



Introduction

The Equitable Building Decarbonization (EBD) program, focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and advancing energy equity, is a statewide program separated into three regions across the state and is administered by the [California Energy Commission](#) (CEC). The Equitable Building Decarbonization (EBD) – Northern California Program, focuses this work on ensuring that the transition to clean energy is both inclusive and equitable in the northern California regions. The EBD – Northern California Program provides no-cost direct installation of energy efficiency measures and high-efficiency electric appliances—including heat pump water heaters, heat pump space heating and cooling systems, induction cooktops, ventilation upgrades, insulation, weatherization, and lighting—in low-income and disadvantaged households throughout the state.

The EBD – Northern California Program is projected to have a five-year timeline. This Installation Contractor RFQ is specific to the Northern California Region of EBD.

Purpose

The Association for Energy Affordability (AEA) is issuing this Installation Contractor Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select appropriately licensed, insured, and bonded General Contractors who can, directly or indirectly through a subcontractor, provide construction services in low-income households in single-family, multifamily, and manufactured and mobile homes in under resourced communities. While the initial launch of the program will be limited to Initial Community Focus Areas (ICFA) in alignment with EBD Guidelines, the purpose of this RFQ is to develop a pool of contractors for the entire EBD – Northern California service territory, which will be expanded over time. To that end, respondents will be able to select both the ICFA's and other regions for their proposed service territories.

We are prioritizing **Humboldt County** in this RFQ. Other ICFA's included in the RFQ are as follows, but the Program is not actively recruiting for these other ICFA's:

- Alameda County – East and West Oakland
- Contra Costa County – Western- Richmond
- Contra Costa County – Eastern- Refinery Corridor
- San Francisco – Eastern
- East Palo Alto
- South Bay – Gilroy and Morgan Hill
- Sacramento Corridor (Rancho Cordova and Rosemount; Lemon Hill, Florin and Parkway; Sacramento, Unincorporated Vineyard; Arden Arcade, Foothill Farms and McClellan Park)
- **Humboldt County**



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A map of all ICFAs can be located [here](#).

The EBD – Northern California Program is expected to expand to serve eligible geographies in the following counties over time: Amador, Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba counties.

While we are including these areas as potential options in the future, job assignments to these areas will be unlikely following the release of this RFQ until further notice.

Responding contractors will be required to select specific service territories based on the ICFAs and/or additional eligible communities. Contractors can select all ICFAs and/or additional communities they are interested in serving.

Overview of Solicitation Process

A Pre-Application Webinar providing an overview of RFQ and the submission process will take place on July 24, 2026, at 9:00am PT. Eligible prospective applicants should submit signed mutual non-disclosure agreement (NDA) and completed Notice of Intent to Respond to the Program Team. Please note that the applicant must provide its Contractor name, CSLB Number, Company name associated with CSLB number and contact information in the Intent to Respond form. If eligible, AEA will provide access to the Application Portal, which includes submission instructions, references, and applicable documents for the applicant within 2 business days.

Prospective applicants must download and fill out the Mutual NDA and Intent to Respond forms, then email those two forms to: ebd-contractors@aeacleanenergy.org

Pre-Application Webinar Information: July 24, 2026, at 9:00am PT

Deadline to submit Application: August 17, 2026, at 3 PM PT

For any questions, please contact: ebd-contractors@aeacleanenergy.org. Any questions received will be addressed at the previously mentioned webinar and be provided on the RFQ application portal.

Description of Work

The EBD – Northern California Program will be delivered by a Program team comprised of several organizations, with Association for Energy Affordability as the prime, supported by Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and contractors selected through this RFQ process.

The program model to deliver services for the EBD – Northern California Program is described below.



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CBOs will be selected for local customer outreach and enrollment in the ICFAs and in expanded areas over time. CBOs will conduct outreach to enroll single family, mobile home and manufactured housing and multifamily properties in the EBD – Northern California Program. Program staff will complete an initial intake and an assessment of the home(s) to identify feasible measures, scope of work, and potential programs that could be leveraged.

Program Staff will develop a Work Order that will include the Scope of Work (SOW) and the initial Cost Proposal and will assign that Work Order to one of the EBD – Northern California Program Contractors selected through this RFQ process.

