

## **About the Hoboken Renewable Energy Program**

### **What is a Community Energy Aggregation program?**

Electricity service includes supply (sources/production of energy) and distribution (delivery of energy to homes and businesses). Currently, PSE&G provides both supply and distribution of energy. With a Community Energy Aggregation Program, the City of Hoboken has created a buying pool (aggregate) for the electricity supply of its residents to obtain a lower energy supply price from a third-party supplier than what PSE&G is currently charging.

### **What is the Hoboken Renewable Energy Program?**

The Hoboken Renewable Energy Program is a community energy aggregation program that incorporates an additional percentage of renewable energy than what is currently being offered by PSE&G. This program is a major step toward achieving the City's goal of reaching net-zero energy by 2030, as established by Hoboken's Climate Action Plan.

### **Can my information be sold to advertisers or energy companies?**

No. All personal and account information, including your address and account number, is kept confidential.

### **Why is there a gap in the program?**

Pricing received at auction for the new program was too high for a start any sooner than March 2024.

### **Will there be a change or disruption in my energy service?**

No. You will see no change in service – PSE&G will continue to provide electricity through the same wires, maintain the energy infrastructure, and respond to emergencies. There will be no disruption of service if and when the supplier changes from PSE&G to a third-party supplier, or back.

### **What is renewable energy? Does renewable energy include nuclear energy or is it strictly solar, wind, and geothermal energy?**

As defined by the U.S. Department of Energy, renewable energy is energy produced from sources like the sun and wind that are naturally replenished and do not run out. Visit the DOE's website at <https://www.energy.gov/eere/renewable-energy> for a complete list of renewable energy sources. Nuclear energy is not considered a source of renewable energy by the DOE.

### **Will the program impact my ability to get adequate power for my property and appliances?**

No. The program has no impact on your ability to power your property or appliances. The program simply allows you to use more renewable energy sources to power your needs.

### **Will there be a future option to join with neighboring communities in their energy aggregation programs? Would combining communities lower program rates even further?**

Yes. The City of Hoboken could join with neighboring communities to form a cooperative purchasing system for electricity services in the future. The combined purchasing power of which may result in additional cost savings for Hoboken residents.

**What is the projected percentage increase in supply rate through the current PSE&G Basic Generation Service for the next 2 years?**

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities holds a Basic Generation Service (BGS) auction every February; as such, BGS rates vary from year to year. Visit the state's BGS Auction website at <https://www.bgs-auction.com/> for additional information.

**Will the Green, Standard, and Basic Program rates be fixed under the Program?**

Yes.

**What is the "10% energy" that has been referenced?**

The Standard Offering in the City of Hoboken Renewable Energy Aggregation Program includes an additional 10% renewable energy which is energy produced from sources like the sun and wind that are naturally replenished and do not run out. This inclusion of additional renewable energy results in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions versus energy generated by fossil fuels like coal and oil

**Are there any potential risks to the consumer, in joining this Program?**

The Hoboken Renewable Energy Program in accordance with NJAC title 14, provides Consumer Protections. Consumer Protections include:

- No predatory contracting (no one from the program will be calling a resident or knocking on any residents' doors)
- No fees of any kind (no billing fee, no management fee, no termination fee etc.)
- Protection against seasonal or short term fixed and variable rates (no teaser rates).

## **Benefits**

**Why establish a Renewable Energy Program?**

With a Renewable Energy Program, Hoboken residents can access a higher percentage of renewable energy supply than offered by PSE&G, making access to renewable energy safe, convenient, and affordable.

**Will my choice have an impact on GHG emissions and make a difference?**

Yes. The Standard Offering in the City of Hoboken's Renewable Energy Aggregation Program includes 10% additional renewable energy resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions through carbon-free energy.

## **Energy Supplier (Direct Energy)**

### **Who is Concord Energy Services?**

Concord Energy Services is an energy consultant licensed by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU). Concord has been retained by the City of Hoboken to administer and implement the Hoboken Renewable Energy Program. Concord has been in business since 1989 and currently supports large scale community/government energy aggregation programs in the State of New Jersey.

### **What happens if Direct Energy goes out of business or otherwise changes their energy production capability and is not able to provide enough green energy?**

There is language in the Program Master Agreement with Direct Energy that the supplier is responsible for providing adequate supply. In the event that Direct Energy cannot meet its obligation, residents' accounts will be automatically returned to the Basic Generation Service without service disruption.

### **How can I learn more about Direct Energy and obtain a corporate report?**

Direct Energy is licensed by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to provide third party electricity supply services in the State of New Jersey. Visit Direct Energy's website at <https://www.directenergy.com/about> for company-specific information.

### **Does Direct Energy support nuclear energy?**

Unless a resident enrolls in the Program's 100% Green Offering, a portion of the supply provided by Direct Energy may contain nuclear-generated electricity.

