



Illinois Solar for All

FACT SHEET

August 2024

What is Illinois Solar for All?

Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) is a state-run program that makes solar more accessible for income-eligible residents. It has two sub-programs that benefit households: Illinois Solar for All: Residential Solar and Illinois Solar for All: Community Solar. CUB is not an administrator of Illinois Solar for All, but we offer this fact sheet to help educate consumers on how to take advantage of the program. For more information about participating in the program visit the Illinois Solar for All website, at www.illinoisfsa.com.

How is Illinois Solar for All possible?

The Future Energy Jobs Act, passed in 2016, created Illinois Solar for All program, and the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), passed in 2021, added more funding to the program and strengthened it.

Who qualifies for the program?

To participate in ILSFA, you must be **at or below 80 percent of Area Median Income**, which varies based on your household size and where you live in Illinois. For those who do qualify, ILSFA is the most cost-effective way to install panels or subscribe to community solar project. Below is more information about the rooftop solar and community solar programs.

Illinois Solar for All: Residential Solar

Through ILSFA, qualified homeowners or building owners have the opportunity to install solar panels on their property for little to no cost. The two types of projects are: Residential Solar (Small): 1-4 units and Residential Solar (Large): 5+ units. Beyond income qualifications, consider these factors:

Solar readiness: Your home must be “solar ready.”

- The roof must be in good condition to support solar panels, and at least 15 years from needing to be replaced.
- The house needs a modern electrical panel.
- The roof should be relatively free of shading.

Note: Funding for solar readiness upgrades may be available through the Illinois Solar for All Home Repairs and Upgrades initiative or [Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program \(IHWAP\)](#). If you are not able to make the necessary upgrades, community solar is still an option.



Illinois Solar for All

Southern Illinois: The ILSFA program fully covers all regions of Illinois, though there are fewer Approved Vendors willing and able to do residential installations in Southern Illinois. If you live in Southern Illinois and are interested in ILSFA, please reach out to CUB and we will try to suggest solutions for you.

Municipal Utilities and Cooperative Electric Utilities (muni/co-op): If you are a customer of a municipal utility or an electric cooperative (muni/co-op), you may not be eligible for ILSFA. This is because many muni/co-ops have prohibitive solar policies, especially when it comes to a third party owning the panels. (You will learn more about this below.) If you are a muni/co-op customer interested in the program, please reach out to your utility to confirm what their solar policies are.

Homeowners have a few financing options to install solar through purchasing panels, leasing panels or with a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Under a PPA or lease, the solar company owns the panels and the customer rents them each month in return for electricity produced by the panels.

- **Purchase:** The customer purchases the solar project outright with the option to finance it with a loan.
- **Lease:** The customer will pay the solar company a fixed monthly fee.
- **PPA:** The customer will pay the solar company an amount based on how much energy the panels produce each month.

Note: Outside of the Illinois Solar for All program, CUB advises consumers to be careful about entering leases or PPAs, because buying the panels outright could be more cost-effective. With ILSFA, however, leases and PPAs are a much better deal. This is because there are guaranteed savings built into the program.

Illinois Solar for All: Community Solar

ILSFA has a community solar option for income-eligible residents who cannot or choose not to install solar panels on their own property. Illinois Solar for All: Community Solar is a good option for peo-

ple who live in apartments and/or have too much shade for solar to work at their house. (For more information about community solar, visit CUB's website, SolarInTheCommunity.com.)

The Illinois Solar for All program maintains a list of all community solar projects. The list includes information on whether each project is currently accepting new subscribers and how to sign up. If you have any questions, please contact CUB for more information.

Note: If you are a customer of a municipal utility or an electric cooperative (muni/co-op), you may not be eligible for Illinois Solar for All. This is because many muni/co-ops have prohibitive solar policies. If you are a muni/co-op customer interested in the program, please reach out to your utility to confirm what their solar policy is.

Where can I get more information?

At the ILSFA website, at www.illinoissfa.com.

For a list of Illinois Solar for All Approved Vendors, see [Illinois Solar for All's Approved Vendor Directory](#).

Visit citizensutilityboard.org/ilsfa for more information.

For a list of current Approved Vendors offers, visit the ILSFA website, at www.illinoissfa.com.

For a list of Community Solar projects, see [Illinois Solar for All: Community Solar offers](#).

For more information on consumer protections on the [Illinois Solar for All consumer protections website](#).

The Citizens Utility Board (CUB), a nonprofit utility watchdog for Illinois utility customers, also has resources:

- For more information about community solar, visit CUB's website, SolarInTheCommunity.com.
- For more information about the ILSFA program, visit CitizensUtilityBoard.org/ILSFA.

