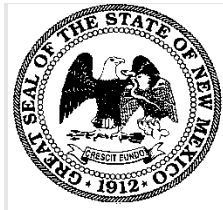


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Mexico Public Regulation Commission signs MOU with DOE's National Community Solar Partnership

SANTA FE, N.M. – The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) National Community Solar Partnership (NCSP), a nationwide coalition of stakeholders working to make affordable renewable energy available to a wide spectrum of utility customers through community solar projects. As a collaborative working group partner with the NCSP, the PRC will have access to a nationwide support network of community solar stakeholders, technical and analytical assistance, and other resources as it continues working toward implementing New Mexico's community solar program.

In July 2022, New Mexico was one of five states and the District of Columbia to sign on with the DOE to assist with the development of a Community Solar Low-Income Subscription Tool, designed to reach out to recipient households of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), a federal social services program run by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and administered in New Mexico by the state Human Services Department. Connecting LIHEAP-eligible customers with low-income-focused community solar subscriptions is expected to reduce the cost of customer acquisition, reduce household energy bills on a regular basis, and increase the deployment of community solar projects that include low-income customers. The DOE estimates that using this platform could lead to \$30 million in energy savings for New Mexicans.

Created by the Community Solar Act of 2021 and scheduled to come online later this year, New Mexico's community solar program will allow customers to support solar energy and benefit from energy savings without having to install personal solar panels on their property. The program also creates a marketplace for Community Solar Subscription Agreements, which could offer discounted rates on electricity as well as support a local solar project. Thirty percent of power produced by the solar facilities will be allocated to qualified low-income households or qualified nonprofit organizations serving low-income communities; qualified low-income households that are not LIHEAP recipients may also participate in the 30% low-income mandate. The Community Solar Act called on the PRC to draft and approve the rules of the community solar program, while development of the program is being administered by InClimate Inc.

The MOU also allows the PRC to make use of a fellowship program offered by the DOE through the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education in Tennessee. The chosen fellow will work for up to two years with the PRC's Utility Division to assist agency staff in the outreach, enrollment, and rollout of the state's community solar program using the Community Solar Low-Income Subscription Tool to help identify LIHEAP-eligible customers served by the state's three investor-owned utilities (Public Service Company of New Mexico, Southwestern Public Service Company, and El Paso Electric Company). More information about this fellowship opportunity can be found at <https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/low-income-community-solar-and-energy-assistance-fellowship>

The NCSP has set a goal of powering the equivalent of 5 million households across the United States with community solar by 2025.

For more information about the National Community Solar Partnership, visit <https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/about-national-community-solar-partnership>

For more information about New Mexico's Community Solar Program, visit <https://csnewmexico.com/>

The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC) regulates the [utilities](#), [telecommunications](#), and [motor carrier](#) industries to ensure fair and reasonable rates, and to assure reasonable and adequate services to the public as provided by law. The NMPRC also promotes public safety through the offices of [Pipeline Safety Bureau](#) and [Transportation Division](#).

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