

# Solar Incentive Program (SIP) Handbook



**Liberty Utilities**

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Please ensure you are reading the most recent version of this handbook by visiting the Liberty Utilities website at [www.libertyutilities.com](http://www.libertyutilities.com). After entering your state and community, click on the Smart Energy Use link at the top to access the Solar Incentive Program webpage.

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# 1. Program Overview

- 1.1 The Liberty Utilities Solar Incentive Program (SIP) supports the development of solar distributed generation systems for residential, small business, and schools customers in the Liberty Utilities service territory in California.
- 1.2 The SIP provides a onetime payment to help offset installation costs.
- 1.3 Payments are based on the size of the system, expected production, and the incentive rate.
- 1.4 Incentives are available on a first come first served basis.
- 1.5 The size of a solar system is measured in kilowatts (kW) in alternating current (AC) using specifications from the California Energy Commission (CEC). The minimum incentive payment size is .5 kW CEC AC and the maximum incentive payment is 10 kW CEC-AC for all customers.
- 1.6 Systems must be net metered. Customers must be on Schedule NEM and comply with all provisions of this schedule.
- 1.7 Installations must be permitted by the local building authority and connected by a California licensed installer with an A, B, C-10, or C-46 license.
- 1.8 Host customers may install their own system, but the grid connection must be performed by a licensed electrician.
- 1.9 The use of a battery backup system on a grid connected system may require additional review.
- 1.10 The SIP is authorized by the California Public Utilities Commission and is subject to changes made by Liberty Utilities and the California Public Utilities Commission.
- 1.11 The SIP is funded by the Liberty Utilities Public Purpose Program Charges.
- 1.12 Participants must take a free online energy audit by Liberty Utilities with the application.
- 1.13 Participants must receive a reservation notice before beginning construction.
- 1.14 Participants have the lesser of 12 months or until November 30, 2018 to complete the installation and submit the incentive claim from the date of the issuance of the reservation notice.
- 1.15 Liberty Utilities is not responsible for consumption or billing changes as a result of the installation of the solar system.
- 1.16 Liberty Utilities is not responsible for the operation, maintenance, or energy production of the solar system.

## 2 Budget, Incentive Rate, and Capacity

### 2.1 Budget

The SIP has an approved incentive budget of \$600,000 for incentive payments through December 31, 2018 or until the incentive budget has been fully reserved. Incentives are available on a first come first served basis.

### 2.2 Incentive Rate

The incentive rate is \$1.20 per Watt, CEC-AC.

### 2.3 Capacity

The SIP has 500 kW of available capacity for payment. The current available capacity for reservations is listed on the PowerClerk application page.

## 3 Eligibility

### 3.1 Participants

Participants in the SIP must be a customer of Liberty Utilities and a **residential** (domestic service), **small business** (small general service), or **school**. A school is a public school, private elementary or secondary institution, or institution of higher learning.

Customers may interconnect with net metering without participating in the SIP. Visit [www.libertyutilities.com](http://www.libertyutilities.com) for more details.

### 3.2 Installers

Installers must have an active A, B, C-10 or C-46 licenses with the California Contractors State License Board. Host customers may install the system but the system must be interconnected by a C-10 electrician. If an installer's license is suspended, applications associated with the installer are not eligible to receive an incentive payment unless the system was completed and inspected by the local building authority prior to the suspension date. Customers may select a different installer during the application process. See [Application Changes](#).

### 3.3 System Owners

System owners may be the host customer or a third party.

## 4 Roles

### 4.1 Applicant

The applicant is the individual or company who completes, submits, and manages the application for the solar project.

### 4.2 Host Customer

The host customer is the customer of record as named on the Liberty Utilities electric bill at the meter where the solar system is installed. The host customer has the right to designate an applicant and a system owner to act on their behalf. The host customer must specifically designate the payee if other than the host customer.

### 4.3 System Owner

The system owner is the individual or entity who owns the solar system at the time the incentive payment is issued. The system owner may be the Liberty Utilities host customer or a third party designated by the host customer.