Upon receiving the Work Order the Program Contractor may either choose to accept the Work Order as is and proceed to the scheduling phase, pass on the project, or propose SOW variances and/or cost adjustments for any element of the SOW that they deem necessary. Program staff will review the Program Contractor's proposed Work Order Change Request and either approve, reject, or request additional information. The Contractor will complete installation of approved Work Order, then submit all required invoicing and reporting documentation to the EBD – Northern California Program.

Program staff will complete a quality assurance review, and the Contractor will be paid upon successful quality assurance and quality control review.

Scope of Services

The EBD – Northern California Program is a direct install program that incorporates electrification of at least the space conditioning or water heating equipment. The EBD – Northern California Program has several components to achieve this result: outreach, assessments, installations, verification, and close out. Outreach and enrollment will be completed by CBOs. Eligible households and properties will be passed to AEA, to receive an assessment to identify eligible EBD measures. An agreed upon scope between AEA and the Participant will be provided to a Program Contractor for installation.

The Program Contractor's responsibilities include:

- Contract directly with regional administrator, AEA
- Provide services within the agreed upon cost parameters and allowances
- Participate in required program onboarding and rules training
- Ensure company, workers, and subcontractors meet program requirements
- Provide required reporting to regional administrator
- Engage with regional administrator and partners effectively to deliver on the program
- Participate in contractor feedback forums and meetings

The Contractor's scope of services will include:



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- Review of proposed installation scope of work from regional administrator and agreement to provide services or decline opportunity in timely manner
- Coordination with participant directly to schedule work
- Conduct walks thorough of home and confirmation of ability to deliver services within expected costs, as needed
- Installation of proposed EBD measures. Coordinate all sub-contractors as appropriate to deliver services
- Completion of test out to demonstrate performance as required by the Program Minimum Measure Performance Standards
- Documentation of installed measures submitted to regional administrator
- Documentation of costs for installed measures including labor, equipment and materials as defined by regional administrator
- Utilization of program portals to receive and submit documentation including program required reporting

Contractors providing installation services for the EBD - Northern California Program cannot provide outreach and enrollment services for the EBD - Northern California Program.

Measures

The following measures are available for installation under EBD – Northern California Program. Equipment specifications and cost assumptions will be provided in the application portal. All measures installed in the program must comply with EBD – Northern California equipment specifications as well as manufacturer’s installation requirements and local jurisdiction permit requirements.

To be eligible for the program, each property must commit to receiving a replacement of either a gas-fired space or water heating system with a heat pump appliance. Additionally, at completion of EBD retrofits at least two of the following end uses must be electric: space heating, water heating, cooking, or clothes drying. The second appliance can be an existing electric appliance or one that was replaced under the EBD – Northern California Program.

Measure categories eligible under this program include the following:

- HVAC: Heat pump for space heating and cooling, duct testing, duct distribution system sealing, duct system distribution replacement, smart thermostat, ceiling fan, whole house fan and filter replacement.
- Building envelope: Air sealing, insulation, and solar window film.
- Water heating: Unitary heat pump water heater, central heat pump water heater, low flow showerheads and faucets.
- Cooking: Electric induction range or cooktop.



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- Laundry: Electric clothes dryer.
- Lighting: LED light bulbs and fixtures.
- Electrical: Electrical wiring, circuit sharing devices, and panel upgrades.
- Remediation and safety: eligible repairs and remediation activities to enable installation of EBD eligible measures. This may also include bringing specific elements up to code, ventilation measures, and/or smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

AEA will manage the costs on electrical and remediation measures for each project. Installation of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms will be required to comply with California Building Code.

The following measures are not eligible through EBD – Northern California Program but could be included on a project utilizing other funding sources for the entirety of the measure: solar photovoltaic systems, battery storage, and window replacement.

Bundling

For single family and mobile and manufactured homes, EBD – Northern California team will prioritize bundling projects for contractors delivering services for the Program. The bundled projects would be in geographic proximity within an ICFA to enable potential for efficiencies in site visits, delivery of services, and optimization of crews. Enrollment will inform the ability for the Program to bundle homes and services, therefore bundling may not always be possible. Single family projects will be bundled in groups of 4-6 based on scope and geographic proximity when possible. Mobile homes and manufactured homes will be bundled based on homes served within a park area as the geographic area when possible. The Program may adjust bundling based on Program implementation and pipeline considerations.

