

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA Announces Updates and Clarifications for Programs to Advance Clean, Affordable and Reliable Energy in Rural America

Updates Will Help People Better Navigate Application Processes

WASHINGTON, June 16, 2023 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small announced key updates and clarifications for financial assistance programs that will advance clean, affordable and reliable energy in rural America.

In May, the Department announced [\\$10.7 billion in funding](#) available under USDA's [Powering Affordable Clean Energy](#) (PACE) and [Empowering Rural America](#) (New ERA) programs. Eligible organizations may apply for loans, grants, loan modifications and partially forgivable loans.

The updates and clarifications being announced today will help people better navigate the application processes for both programs, including:

- Adding a requirement for applicants to create verified eAuthentication IDs prior to submitting a Letter of Interest. All applicants must have a verified eAuthentication ID in order to submit a Letter of Interest. For more information about the USDA eAuthentication system, visit: <https://www.eauth.usda.gov/eauth/b/usda/home>.
- Enabling USDA's General Field Representatives to help eligible organizations before they submit Letters of Interest.
- Clarifying that New ERA applicants must submit applications within 60 days of being invited to apply unless another date is mutually agreed upon.
- Clarifying that the 120-month and 180-month exclusions referenced in Section 306b of the Rural Electrification Act and related regulations do not apply to USDA's PACE or New ERA programs.

More information on updates and clarifications for USDA's PACE program are on page 39394 of the June 16 [Federal Register](#).

More information on updates and clarifications for USDA's New ERA program are on page 39395 of the June 16 [Federal Register](#).

If you have questions, USDA is regularly updating frequently asked questions (FAQs). FAQs are available at [IRA FAQs | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#).

Additional details about the Inflation Reduction Act are available at www.rd.usda.gov/inflation-reduction-act.

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