

Income Qualified EE Advisory Committee

2020 SAG Portfolio Planning Process Proposed Income Qualified Energy Efficiency Ideas Template

Due Date: By 5:00 pm (CST) on Monday, April 27, 2020

Purpose: The [SAG Portfolio Planning Process](#) is an opportunity for Illinois Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) and Income Qualified EE Advisory Committee participants to understand current energy efficiency (EE) portfolios and provide feedback to Illinois utilities (Ameren Illinois, ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas) as they develop their 2022-2025 EE Plans. **This Income Qualified Energy Efficiency Ideas Template is intended for Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to submit ideas for consideration by utilities.** ***Please note:*** SAG participants submitting Energy Efficiency Ideas have been invited to complete a separate template, which is also due on April 27th.

CBO and CCA Income Qualified EE Advisory Committee participants are invited to submit:

1. Feedback on current portfolios, focused on suggested changes for the 2022-2025 EE Plans;
2. Stakeholder ideas/approaches for utility consideration, such as program approaches or new measures that have been successfully implemented in other jurisdictions; and
3. Innovative ideas that could be researched during the next EE Plan cycle by utilities, evaluators, SAG, or another advisory group (IL-TRM Technical Advisory Committee; Income Qualified EE Advisory Committee).

How to Submit an Energy Efficiency Idea:

- Income Qualified EE Advisory Committee participants are encouraged to make a good faith effort to fill out as much information as possible in this template by the due date. Templates submitted after the April 27th deadline may not be considered due to time constraints.
- If you need help filling out the Energy Efficiency Idea Template or researching required information, contact the Income Qualified Facilitator for assistance: SAG Facilitator Celia Johnson (Celia@CeliaJohnsonConsulting.com) and Income Qualified Committee Facilitator Theo Okiro (Theo.Okiro@futee.biz).
- Income Qualified EE Advisory Committee participants that submit an idea may be invited to present their idea at the Wednesday, May 13 Joint SAG – IQ Advisory Committee meeting. Utilities will respond to feedback and ideas during the Wednesday, June 17 Joint SAG – IQ Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Please email your completed template, with any supplemental materials, to the SAG Facilitator Celia Johnson (Celia@CeliaJohnsonConsulting.com).

Submitter Contact Information

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Energy Efficiency Idea Questions

Please check the boxes below to identify 1) the type of idea; 2) which Illinois utility or utilities will be impacted by the idea; and 3) which EE sector the idea impacts.

Check	Type of Energy Efficiency Idea
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Measure or New Program Idea
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed Program Approach
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovative Idea

Check	Illinois Utility Impacted by Energy Efficiency Idea
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Central and Southern Illinois Utility (Ameren Illinois)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Northern Illinois Utilities (ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas)
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Illinois Utilities

Check	Energy Efficiency Sector Targeted by Energy Efficiency Idea
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Residential Customers – Single Family Income Qualified/Income Eligible
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Residential Customers – Multifamily Income Qualified/Income Eligible

Additional Questions

1. **Description of Idea:** Describe the proposed idea, including the purpose of the suggested idea and rationale. Describe whether this is an idea that could be implemented in an existing EE program, or whether the idea involves establishing a new measure or program. Please indicate whether additional research may be required before implementation.

Questions to consider: What issue will this proposed change resolve? Will the proposed change increase participation and result in increased energy savings? Will this reduce costs? Will this increase customer satisfaction? Will this help achieve statutory goals? Will this help increase program penetration?

For many families, one unexpected setback, such as a sudden illness or job loss, can initiate a household financial crisis, leading to the inability to pay for basic expenses, such including utility bills.. Many community members deal with repeated utility shutoffs. This initiative idea is to coach community members with repeated utility shutoffs and connect them to the resources they need. The idea is to create a subsidy program to help people get connected and stay connected. A utility shutoff can have harmful impacts beyond the immediate loss of necessary electricity. For example, people with past disconnections are unable to qualifying for public housing and to rend from some landlords. PCR wants to remove barriers for new tenants. One idea is to have a uniform fixed rate for IQ customers and shutoffs. This proposed initiative will address the large rates of utility shutoffs in income qualified communities, especially those on Chicago’s far southside. We believe that this initiative will increase participation in EE IQ programs because there will be improved trust with the customers and utilities. As we have seen from the COVID-19 crisis, utility shutoffs are directly related to quality-of-life issues and economic stability.

2. **Idea Marketing:** How will this idea be delivered to customers? Describe marketing strategies used to reach the target market and minimize market confusion.

It is imperative that the program is conducted in collaboration or coordination with community-based organizations that have established relationships and educational campaigns with IQ customers. We propose that the program be marketed based on the existing marketing infrastructure that CBOs have within their communities. Accordingly, the marketing strategy should not be prescriptive.

3. **Background:** Describe where the idea originated from, including whether this idea has been successfully implemented in other jurisdictions. Provide specific background information that will help utilities and SAG participants understand the proposed idea.

Questions to consider: In what jurisdiction has this idea been successfully implemented? Do you have information on eligible customers, participation achieved, and/or savings achieved? Do you have access to reports describing the successful idea / program approach?

This idea is based on the “LIFT-UP MODEL” – financial empowerment through utility payments pioneered by the National League of Cities. In the lift-up model seen below, customers in delinquency status are identified by utility staff and referred to a financial counselor. However, in this proposed idea, the utility refers them to a partner CBO – such as PCR, where PCR will educate the customers on EE and opportunities to develop a restructured repayment plan. The viability of this model is that many CBOs have financial literacy programs and that coupled with EE education and awareness will promote prompt utility payments for the customers.

LIFT-UP Model



4. **Idea Impact:** Provide additional information on the customer segment that will be targeted with the program idea, including how and why this idea will have a positive impact on customers participating in Illinois EE programs.

Questions to consider: What level of impact will this idea have on current EE programs? How much additional market share do you estimate this change will impact?

This idea is scalable and replicable. We propose that this idea be conducted in the Riverdale community initially where there is a large number of customers with repeated shut-offs.

5. **Duration:** Is this idea intended to be offered for the duration of the 4-year EE Plan (2022-2025) or as a pilot measure or program?

This is intended to be a pilot program.

Sources

If any sources will be useful to Illinois utilities in reviewing ideas, please either provide links within this template or send attachment(s) to the SAG Facilitator with the Energy Efficiency Idea submittal.

NLC partnered with the Center for Financial Security (CFS) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to conduct a two-year evaluation to assess LIFT-UP's impact on customer utility payment patterns. The five cities randomly selected residents who were delinquent in water payments and compared their payment and shut-off rates with two comparison groups. In three of the four cities that provided data, participants were making more frequent, on-time payments or at reduced risk of service termination at three, six and 12-months post enrollment, relative to customers who were not offered LIFT-UP.

Resources:

[LIFT UP Evaluation Report Executive Summary](#)