Applicant's Minimum Requirements

The below sections detail the minimum requirements at the contractor level and at the worker level. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee selection for participation as a contractor in the EBD – Northern California Program.

Contractors who meet the following requirements will be eligible to respond to this Contractor RFQ and therefore eligible to request access to RFQ Application Portal:

General B Contractor Requirements

- Licensed and in good standing in state of California
 - General B license *and* C-20 or General B license *and* an identified C-20 subcontractor.



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- Optional: additional active trade licenses (for example C-2, C-10 or C-36)
- Have a minimum of at least 3 years of experience with performing residential energy efficiency and electrification retrofit projects.
- Insurance and Bonding: Commercial general liability insurance with coverage of at least \$1M each occurrence/\$2M aggregate for bodily injury, property damage or personal injury or death; Workers' compensation of no less than \$1M per event of injury or death; and Automotive liability insurance with coverage of at least \$1M per event of bodily injury or property damage; and bonding per California state requirements.
- Agree to pay Prevailing Wages in accordance with the Mandatory Prevailing Wage Requirements as defined by the EBD Northern California Program.
- Agree to work within program cost caps in Section 1.5 Cost Control and Pricing Requirements.
- Attestation that one-third of all construction workers on every installation project will either have: Graduated from a state approved apprenticeship program or possess at least three years of relevant installation experience and have received training and/or certification in the type of equipment being installed. All workers on the job will be Cal/OSHA certified or similar (OSHA 10 for non-management and OSHA 30 for management).
- Contractor staff or designated subcontractor who holds U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Section 608 Technician Certification.

Documentation of the above requirements is detailed in the Submission Instructions hosted on the Application Portal.

C-Specialty Contractor Requirements

The Program may maintain a non-exclusive, rolling pool of pre-qualified C-Specialty contractors eligible to support General B contractors delivering EBD projects. Placement in the contractor pool does not guarantee work assignments or subcontracting opportunities.

C-Specialty contractors must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Hold an active and valid California CSLB C-type specialty contractor license applicable to the scope of work being performed and remain in good standing throughout Program participation.
- Maintain insurance coverage meeting Program minimum requirements and provide Certificates of Insurance (COIs) and additional insured documentation upon request.
- Demonstrate a minimum of three (3) years of operational experience in the applicable trade, as verified through CSLB license history and/or license holder experience.
- Provide self-attested information regarding relevant project experience, operational capability, and familiarity with residential energy efficiency and electrification work scopes.



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References may be requested by the Program and/or General B contractor for verification purposes.

- Agree to comply with all applicable prevailing wage and workforce requirements associated with the EBD Program and acknowledge that multifamily projects may require full DIR public works compliance, including certified payroll reporting.
- Agree to comply with Program worker training and safety requirements, including OSHA 10 for field staff and OSHA 30 for supervisory staff.
- Agree to complete any required Program orientation or onboarding training identified by the Program or General B contractor prior to project participation.
- Acknowledge that the Program may publicly maintain a contractor list identifying contractor trade(s), service territory, and any applicable contractor preference criteria identified by the contractor and verified by the Program.

Worker Training Recommendations

Relevant training requirements and recommendations in the Contractor Response Workbook.

Mandatory Prevailing Wage Requirement

The EBD – Northern California Program will require compliance with prevailing wages and worker benefits according to building type. Contractors serving the EBD – Northern California Program will be required to meet all aspects of the EBD Northern California Program Prevailing Wage Requirements as defined in the relevant documents provided in the Application Portal. A summary of the prevailing wage compliance criteria is provided below:

Single Family and Mobile Home Projects: The Program will require paying prevailing wages and benefits but will not require compliance reporting with DIR Public Works.

Multifamily Projects: the program will require compliance reporting with the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) public works prevailing wage and benefit requirements.

Preference Criteria

Preference is given in the Evaluation Criteria to contractors that demonstrate that they meet at least three of the following criteria outlined in the CEC's EBD Guidelines. These contractor preference criteria are designed to support a diverse contractor base, create high quality jobs, and ensure that small contractors can participate as well as larger contractor firms.