### 4.4 Installer

The installer is the individual or company installing the solar system.

#### 4.5 Payee

The payee is the individual or company who receives the incentive payment. The payee may be the host customer or a third party.

## 5 Energy Audit

### 5.1 Online Energy Audit

Participants must participate in a free online energy audit as part of their application.

## 6 Equipment

### 6.1 New

The modules and inverters must be new and not previously used.

### 6.2 California Energy Commission

The modules and inverters must be listed on the California Energy Commission (CEC) lists of eligible [equipment](#).

### 6.3 Generation Meter

System must include a generation meter per Liberty Utilities [standards](#). Meters must be listed on the California Energy Commission list of eligible [meters](#).

## 7 Sizing

### 7.1 Maximum Incentive

The maximum incentive paid for all participants is 10 kW CEC-AC. Participants may install larger systems than the maximum incentive, but the incentive will be limited to the maximum incentive.

Systems larger than 30 kW will be subject to a more detailed review by Liberty Utilities prior to issuance of the reservation notice.

Maximum incentive:

Residential, Small Commercial, School	10 kW
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Net metering systems may not have a generating capacity of more than 1,000 kW and must comply with all other provisions of Schedule NEM. These projects can only be designed to displace the energy usage at the host customer site and shall not be designed to be net generators of energy.

### 7.2 Minimum Incentive

The minimum incentive paid for all participants is .5 kW CEC-AC.

### 7.3 Calculation

The system rated generating size (kW) is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{CEC-AC} = \text{number of modules} \times \text{CEC rating of modules} \times \text{CEC efficiency rating of inverters}$$

Note: The CEC-AC by itself does not determine the incentive payment. Rather it is used in conjunction with the expected performance (design factor) of the system due to shading, azimuth, location, and tilt. See [Incentive Calculation](#).

#### 7.4 System Additions

Customers may apply to add existing capacity to an existing system. Applications for new capacity to an existing system may require additional review. **ASK BEFORE YOU ADD.**

## 8 Incentive Calculation

### 8.1 Expected Performance Based Buydown (EPBB)

Incentive payments are based on the expected electrical output of the system.

### 8.2 Design Factor

Design Factor is a ratio that compares the expected production of the proposed system to the production of a system using ideal design parameters. The installation location, azimuth, and tilt, and shading of each array of solar modules are the variables used to determine the design factor.

### 8.3 Incentive Payment

The incentive payment will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Incentive payment} = \text{CEC AC} \times \text{Design Factor} \times \text{incentive rate}$$

## 9 Application Process

### 9.1 Submission

Liberty Utilities will manage the application process online in PowerClerk. Applicants will apply in PowerClerk and receive all communication through PowerClerk. Applicants may view the status of their application by logging in to PowerClerk. To begin an application, applicants must create an account in PowerClerk and can access the website from [www.libertyutilities.com](http://www.libertyutilities.com).

Accurate email addresses are required on the application for all program participants including the host customer.

The following documents must be uploaded and submitted with the application:

Application

Copy of electric bill	Must be a recent bill from within the last six months
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## 9.2 Application Fee

Applicants must pay a non-refundable \$100 application fee via check. Fees must be sent by mail to:

Liberty Utilities Solar Incentive Program  
933 Eloise Avenue  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

## 9.3 Review

Once the application fee is received and the online audit is completed, Liberty Utilities will review the application for completeness. If further information or corrections are required, Liberty Utilities will notify the applicant.

## 9.4 Reservation Notice

Once an application has been reviewed and approved, Liberty Utilities will send a reservation notice for the project indicating the date of the reservation, the reserved capacity, the maximum incentive amount, and the expiration of the reservation. The host customer has the sole rights to the reservation notice.

Project construction may not begin before a reservation notice is issued. Projects that are in construction prior to receiving a reservation notice are not eligible for an incentive.

