

HOBOKEN COMMUNITY SOLAR FAQ

Q: What is Community Solar?

A: Community Solar is a NEW State program that allows utility customers to participate in a solar energy project that is remotely located from their property. Community Solar projects enable greater access to solar energy. Electric utility customers who have been unable to install solar panels on their own roofs can now access this renewable energy source, both helping our environment AND lowering energy bills due to the low cost of solar energy production.

Q: How Does Community Solar Benefit Hoboken?

A: The Hoboken Community Solar Program provides savings of at least 25% on electric charges to lower-income Hoboken residents who pay their own energy bills. It also expands the benefits of solar energy to people who cannot install solar panels on their own homes, like renters, residents of apartment buildings, homes with old roofs, homes with shaded roofs, and residents with low credit. The Hoboken Community Solar Program also provides funding to benefit public housing residents.

Q: Who can participate?

A: To participate in the Hoboken Community Solar Program you must:

1. pay your own energy bill
2. be a resident of Hoboken, AND
3. be within low-to-moderate income limits.

Q: What are low-to-moderate income limits?

To be eligible as a subscriber to the Hoboken Community Solar Program the resident must be within low-to-moderate income limits, which means:

1. households with a combined income that qualifies as low-to-moderate (see chart here and refer to HOPES);
2. residents of affordable housing who pay their own energy bill including recipients of Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (you are pre-qualified), OR

3. Recipients of government assistance programs such as SNAP, LIHEAP, USF, LIFELINE, etc. (provide ID#)

Q: Why is the Program only open to lower-income residents?

A: Hoboken's Community Solar Program is only open to low-moderate income Hoboken residents in pursuit of environmental justice. Historically, the benefits of rooftop solar energy have not been accessible to residential customers who are renters, have an older roof, live in an apartment, or have low credit. These disqualifying conditions are more likely to apply to lower-income residents, effectively preventing those most in need of energy bill savings from saving through solar energy.

Q: Can I participate if I am not a lower-income Hoboken resident?

A: The Hoboken Community Solar Program is only open to low-to-moderate income residents of Hoboken, but other Community Solar Projects may be open to general enrollment. Contact your utility to learn more.

Q: Do I need to put anything up on my roof?

A: No! That's the beauty of Community Solar: you get all the benefits of clean energy without installing anything at your home. The energy produced for the Hoboken Community Solar Program is generated by a solar facility located on the rooftop of a warehouse in Elizabeth. No area within Hoboken is suitable for a solar facility of this size, so siting the facility outside of the City enables better land use. The energy produced there is then sold to PSE&G and distributed across the energy grid, with the lower cost energy being attributed to the Community Solar subscriber (you!).

Q: How do I sign up for Community Solar?

A: Enrollment for the Hoboken Community Solar Program is up and running! There are many ways to sign up:

1. Register online by scanning the QR code;
2. Go to:

<https://www.hobokennj.gov/resources/community-solar>

3. Fill out the pre-paid paper form and mail it back to us to receive a contract to your mailbox; OR
4. Visit us at a tabling event in your community! (see calendar)

Q: How do I know this will reduce my energy costs?

A: Unlike other solar energy offers run by private companies, the Hoboken Community Solar Program was developed by the City to save money for lower-income residents. Hoboken entered a fixed-price contract that is guaranteed to be below the utility credit.

Q: How does it work?

A: When you sign up for the Hoboken Community Solar Program, the amount of electricity generated is put on your utility bill in the form of a credit, deducting it from the amount you'd owe to your utility. Then, instead of paying the utility company, you pay the renewable energy project at a discounted rate, saving you money and directly supporting a local clean energy project.

Q: How do I pay my energy bills?

A: Community Solar operates in a two-step billing process where you receive a credit on your utility bill reducing your typical monthly payment. You then pay the renewable energy project for those credits at a discounted rate instead of paying your utility company, since your bill is covered. However, you will still have to pay for the other charges on your PSE&G bill.

Example: Jane Doe signs up for the Hoboken Community Solar Program. She receives her PSE&G bill as usual, and it includes a new line item called "Community Solar Credit." The credit is for -\$100, so she owes PSE&G \$100 less. Jane then pays \$75 to the Hoboken Community Solar Program for the solar energy, saving 25%!

Fortunately, all of this is done electronically; and to make it as easy as possible, your reduced Community Solar bill can be set up to be paid automatically.

 We make things work for you.	JANE DOE Your account number: 1010101010 Invoice Number: 111111111111
This month's charges and credits	
Electric charges - PSE&G	\$100.00
Community Solar Credit	-\$100.00
Total amount due by Mar 7, 2022	\$0.00

	JANE DOE Your account number: 1010101010 Invoice Number: 111111111111
This month's charges and credits	
Electric charges - Hoboken Community Solar	\$75.00
Total amount due by Mar 7, 2022	\$75.00

Q: Which forms of payment can I use?

A: You can pay online, by wire transfer, or by check, but we recommend setting up an autopay connected to a credit card for ultimate ease of payment.

Q: What if I move?

A: If you move within Hoboken, you can still be part of the Hoboken Community Solar Program. However, if you move out of Hoboken, you must unfortunately cancel your membership.

Q: What if I want to leave the project?

A: You can leave the project at any time, with no penalties or fees.

Q: What do I do in case of a power outage? Are you replacing my utility company?

A: Even if you participate in the Hoboken Community Solar Program, PSE&G will still provide electric delivery service, and will still be responsible for service reliability and restoration. If the lights go out, you should call PSE&G at 1-800-436-PSEG.

Q: I have more questions. Whom do I contact?

The City's Community Solar Administrator, Belle Gabel, would be happy to answer any further questions or concerns. You can direct questions to 1-855-5-COMSOLAR or email community-solar@hobokennj.gov