program with the receipt of a HEAP payment. HEAP or proof of HEAP with another utility or vendor is the only way on the program. The program offers a monthly bill credit. For information contact by email at [AffordAbility@nationalgrid.com](mailto:AffordAbility@nationalgrid.com) or telephone at 1-866-305-1915.
- Temporary Assistance:** This is assistance offered by New York State Department of Social Service Counties to help their qualified residents facing emergency situations. For more information about Temporary Assistance and other available assistance programs through local Department of Social Services Counties, please visit: [www.mybenefits.ny.gov/](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov/) or contact your local DSS county.
- Home Energy Assistance Program - HEAP (Opens each November):** A federally funded program that assists income-eligible families and individuals in paying their home heating bills - generally available November - March. It is not a loan and does not have to be paid back. There are two components to HEAP - Regular HEAP and Emergency HEAP. For more information about HEAP visit: <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/> or to find out about qualifying and other programs offered, visit: [www.mybenefits.ny.gov/](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov/).

The 'Payment Methods' section is titled 'Payment Methods Payment Plans Payment Assistance'. Below this, there is a photo of an elderly couple looking at a laptop. A notice below the photo reads: 'This is an important notice. Please have it translated.' Below the notice are translations in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

CM7286 (6/19) Visit [nationalgridus.com](http://nationalgridus.com) for more information.

# Interaction with other Community Solar

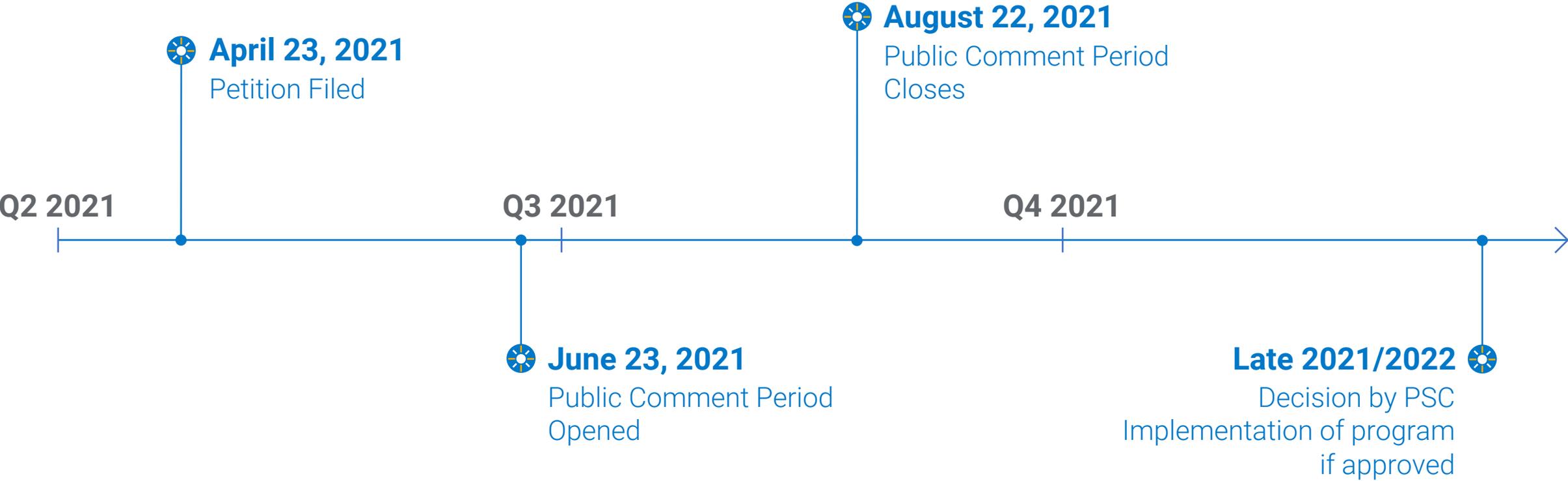
- > Customers can only receive solar (either rooftop or community solar) from one source, per statewide regulations. Customers enrolled in E-SFA will not be able to participate in another community solar project.
  - If an eligible customer **already** has rooftop solar or community solar → this customer **will not be enrolled in E-SFA**, they can keep their rooftop solar/community solar subscription
  - If a customer **has E-SFA** and they want to install rooftop solar or switch to another community solar project → they can **unenroll** by contacting National Grid