## 9.5 Construction

After receiving the reservation notice from Liberty Utilities, the applicant may begin construction of the project.

## 9.6 Installation Complete

A solar energy system installation is considered completed when it is completely installed, the building permit is satisfied, and the system is capable of producing electricity in the manner and amounts for which it was designed.

## 9.7 Incentive Claim

When the project is completed, the applicant requests interconnection and payment of the incentive by submitting the incentive claim in PowerClerk prior to the expiration date listed on the reservation notice or November 30, 2018 whichever comes first.

The incentive claim must include the following documents:

Incentive Claim	
Incentive Claim Form	Includes final system information and payment designation (payee)

Signed Interconnection Agreement	Liberty Utilities will also sign and return a copy to customer
Copy of Signed Off Building Permit	Verifies building authority completion

If corrections or more information is required, Liberty Utilities will notify the applicant and the applicant must make the corrections in PowerClerk.

**9.8 Program Inspection**

A program inspection may be conducted at the project site to verify the information contained in the incentive claim. Participants do not need to be present for the inspection, however if there are site access issues, the participant will be able to notify Liberty Utilities on the incentive claim, and inspectors will work with the participant if necessary to arrange access.

**9.9 Interconnection and Meter Set**

After review and approval of the incentive claim, Liberty Utilities will install a new bidirectional meter. Systems may not be energized until Liberty Utilities has installed the new meter.

**9.10 Permission to Operate**

Once Liberty Utilities has installed the new bidirectional meter, the customer has permission to operate the system.

**9.11 Payment**

When interconnection is complete, Liberty Utilities will authorize payment to the payee. The completed system must be interconnected before the incentive payment is issued. Incentive checks will be sent via postal mail. Depending upon a payee’s tax status, the payee may be required to submit a W-9 tax form to Liberty Utilities.

**10 Application Changes**

**10.1 Installation Location**

Applicants and host customers may change the installation address of a reservation to another address with the same host customer. Changes must be requested in writing to Liberty Utilities. The terms of the original reservation notice apply to the new installation location.

**10.2 Capacities**

Reserved capacities and incentives listed on the reservation notice will not be changed. Applicants who intend to install a larger system than originally reserved and have yet to begin construction may withdraw the original application and reapply for the desired capacity. New applications are subject to incentive levels in effect and availability of incentive funds.

**10.3 Applicant or Installer**

Host customers may change or rescind affiliation with any of the parties of the original application with written notice to Liberty Utilities.



## 10.4 Host Customer

The host customer name for an application may be changed only when the solar system is being installed on a new, not previously occupied home. A builder or developer that applies as a host customer may request to change the name on an application to the name of the new home buyer.

## 11 Net Metering

All solar systems in the SIP must be net metered and will be interconnected on the net metering service (NEM) rate schedule. The rules of net metering are subject to change based on Liberty Utilities' progress towards a 5% net metering cap. For more information on net metering, visit the Liberty Utilities net metering [page](#).

### 11.1 Standards

For net metering standards, visit [connection requirements](#).

### 11.2 Rate Schedule

For information on the NEM rate schedule, visit [NEM Net Metering Service](#).

## 12 Inspections

Liberty Utilities reserves the right to inspect a solar project before incentive payment to verify installation information including site location and equipment. Any deviations discovered in an inspection could result in adjustments to incentive amounts or forfeiture of rebate. Liberty Utilities will work with the applicant to correct deviations if possible.

## 13 Cancellation, Withdrawal, Forfeiture

### 13.1 Cancellation

An application that has not yet been approved and issued a reservation notice may be cancelled by written or verbal request from the applicant, installer, system owner, or host customer.

### 13.2 Withdrawal

An application that has been issued a reservation notice may be withdrawn from the program by written request from the host customer.

### 13.3 Forfeiture

An application is forfeited if the complete incentive claim is not submitted by the expiration date listed on the reservation notice.

## 14 For More Information

[LibertyUtilities.com](http://LibertyUtilities.com)

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