

Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street
27th Floor
Toronto ON M4P 1E4
Telephone: 416-481-1967
Facsimile: 416-440-7656
Toll free: 1-888-632-6273

Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario
C.P. 2319
2300, rue Yonge
27^e étage
Toronto ON M4P 1E4
Téléphone: 416-481-1967
Télécopieur: 416-440-7656
Numéro sans frais: 1-888-632-6273



BY EMAIL and WEB POSTING

May 26, 2015

To: Low-Income Energy Network
Housing Help Association of Ontario
Neighbourhood Information Post
United Way Greater Simcoe County
United Way Toronto
Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition
Consumers Council of Canada
Energy Probe
All Licensed Electricity Distributors
All Other Interested Stakeholders

Re: **Consultation to Implement the Ontario Electricity Support Program**
Board File No.: EB-2015-0148

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is now in the process of implementing the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP), a program to provide ongoing, and on-bill, rate assistance for low-income electricity consumers in Ontario. The program is set to be available on January 1, 2016.

The OEB is consulting with various organizations including the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), electricity distributors, unit sub-metering providers, low-income consumer advocates, social agencies and First Nations and Métis organizations to facilitate a smooth program implementation.

Participants in these consultations may be eligible for cost awards under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*. The purpose of this letter is to invite interested stakeholders to request eligibility for costs.

Background

In a [letter](#) dated April 23, 2014, the Minister of Energy asked the OEB to develop options for the implementation of an ongoing, ratepayer-funded bill assistance program for low-income electricity customers. The OEB submitted its [Report of the Board](#):

[Developing an Ontario Electricity Support Program](#) to the Minister in December 2014. The Minister expressed his support for the OEB to implement its proposed program design in an [announcement](#) made on March 26, 2015.

Electricity customers may begin applying for the OESP in the fall of 2015 and eligible recipients will begin seeing credits on their bills after January 1, 2016. Due to the timelines for the implementation of the OESP, the OEB has undertaken significant preliminary work to implement the program.

Cost Award Eligibility

Any person intending to request an award of costs must file a written submission to that effect by **June 5, 2015**. Instructions for filing requests for cost eligibility are set out below. All requests for cost eligibility will be posted on the Board's website.

If a licensed distributor has any objections to any of the requests for cost eligibility, such objections must be filed with the Board by **June 19, 2015**. Any objections will be posted on the Board's website. The Board will then make a final determination on the cost eligibility of the requesting participants.

The Board will determine eligibility for costs in accordance with its [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#). The request for cost eligibility must identify the grounds on which the person believes that they are eligible for an award of costs (addressing the Board's cost eligibility criteria as set out in section 3 of the Board's Practice Direction on Cost Awards). An explanation of any other funding to which the person has access must also be provided.

Eligible Activities

Cost awards will be available for any consultation activities that have taken place or may take place during the OESP implementation, including the meetings of the Financial Assistance Working Group, the Implementation Working Group, and any other working groups that may be established at any point during this consultation.

The maximum number of hours allowed per participant for any of the working group meetings are:

Preparation & attendance..... Actual meeting time + 2 hrs

The maximum number of hours for other consultation activities not specified in this letter will be determined at a later time.

Cost Awards

When determining the amount of the cost awards, the Board will apply the principles set out in section 5 of its Practice Direction on Cost Awards. The maximum hourly rates set out in the Board's Cost Award Tariff (appended to the Practice Direction) will also be applied. The Board expects that groups representing the same interests or class of persons will make every effort to communicate and co-ordinate their participation in this process.

Costs awarded will be recovered from all rate-regulated electricity distributors and costs will be apportioned based on distribution revenues.

In accordance with section 12.04 of its Practice Direction on Cost Awards, the Board will act as a clearing house for all payments of cost awards in this process. For more information on this process, please see the Board's Practice Direction on Cost Awards.

Filing Instructions

Two (2) paper copies of each filing must be provided, and should be sent to:

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street, Suite 2700
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1E4

In addition, the Board requests that stakeholders make every effort to provide electronic copies of their filings in searchable/unrestricted Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format, and to submit their filings through the Board's web portal at <https://www.pes.ontarioenergyboard.ca/eservice/>, quoting the file number EB-2015-0148. A user ID is required to submit documents through the Board's web portal. If you do not have a user ID, please visit the "e-filings services" webpage on the Board's website at www.ontarioenergyboard.ca, and fill out a user ID password request. Additionally, stakeholders are requested to follow the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the document entitled "RESS Document Preparation – A Quick Guide" also found on the e-filing services webpage. If the Board's web portal is not available, electronic copies of filings may be filed by e-mail at boardsec@ontarioenergyboard.ca. Those that do not have internet access should provide a CD containing their filing in PDF format.

Filings to the Board must be received by the Board Secretary by 4:45 p.m. on the required date. They must quote the applicable file number (EB-2015-0148) and include your name, address, telephone number and, where available, your e-mail address and fax number.

All materials related to this consultation will be available for viewing at the Board's offices and on the Board's website (www.ontarioenergyboard.ca).

If the filing is from a private citizen (i.e., not a lawyer representing a client, not a consultant representing a client or organization, not an individual in an organization that represents the interests of consumers or other groups, and not an individual from a regulated entity), before making the filing available for viewing at the Board's offices or placing the filing on the Board's website, the Board will remove any personal (i.e., not business) contact information from the filing (i.e., the address, fax number, phone number, and e-mail address of the individual). However, the name of the individual and the content of the filing will be available for viewing at the Board's offices and will be placed on the Board's website.

Any questions relating to this initiative should be directed to OEB Industry Relations at IndustryRelations@ontarioenergyboard.ca, or by phone at 416-440-7604 or 1-888-632-6273 (toll-free).

Yours truly,

Original Signed By

Mary Anne Aldred
General Counsel and VP, Legal Services & Strategic Policy