# E-SFA Interaction with Community Choice Aggregation

- > Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) programs allow **local governments** to procure energy supply services and distributed energy resources (DER) for eligible energy customers in a community.
- > Customers can be enrolled in **either** E-SFA or the CCA's opt-out community solar option. If a low-income customer is enrolled in E-SFA, they can participate in the CCA's other offerings.
- > National Grid and NYSERA recommend that the low-income customer would be enrolled in whichever opt-out community solar program provides the **greatest cost savings** to the customer.
- > National Grid and NYSERDA encourage municipalities to create locally tailored solutions to serve the needs and create benefits for their communities. For those municipalities which do not implement such solutions, E-SFA provides clean energy benefits to low-income customers who otherwise would remain unserved.

# Next Steps

# Program Timeline



# Submitting a Public Comment

- > Anyone can submit a Public Comment about this program until August 22<sup>nd</sup>:  
<https://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/Comments/PublicComments.aspx?MatterCaseNo=19-E-0735>
- > Public Comments are instrumental in the Public Service Commission's decision on any program.

**Thank You!**  
**Q&A**

# Appendix

# NY-Sun Historical LMI Funding

## NY-Sun has implemented multiple programs serving LMI households and disadvantaged communities:

### > **Predevelopment and technical assistance support:**

- Funding to address gaps and barriers to solar and energy storage projects benefitting LMI households, affordable housing and disadvantaged communities
- **\$2,946,342** committed to date

### > **Solar for All:**

- No-cost community solar for low income households
- **\$11,639,368** committed to date

### > **Affordable housing adder and Affordable Solar residential adder:**

- Additional NY-Sun incentives for affordable housing properties and LMI homeowners
- **\$16,093,796** committed to date (total incentives to eligible projects)

# Current NY-Sun LMI and DACs Funding

## > **Solar Energy Equity Framework**

- Approved by the Public Service Commission's **May 2020 NY-Sun Order**
- To fulfill the CLCPA mandate: disadvantaged communities receive **35%** benefits associated with clean energy investments

## > **\$200 million** will build and expand NY Sun programs:

- Low-Income households (<60% of State Median Income)
- Moderate-income (LMI) households, (<80% of Area Median Income)
- Affordable housing
- Disadvantaged communities (DACs)
- Environmental justice communities

## > **Two new programs: Community Solar Strategy**

- **Utility-managed program**
- “Adder” incentives for inclusive community solar projects serving LMI households, affordable housing and disadvantaged communities

# Expanded Solar for All Details

- > **Cost savings passed onto the customer:** target of up to \$10/month once the program is fully implemented
- > Credits and customers are **aggregated by the utility**, eliminating developer customer acquisition and management costs
- > **Potential project pipeline:** Over 500 MW DC of community solar in various stages of development in National Grid territory planned
- > **Seamless customer experience:** Automatic enrollment (no additional verification required for EAP customers), customer education integrated with HEAP/EAP process,
- > **Builds on Solar for All:** Scales up concept, incorporating lessons learned, best practices, and past Commission directives for low-income customer assistance
- > **Low Administration Costs:** National Grid will take a **1% administrative fee** (same as net crediting) for managing the projects and customer allocations.

# Building on Solar for All

- > Free community solar program launched in 2018, eligible low-income customers sign up with NYSEERDA. As of December 2020, **3,187** customers are currently receiving credits and **707** customers are in the process of receiving credits.
  - Customers like the program **once they understand it**, and the savings have made a difference to them. Program received strong support from state/local social service agencies, housing providers, and community organizations.
- > Ongoing challenge with **slow pace of customer sign-ups**, despite support from local/regional partners, significant on the ground outreach, and extensive digital marketing.
  - **Perceived barrier to entry:** Gathering utility documentation and income verification is burdensome and intrusive for the customer
  - **Initial association with other negative experiences:** Many customers have been scammed by predatory ESCOs and do not want to sign up for anything “energy related”
  - **Concern about variability in the bill credit:** Customers prefer a fixed incentive amount that they can plan for and budget

# E-SFA Benefits

	<b>Current Crediting Model</b>	<b>Proposed Model</b>
<b>Customer Participation</b>	Developers identify and recruit customers and those customers must opt-in.	All EAP customers are automatically enrolled.
<b>Bill Credit Distribution</b>	Customer savings change monthly. Difficult to account for EAP credits in subscription sizing.	Consistent customer savings distributed equally across all EAP customers.
<b>Customer Churn</b>	Customers who unenroll from the program must be replaced; high low income customer churn increases project costs.	Customer enrollment tied to EAP, not projects.