## **Opting In, Up, or Out**

### **Do I have to participate in this program?**

No. You can opt-out of his program by January 31, 2024, before it begins or at any time during the program with 30 days notice via [www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy](http://www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy), by calling 1-866-968-8065, or by returning the provided response card.

### **Will I be penalized if I do not participate in this program?**

No. If you opt-out of this program you can stay with PE&G or choose your own third-party supplier.

### **If I initially opted out, do I need to opt-out again?**

Yes. Unless you choose to permanently opt-out of the program, you will need to opt-out of each new program offering.

### **How many GHG emissions would I save by opting up to 100%?**

By opting up to 100%, the average resident would save approximately 1.6 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), equivalent to 70 trash bags of waste recycled instead of thrown in a landfill.

**If I elect to enroll in the Program's default Standard Offering, putting the cost of electricity to one side, will there be any additional costs, such as equipment or services costs?**

No. There are no additional costs for participating in the program's Standard Offering.

**If I opt-up for the 100% Green Offering, how can I be assured that the supply is always available? Is it possible that the subscription exceeds the total energy supply from the renewable sources?**

There is language in the Program Master Agreement with Direct Energy that the supplier is responsible for providing adequate supply. In the event that Direct Energy cannot meet its obligation, residents' accounts will be automatically returned to the Basic Generation Service without disruption in electricity service.

**Can I opt-in to the Basic Offering now, and then opt- in to the Standard Offering later IF the PSE&G rate increases above the Hoboken Renewable Energy Program's Standard Offering rate?**

Yes. Residents can change their enrollment status in the various Program Offerings at any time. Please note that it can take one to two meter read cycles for the rate change to take effect, depending on how quickly Direct Energy and PSE&G can enroll the customer's account following receipt of the change request.

**If I do not take any action to opt-out of the program, am I automatically enrolled in the Standard Offering?**

If a resident does nothing, their electricity account will be enrolled with Direct Energy at the Standard Offering at 14.36 cents/kWh with their first meter read after March 1, 2024.

**Why was the program offered as an opt-out program instead of an opt-in program?**

The opt-out requirement is mandated by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities as stated in N.J.A.C. 14:4-6. Any resident for whom the City receives returned mail are not automatically enrolled in the program. Residents can opt-out of the program at any time, even after the expiration of the initial 30-day opt-out period of January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

**What happens if I move to a new home outside of Hoboken before the end term of November 2024?**

The resident's account will no longer be enrolled in the program. The new resident moving into the vacated property would need to actively enroll in the program in order to participate. The resident who moved from the property can check with their new municipality to see if that town participates in an energy aggregation program in which they can enroll.

**What happens if I Opt-Out or Opt-In after the initial 30 day Opt-Out / Opt-In period?**

Depending on when you request the opt-out or opt-in, the utility can take one to two meter read cycles for the request to become effective.

## **What happens if the City of Hoboken decides to not continue the Renewable Energy Program?**

All residents will be sent back to PSE&G at the end of the initial contract period.

## **Cost**

### **Am I going to have to pay more than one monthly bill if I am a part of this program?**

No. You will continue to pay one bill directly to PSE&G. Your itemized bill will show your distribution charges from PSE&G and the Hoboken Renewable Energy Program rate for supply from the new supplier, Direct Energy. You should not receive a bill from Direct Energy; if you do, please email [njagg@commercialutility.com](mailto:njagg@commercialutility.com).

### **Are there any fees to participate or not participate in this program?**

No. There are no fees or penalties for you to be included in or opt-out of this program, even after it starts.

### **Would I be paying a lower rate if the renewable energy program did not exist?**

The Hoboken Renewable Energy Program Standard Rate which includes an additional 10% Green Energy is projected to provide savings for residents over the term of the program. You can also visit [www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy](http://www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy) and login to create a residential account and view your savings to date. You will need your PSE&G POD ID 20-digit number which starts with "PE" to sign up. You can also visit PSE&G's website to view their posted Price-to-Compare rates at Price to Compare (PTC) for Electric & Gas – PSE&G ([pseg.com](http://pseg.com)).

### **How much extra would I need to pay if I opted up to 100%?**

Approximately 0.4¢ more per kWh. This amount will change based on fluctuations in PSE&G's monthly price-to-compare.

### **Are the program's rates lower than PSE&G's current rates?**

The program price is flat and non-variable until November 30, 2024. This price stability makes the program different from PSE&G's Basic Generation Service (BGS). With PSE&G's BGS, the price used to calculate the Supply portion of your PSE&G bill changes every 3 months. Price stability also makes the program different from many third-party suppliers' offers that you may receive by mail or by phone. There is no guarantee of savings relative to PSE&G's BGS over the full term of the Direct Energy contract.

At the time of auction on August 23, 2023, the Standard Offering of 10% **additional renewable energy** was slightly more expensive - \$0.0019/kWh - than the Basic Generation Service with PSE&G - which does not include the additional 10% of renewable energy. The average Hoboken resident enrolled in the Standard Offering will pay approximately \$1 more per month.