Contractor Preference Criteria:



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- Comply with “skilled and trained workforce” standards as defined in [Public Contracts Code Section 2600](#), et seq.
- Are local to the community or county where the work will occur (geographic area Contractor is responding to in RFQ). Criteria for qualifying as local is a contractor business headquarters, satellite office or a participating workers’ home addresses.
- Are owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals as indicated by the following certifications:
 - o California’s Unified Certification Program for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and/or
 - o California’s Small Business and/or Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise, and/or
 - o Other state or federally recognized certifications to verify that the business is a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, Small Business, or Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE).
- Participate in relevant state-approved apprenticeship programs.
- Employ targeted hiring strategies to create jobs for residents of under resourced, tribal, or low-income communities, and individuals with barriers to employment.¹

Contractors who meet at least 3 of the above criteria will receive points in the preference scoring criteria and be given preference in the allocation of the first round of projects if selected. Job allocations will also consider distribution of projects among the selected contractor pool to avoid one contractor receiving a majority of the jobs, to align with the geography of customer demand, and to maximize diversity within contractor delivery.

Schedule

RFQ Release	July 24, 2026	
Pre-Application Webinar	July 24, 2026	9 am PT
Anticipated Distribution of Questions and Answers	Twice weekly through August 7, 2026	
Deadline to Submit Application	August 17, 2026	3 pm PT
Anticipated Notice from Regional administrator for initial areas*	October 1, 2026	
Anticipated Agreement Start Date for initial areas*	September 21 November, 2026	

¹ “Individual with a barrier to employment” is defined in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Section 3, Part 24. <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>



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Anticipated Agreement End Date	December 1, 2030	
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*Because EBD – Northern California Program will initially be launched in the ICFA's and later expanded to other geographic regions, The Regional administrator reserves the right to review responses and execute contracts based on priority areas in order to meet immediate contractual agreements with the California Energy Commission.

Cost Control and Pricing Requirements

The EBD – Northern California Program requires rigorous cost controls to ensure affordability, consistency, and equity across single-family, multifamily, and mobile and manufactured home projects. Contractors responding to this RFQ must adhere to the following cost control requirements.

Labor/ Installation Costs

- Maximum labor pricing by measure must be agreed to in response to this RFQ is detailed in the relevant documents provided in the Application Portal.
- Hourly rates will only be accepted for pre-approved additional work, measures not on existing list or change orders.
- No “Time and Materials” proposals will be accepted for standard installations.
- Labor cost caps are defined for each measure category, and include caps for “standard”, “moderate”, and “difficult” installations, with lower caps for standard installations and higher caps for difficult ones. The installation type (standard, moderate, difficult) and the associated labor cap will be determined by the EBD Program Team who will complete the assessment. The process will allow contractors to submit for variances on a case-by-case basis to address unique conditions.
- Labor Cost estimates account for installation costs, administrative cost, profit and overhead.
- Contractors must agree to labor rates as defined by DIR Public Works for appropriate labor classifications.

Equipment Costs

- Equipment cost and ancillary cost caps will be included in the measure cost caps provided at a future date post contractor selection.
- AEA will work to negotiate equipment costs and set up purchasing accounts with vendors/distributors (“EBD Vendors”).



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- Contractors will be encouraged to select equipment and materials from EBD Vendors but will be allowed to purchase equipment from other vendors provided the costs are equivalent or lower than those of the EBD Vendors.
- Equipment procured through EBD Vendors will be billed directly to the Program and will therefore require no outlay of cash from the contractor. For any equipment and/or materials with a value greater than \$500 that are purchased from a non-EBD Vendor, the contractor is required to provide vendor invoices stamped as “PAID” in order to submit for reimbursement.

Work Order Change Request and Change Order Process

- If the selected contractor wishes to propose any changes to the Scope of Work or to the approved fixed pricing contained in the Work Order they must submit in writing a Work Order Change Request, which must include:
 - Full justification, itemized cost details, and documentation of site-specific conditions.
 - For variances to the SOW the contractor must provide justification for why the variance is required, detailed explanations of what the proposed changes are, and must include any cost impact. These can be submitted after a site visit by the contractor.
 - For cost adjustments being proposed the contractor must provide justification and explanation for why the initial cost proposal is insufficient to complete the installation and/or meet the Minimum Installation Standards. These can be submitted after a site visit by the contractor.
 - AEA will review the Work Order Change Request and, if approved, issue written Change Order for the project. Contractors may not proceed with work until they have received the approved Change Order from the Program Administrator. If agreement on pricing cannot be reached the project(s) will be reassigned to another contractor.