# E-SFA Benefits by Stakeholder

<b>EAP Customers</b>	Higher bill discounts and support clean energy development. No additional application process.
<b>CDG Owners</b>	Reduced costs and lower risk than standard CDG projects
<b>National Grid</b>	Minimal risk and cost to non-participating customers
<b>NYSERDA</b>	Efficient way to use NY-Sun funds to maximize impact
<b>Regulators</b>	Focus benefits where they are most impactful

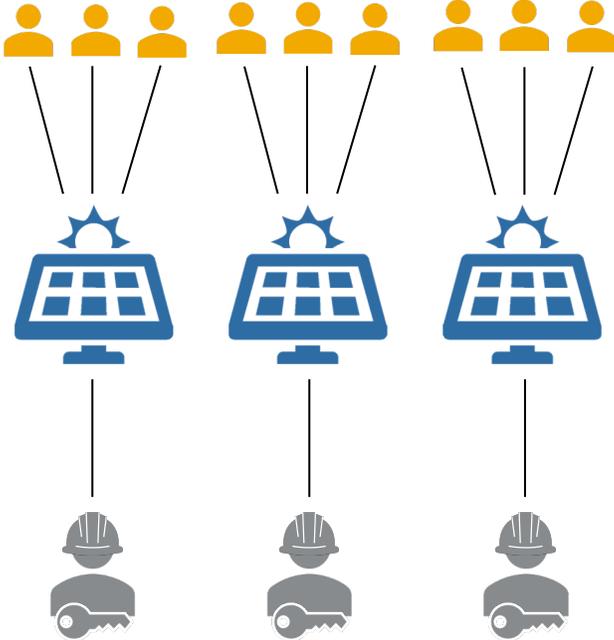
# Proposed E-SFA Model

Participating Customers

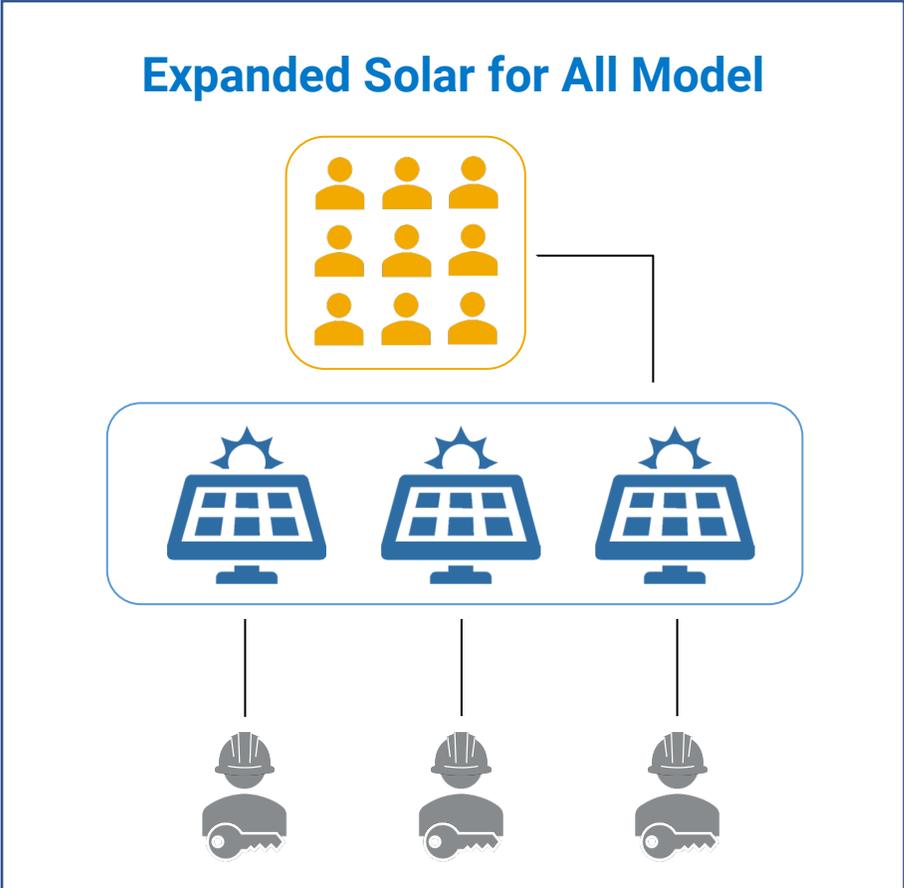
CDG Projects

CDG Owners

## Community Solar Model



## Expanded Solar for All Model

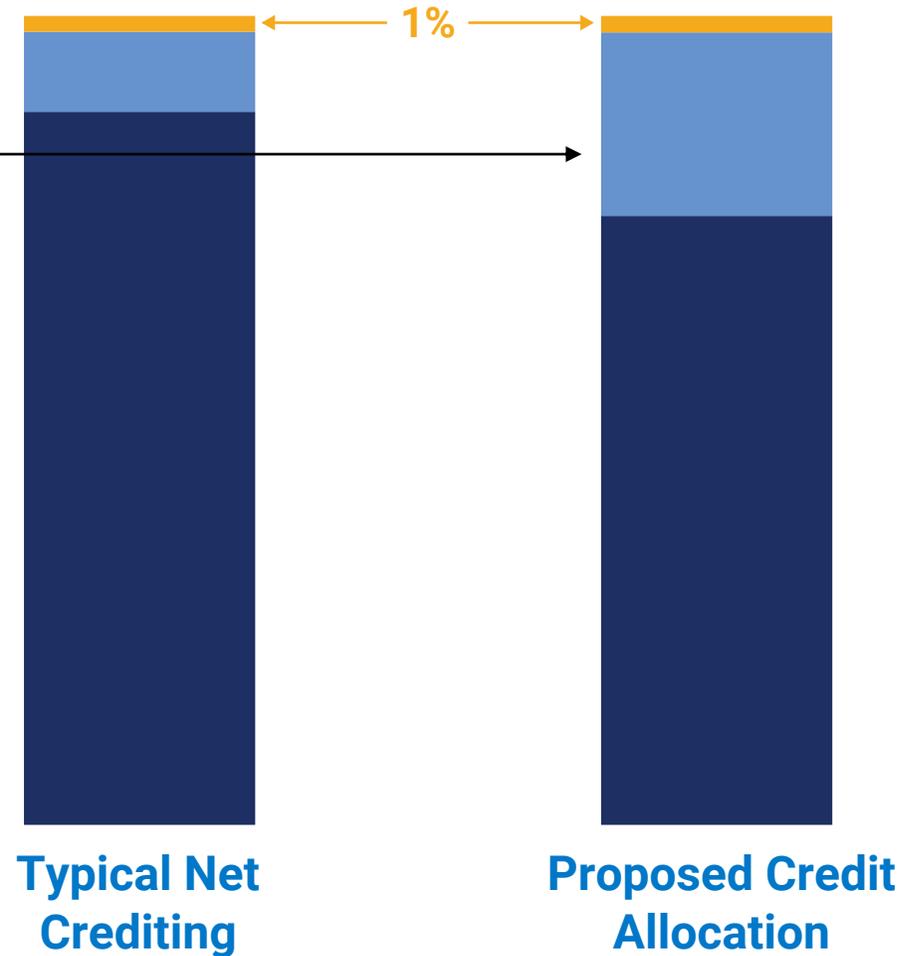


# Solar Developer/Owner Experience:

- > Developers with mature projects can participate (25% interconnection payment and permits)
- > CDG project owner is responsible for operating the project for 25 year term
- > National Grid will manage all customer allocations, bill crediting, and management
- > National Grid will directly pay CDG project owner for the balance of the project generation (value stack minus contribution level)
- > Project will still be eligible for base NY-Sun incentive, Community Credit/Adder, and potentially an additional NY-Sun incentive adder

# Allocation of Credits

A portion of what was once developer revenue is now going to customers. This is because the developers have lower costs (no customer management, acquisition, billing, etc.).



- National Grid Administrative Fee (\$)
- Customer Bill Credits (\$)
- Developer Share (\$)