



2020 Community Solar Access Act Summary

Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2248

Community solar allows electric customers who may not otherwise have access to rooftop solar to participate in a solar project within their utility service area. Past state incentives for community solar failed to reach low-income participants. Now, the 2020 Community Solar Access Act ([ESHB 2248](#)) updates the 2017 Renewable Energy System Incentive Program, providing \$20 million for low-income participants of community solar projects.

Highlights

- **Eligible Projects:** Community solar projects between 12 and 199 kW AC that serve, among others, low-income customers.
- **Who can participate?** Anyone! Projects receive a grant for participation by low-income households and low-income service providers.
- **Who can administer community solar projects?** Utilities, nonprofits, and housing authorities can register with the Washington UTC to serve as community solar administrators.
- **Incentive Funding:** Project administrators may apply for an up-front grant covering the cost of low-income participants. Project Administrators may also apply for up to \$20,000 for the administrative start-up costs related to low-income participants.
- **Electricity Cost Savings** are passed on directly to the community solar participants at retail electric rates.
- **Reporting:** Projects follow the same precertification / certification process as in the RESIP program. Existing pre-certified projects now have a total of two years to achieve certification. The project administrator must report low-income participant benefits to the Washington State University for 10 years following certification.

To learn more about the program, reach out to the nonprofit [Olympia Community Solar](#) and the [Washington State University's Extension Energy Office](#).