For more information on change order process refer to Section 12, Changes in the Work of Example Contract. This includes terms and conditions where AEA may issue a change order.

Quality Assurance and Quality Control

In order to ensure installation quality, the following Quality Assurance and Quality Control protocols must be adhered to:

- Payment may be withheld until:



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- o Work passes required quality assurance inspections.
 - o Documentation (e.g., photos, permits, test results) is provided as required by the program.
- Contractors shall cooperate fully with on-site inspections and data collection.

To comply with all cost documentation and reporting requirements, contractors shall:

- Maintain complete cost records for each project.
- Submit reports as defined by AEA which may include but are not limited to:
 - o Actual costs by labor and equipment per household, per unit, or per project (multifamily).
 - o Installed measures and quantities.
- Allow the Program Administrator or its representatives to audit records upon request.

Contractor cost performance will influence future project allocations and continued eligibility in the contractor pool. Evaluations will include:

- Cost competitiveness relative to other enrolled contractors.
- Cost reasonableness compared to established benchmarks.
- Demonstrated cost control and adherence to fixed pricing.

Contractors who repeatedly exceed cost guidelines, fail to adhere to fixed pricing, or submit unjustified change orders may be:

- Subject to corrective action plans.
- Temporarily suspended from receiving new work.
- Permanently removed from the Program contractor pool.

Project Timeline and Days to Complete Work

The EBD – Northern California Program requires timely completion of all installations to ensure effective program delivery and customer satisfaction.

Contractors shall complete installations within the following standard timeframes unless otherwise approved in writing by the Program Administrator:

- **Single-Family Projects:**
 - o Contractor acceptance: Contractors must accept or decline jobs within 10 business days
 - o Standard installations: 45 business days from issuance of Notice to Proceed (NTP)
 - o Complex installations (e.g., requiring panel upgrades): 60 business days from NTP



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- **Multifamily Projects:**
 - o Contractor acceptance: Contractors must accept or decline jobs within 15 business days
 - o MF Project: 240 business days from NTP
- **Manufactured/Mobile Homes:**
 - o Contractor acceptance: Contractors must accept or decline jobs within 10 business days
 - o Standard installations: 45 business days from NTP
 - o Complex installations (e.g., requiring structural modifications or panel upgrades): 60 business days from NTP

Contractors shall propose expected completion timeframes in their response to the Work Order assignment.

Contractors must:

- Immediately notify the Program Administrator of any delays.
- Provide revised timelines and reasons for delays in writing.
- Obtain written approval for any new schedule.

The Program reserves the right to impose liquidated damages for repeated or unapproved delays to ensure timely program delivery.

AEA's Rights & Responsibilities

AEA as the prime for the EBD – Northern California Program will enter into contract with selected contractors to provide services. Any process explained in this solicitation is in addition to, and does not restrict, any other rights and remedies available to the CEC.

Terms and Conditions

Each contract resulting from this solicitation will include terms and conditions that set forth the Contractor's rights and responsibilities. By submitting an application to AEA for contracting services under the EBD – Northern California Program, each applicant agrees to enter into an agreement with the Association for Energy Affordability to conduct the services for the program according to the terms and conditions that correspond to its organization: (1) AEA terms and conditions; (2) CEC terms and conditions; AEA terms and conditions will be included in the sample contract provided in the application portal. Flow down terms and conditions from the CEC are located at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources>. Failure to agree to the terms and conditions by taking actions such as failing to provide the required authorizations and



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certifications or indicating that acceptance is based on modification of the terms may result in **rejection** of the application. Applicants **must read** the terms and conditions carefully. AEA reserves the right to modify the terms and conditions prior to executing grant agreements.

By responding to this RFQ, contractors acknowledge and accept all cost control requirements as conditions of participation in the EBD – Northern California Program.