



Ontario | Commission
Energy | de l'énergie
Board | de l'Ontario

BY EMAIL AND WEB POSTING

November 21, 2023

**TO: All Licensed Electricity Distributors
All Rate-Regulated Natural Gas Distributors
All Licensed Unit Sub-Meter Providers
Financial Assistance Working Group Members
All Other Interested Parties**

**RE: Ontario Energy Board Staff Report
Low Income Energy Assistance Program Emergency Financial Assistance
Review - OEB File No. EB-2023-0135**

Today, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) issued, for comment, its Low-Income Energy Assistance Program Emergency Financial Assistance (LEAP EFA) Program Review (Report).

On July 19, 2023, the OEB initiated a [review](#) of the LEAP EFA program. The scope of the review includes the program's funding mechanism, eligibility criteria, grant amounts as well as performance metrics and targets to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. OEB staff engaged with the Financial Assistance Working Group (FAWG) which is made up of distributors, community agencies and consumer representatives for advice to inform the review.

After considering input from the FAWG as well as analysis of relevant program related data collected through the OEB's Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements, OEB staff prepared the Report which includes recommendations for program enhancement and performance metrics.

Invitation to Comment

The OEB invites interested parties to submit written comments on the Report by **December 8, 2023**.

Cost Award Matters and Filing Instructions

Cost awards will be available to eligible participants under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* for participation in the consultation. Costs awarded will be recovered from all rate-regulated electricity distributors and rate-regulated natural gas distributors (distributor). FAWG members that have been deemed eligible for cost awards in previous OEB consultations are deemed eligible for the purpose of this consultation and do not need to reapply.

Important information regarding cost awards and instructions for filing materials with the OEB is included in Appendix A to this letter.

Any questions relating to this letter should be directed to Sophie Rousseau at sophie.rousseau@oeb.ca The OEB's toll free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Yours truly,

Brian Hewson
Vice President, Consumer Protection & Industry Performance

Appendix A Cost Awards Matters and Filing Instructions

Cost Award Eligibility

The OEB will determine eligibility for costs in accordance with its [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#). Any person intending to request an award of costs must file with the OEB a written submission to that effect by **November 27, 2023**. The submission must identify the grounds on which the person believes that it is eligible for an award of costs (addressing the OEB's cost eligibility criteria as set out in section 3 of the *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*). An explanation of any other funding to which the person has access must also be provided, as should the name and credentials of any lawyer, analyst or consultant that the person intends to retain, if known. All requests for cost eligibility will be posted on the OEB's website.

If a distributor has any objections to any of the requests for cost eligibility, such objections must be filed with the OEB by **December 1, 2023**. Any objections will be posted on the OEB's website. The OEB will then make a final determination on the cost eligibility of the requesting participants.

Eligible Activities

Cost awards for up to **5 hours per participant** will be available to eligible participants for reviewing and providing written comments on the Report.

Cost Awards

When determining the amount of the cost awards, the OEB will apply the principles set out in section 5 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*. The maximum hourly rates set out in the Cost Awards Tariff will also be applied. The OEB expects that groups representing the same interests or class of persons will make every effort to communicate and co-ordinate their participation in this process. In accordance with section 12 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* the OEB will act as a clearing house for all payments of cost awards in this process. For more information on this process, please see the OEB's *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*.

How to File Materials

All written materials sent to the OEB in response to this letter will be placed on the public record and posted on the OEB's website. If the written materials are from a private citizen (i.e., not a lawyer representing a client, not a consultant representing a

client or organization, not an individual in an organization that represents the interests of consumers or other groups, and not an individual from a regulated entity), the OEB will remove any personal (i.e., not business) contact information (e.g., address, phone number and e-mail address) before placing the materials on the public record and posting the materials on the OEB's website. However, your name and the entire content of your materials will be placed on the public record and posted on the OEB's website. If the written materials are from a person acting in a professional or business capacity, all information in the written materials will be publicly available.

Stakeholders are responsible for ensuring that any documents they file with the OEB **do not include personal information** (as that phrase is defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*), unless filed in accordance with rule 9A of the OEB's [Rules of Practice and Procedure](#).

Please quote file number, **EB-2023-0135** for all materials filed and submit them in searchable/unrestricted PDF format with a digital signature through the [OEB's online filing portal](#).

- Filings should clearly state the sender's name, postal address, telephone number and e-mail address.
- Please use the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the [Regulatory Electronic Submission System \(RESS\) Document Guidelines](#) found at the [File documents online page](#) on the OEB's website.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to use RESS. Those who have not yet [set up an account](#), or require assistance using the online filing portal can contact registrar@oeb.ca for assistance.
- Cost claims are filed through the OEB's online filing portal. Please visit the [File documents online page](#) of the OEB's website for more information. All participants shall download a copy of their submitted cost claim and serve it on all required parties as per the [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#).

All communications should be directed to the attention of the Registrar and be received by end of business, 4:45 p.m., on the required date.

Email: registrar@oeb.ca

Tel: 1-877-632-2727 (Toll-free)