### **What is the estimated annual cost savings for an average 1-bedroom household?**

The average monthly electricity usage for a Hoboken resident is 550 kWh per month. If the resident enrolls in the Basic Offering, there would be a savings of \$1.15 per month. If a resident enrolls in the Standard Offering, which includes 10% additional renewable energy, there would be a cost of approximately \$1 per month. If a resident enrolls in the 100% Green Offering, there would be a cost of approximately \$18 per month. *Please note, this pricing is subject to change.*

**Is the comparison rate of PSE&G Basic Generation Service that is listed as 14.17 cents/kWh based on the average PSE&G price of the entire year including changes in weather?**

No. The PSE&G Basic Generation Service (BGS) rate of 14.17 cents/kWh was the price being charged at the time of auction on August 23, 2023. There are several different components that make up the monthly BGS charges, causing fluctuations in the BGS rate throughout the year. Visit PSE&G's website at <https://nj.pseg.com/aboutpseg/regulatorypage/electrictariffs> for more information on how PSE&G's Basic Generation Service rate is determined.

**Are there any "hidden" charges for the Program such as higher delivery or distribution charges? For example, does PSE&G charge higher delivery and distribution when I opt-in, or is it the same across the board?**

No. The program is limited to electricity supply only.

**Will the delivery charges from PSE&G change?**

The City of Hoboken Renewable Energy Aggregation Program is limited to electricity supply only. Any changes to the delivery charges from PSE&G are unrelated to the program.

**It seems PSE&G charges residents multiple different rates based on usage. With Direct Energy, will there be just one flat rate for all electricity used?**

Yes.

## **Billing**

**Who will now read my meter and send the monthly bill?**

PSE&G will continue to read your meter and send you your monthly bill.

**Will the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Lifeline benefit programs for low-income residents still apply if I participate in the Renewable Energy Program?**

LIHEAP is a federally-funded program administered by the Department of Community Affairs to assist low-income households with paying their heating bills. Lifeline and Universal Service programs are state-funded programs to assist low-income households with paying their energy bills. The Renewable Energy Program will not impact a customer's eligibility for LIHEAP or bill credits for Lifeline or Universal Service programs.

**Will budget billing be offered as part of this program?**

Yes. Budget billing is offered.

**I received a bill that is higher than usual. What should I do?**

We recommend checking your bill to make sure you did not receive an estimated usage meter reading. If you received an estimated usage meter reading, this could be the issue and we recommend contacting PSE&G Customer Service at 1-855-249-7734. You can request to have them provide an actual usage meter reading and receive a new bill.

We also recommend checking your bill to make sure that you are not receiving a settle-up bill. A settle-up bill is when PSE&G has estimated your meter usage reading over one or more months, and you have received a new bill that has an actual usage meter reading. If this has happened, you may have been billed for lower usage than you consumed in the previous months of the estimated meter usage bills.

**Do the utility bill charges reflect my usage amount or create an average charge monthly?**

The monthly supply charges noted on a resident's bill reflect the usage amounts reported to the supplier by PSE&G UNLESS the resident is enrolled in budget billing. If the resident is enrolled in budget billing, then the supply charges will be based on an average monthly amount.

**Who do I call for a power outage or if I have questions about my monthly bill?**

You will continue to call PSE&G for any emergencies, outages, or questions about your bill.

**Communication****What information will I receive about this program?**

The City has sent notices via the City's Nixle messaging system, maintains a website (<https://njaggregation.us/hoboken/>) and will host two public information sessions, offered in English and Spanish, on:

- Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Hoboken Multi-Service Center (124 Grand Street) and
- Thursday, January 18, 2024 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., via Zoom. Register at [www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy/webinar-registration](http://www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy/webinar-registration)

Beginning in January 2024, residents can expect to receive an official informational package from the City of Hoboken. If you are new to the program, you will receive a second mailer from PSE&G stating you are participating in the program and the date your supplier changed from PSE&G to the new supplier, Direct Energy. All mail will clearly state "Hoboken Renewable Energy Program" on it, with a return address from "City of Hoboken c/o Direct Energy." Any mail from another supplier (such as Inspire Clean Energy is not affiliated with the City of Hoboken's Renewable Energy Program.

**Will people be knocking on my door or calling me about this program?**

No one associated with the program, the City, or the third-party supplier will be knocking on your door or calling you unless they are responding to a message that you left with customer service. Please be wary of anyone trying to obtain your information by solicitation. All program

information is strictly sent via U.S. Mail and available on the program's website at [www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy](http://www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy).

**Where can I get more information or answers to additional questions?**

You can visit [www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy](http://www.hobokennj.gov/renewableenergy) or contact Concord Energy Services Customer Service Team at 1-866-688-5197.