



## FAQs for Rhode Island Rebounds Energy Efficiency Program

January 2024

### 1. How do I know if my business is eligible?

Small businesses must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the RI Rebounds Energy Efficiency Program:

- have less than \$2 million in annual gross revenues in 2020 or 2021
- not be disbarred in the federal System of Account Management (SAM)
- not be permanently closed
- have been open and operating prior to October 1, 2021
- not be owned by a nationally or regionally owned franchise. While nationally owned chain businesses are not eligible to apply, a business that is part of a regional or national franchise that includes franchisees with locations outside of Rhode Island, may apply unless the business is owned by a regional or national franchisor or chain OR is owned by an entity that is not headquartered in Rhode Island.
- be a Rhode Island business or nonprofit
- demonstrate a negative impact from the COVID-19 health pandemic by demonstrating at least one of the following:
  - a. it was forced to close or curtail its operations due to the pandemic or a government order pertaining to the pandemic;
  - b. it experienced a supply chain delay or disruption that negatively impacted its operations;
  - c. it experienced increased costs as a result of the pandemic;
  - d. it was forced to lay off workers as a result of the pandemic;
  - e. or was impacted by the pandemic in some other way.
- Complete an energy audit/business assessment

### 2. How does the RI Rebounds Energy Efficiency Program work?

The RI Rebounds Energy Efficiency Program is a reimbursement program to support small businesses that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds will be used to assist in making purchases and completing projects that improve the energy efficiency of impacted small businesses. Small businesses must complete an energy audit of their facility in order to be eligible for the program.

### 3. Where can I get a no cost, no obligation energy assessment/audit for my small business?

You can obtain a no cost, no obligation energy assessment/audit from any of the following:

- Rhode Island Energy's Small Business Program delivered by RISE Engineering: [complete this form](#) or call 877-784-3709 to schedule a no cost audit
- [Block Island Power Company](#)
- Licensed and Registered Contractors\*
  - To verify registered and licensed contractors (commercial roofers, home inspectors, underground utility, water filtration, well drilling, pump installers, etc.), visit <https://crb.ri.gov/>
  - To verify licensed trades professionals (alarm business and agents, electricians, hoisting engineers, mechanical, and plumbers/irrigators, etc.), visit <https://dlt.ri.gov/regulation-and-safety/professional-regulation>

*\*Only energy assessments/audits conducted by a Rhode Island registered and licensed professional will be accepted for the RI Rebounds Energy Efficiency program.*

### 4. If I pay for my business energy assessment/audit, will I be reimbursed?

No, we will not reimburse for any costs associated with an energy assessment/audit. We strongly

encourage businesses to work with the partners listed above.

**5. Who can I contact for questions?**

Questions or clarifications concerning this program should be directed by e-mail to [RISmallBiz@commerceri.com](mailto:RISmallBiz@commerceri.com) and should include "Energy Efficiency Support Program Question" in the subject line. You can also call 401-521-HELP to speak with a business support specialist.

**6. Are there industry restrictions on this grant?**

No. Small businesses in any industry are eligible to apply as long as they meet the eligibility criteria listed in question one.

**7. How will the gross revenues of the business applicants be verified?**

Small businesses will be required to sign attestations that their gross revenues did not exceed \$2,000,000 in 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023.

**8. Does a small business need to own the building where the efficiency upgrades are being done?**

No. Small business owners do not need to own the building where efficiency upgrades are being undertaken. However, if the applicant does not own the building, they will need to attest that they have permission from the building's owner for the approved project.

**9. Can the funding be applied to cover part of the cost of a larger upgrade project?**

Yes. It is anticipated that many energy efficiency projects will cost more than the \$10,000 limit of this grant. In those cases, grant funds will only cover up to \$10,000 of the cost and the small business is responsible for the remainder.

**10. How can I check to see how much my small business received from other State grant programs?**

The most up to date list of businesses and organizations who received COVID-19 assistance from the State of Rhode Island can be found here: <http://www.transparency.ri.gov/covid-19/payees.php>. This portal covers information on all relevant grant programs, with the exception of the RI Rebounds Take It Outside program. To see how much your small business received from the RI Rebounds Take It Outside program, you can reach out to the intermediary you worked with for that program.

**11. Does the work need to be performed by a registered contractor?**

Yes. Any project requesting funds for labor or installation must be completed by a Rhode Island registered contractor and follow local and state regulations (including permits and zoning).

**12. What documents do I need to provide for upgrades? Can I apply with just an outline of my needs and the potential cost?**

Applications must include proof of an energy assessment/audit and a quote or purchase order (in some cases a screenshot of an online order can be used in the place of a purchase order).

**13. What documents do I need to provide once the work is completed and I am seeking a reimbursement?**

You are required to submit the following documents prior to receiving a reimbursement for the eligible expenses:

- A receipt or paid invoice (canceled check, bank statement or equivalent)
- The Project Completion Form
- An ACH and W9 vendor form

**14. How long will it take for me to receive my reimbursement?**

Please allow a minimum of 30 days to receive your reimbursement.

## 15. Where can I find a list of eligible expenses?

Eligible expenses include:

- LED lighting upgrades and controls
- Cooler/refrigeration controls
- Programmable WiFi thermostats
- Boiler and hot water controls
- Air sealing and building insulation
- Variable frequency drives
- Water saving devices
- Roof top unit controls
- Pumps and efficient motors
- Custom equipment and controls
- Electric panel upgrades
- Removal knob-and-tube wiring
- Improvements to ventilation:
  - Purchasing and installing a higher-grade filter within an existing air handling unit
  - Central HVAC installation, repair, or balancing
  - HVAC UVGI system installation
  - Adding a portable fan filter unit (PFFU)
  - Adding an indoor air purifier
  - HRV system installation, repair or balancing

*Note: items ineligible for reimbursement includes heat pumps (eligible for support through Clean Heat RI) and solar panels (state incentives already support purchase and installation).*

## 16. If eligible work has been completed, can a business request funds?

Purchases or projects completed or made after July 1, 2023 are eligible for reimbursement through the Energy Efficiency program. However, prioritization in this program is given for projects/purchases undertaken after the Energy Efficiency program start date (January 30, 2024).

## 17. How is SAM.gov being handled for this grant program?

Small business recipients are not required to have an active registration with SAM.gov. However, intermediaries will ensure that the small business has not been disbarred from the federal System of Account Management (SAM).