

Massachusetts DOER Revises SMART Program Regulations

The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has updated the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program effective on April 15, 2020. The updates include [emergency regulations](#) revising the previously effective SMART regulations, 225 CMR 20.00, and three revised SMART Program guidelines:

- [Revised Guideline Regarding Land Use, Siting and Project Segmentation](#)
- [Revised Statement of Qualification Period Guideline](#)
- [Revised Capacity Block, Base Compensation Rate and Compensation Rate Adder Guideline](#)

The SMART Program is a landmark solar energy incentive program in Massachusetts in effect since November 2018. The emergency regulations and revised guidelines are the product of a 400 mW review of the SMART Program begun by DOER in 2019.

Key changes to the SMART Program include the following:

- The size of the program has doubled from 1,600 megawatts (mW) of statewide solar capacity to 3,200 mW. There will be up to 16 Base Capacity Rate blocks (currently there are 8). The Eversource western and eastern territories will be combined starting with the 9th capacity block but still will have separate Base Compensation Rates.
- All solar projects greater than 500 kilowatts (kW) up to 5 mW must include an Energy Storage System that meets the requirements for an Energy Storage adder.
- Twenty percent of full capacity blocks going forward will be set aside for mid-size projects (greater than 25 kW, less than equal to 500 kW).
- The categories of land use areas ineligible to host certain SMART projects is broadened to include lands categorized as Priority Habitat, Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape, subject to limited exceptions.
- The value of the Greenfield Subtractor is increased by up to 2.5 times the previous subtractor, disincentivizing solar development on some greenfield sites. However, a pollinator adder is introduced for projects that incorporate pollinator habitat meeting SMART requirements, with a value 5 times the previous greenfield subtractor.
- More people can qualify as Low Income Customers for purposes of the SMART Program, better facilitating the development of Low Income SMART projects. There is also a new 5% set-aside in each capacity block for Low Income SMART projects.
- Projects qualifying for the Public Entity adder now include projects sited on privately owned property that serve public entities, and the Public Entity adder is doubled in value.
- Consumer protection provisions in the SMART Program are strengthened. DOER will periodically audit the customer disclosure forms for Community Shared Solar projects, and DOER will issue a new Guideline on SMART Consumer Protection soon.

DOER filed the emergency regulations with the Secretary of the Commonwealth on April 14. Under Massachusetts administrative procedure, the emergency regulations are in effect for a period of 90 days, during which DOER conducts a formal rulemaking proceeding. At the conclusion of the 90-day period, DOER will issue final regulations. Thereafter, the electric

distribution companies in Massachusetts will file updated SMART tariffs with the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.

DOER will conduct a virtual public hearing on May 22 from 10:00 am to noon. Anyone wishing to register for the hearing may do so [here](#). DOER will also accept written comments until May 22 at 5:00 p.m. Written comments should be emailed to doer.smart@mass.gov.

If you have any questions about the changes to the SMART Program, please contact [Chuck Willing](#).