

Low Income Recruitment Report – November 2020

This recruitment report highlights the monthly activities the Low Income Facilitator has conducted for the month of November.

LIF Recruitment

The Low-Income Facilitator (LIF) recruits low-income customers to a statewide waitlist that populates projects where Project Managers (PMs) have asked for assistance. The goal number of participants is an estimate for each utility territory that is based on the recruitment needs of each project. Numbers will change frequently based on subscription size adjustments, added/cancelled projects, recruitment delays and extensions.

A customer is considered officially on the waitlist once intake is completed, but final paperwork may be in the process of being signed. Numbers are cumulative.

LIF Recruitment			
	Waitlist 11/1/2020	Assigned 11/1/2020	Goal 1/31/2021
PGE	101	0	324
PPL	17	0	0
IDP	0	0	0

Project Manager Recruitment

Many Project Managers are helping with recruitment for their projects. This table represents all projects that have been pre-certified and their anticipated date of operation. Goals will change as projects are delayed and new certification dates are updated. PM-recruited participants are assigned to their projects once intake has been completed. Numbers are cumulative.

PM Recruitment			
	Leads 11/1/2020	Leads 11/1/2020	Goal 1/31/2021
PGE	90	66	720
PPL	0	0	0
IDP	0	0	0

PMs provide leads to the LIF for intake. People may change their mind before or during intake, or may be unreachable, so leads will be higher than the “assigned” number. Once customers have completed intake, they are assigned to the project.

Highlighted outreach activities for October

- Printed and delivered 4,500 flyers for Energy Trust of Oregon energy saver kits
- Sent mailing to 402 Habitat for Humanity participants
- Flyer distribution through 1,000 food boxes through Multnomah County schools
- Delivered 2 online workshops to prospective participants
- Held 4 meetings and provided 2 presentations to CBOs
- Gave 1 presentation to organizations and/or public events
- Postcard mailing to 1,200 CEP clients
- Worked with PGE's LI and DEI team to do a targeted mailing to 38,000 customers who have received energy assistance in the past
- Coordinated with Project Managers
 - Low-income housing – participants with meters not in their name

Program Development

In Progress

- Exploring ways to cover arrears and oversubscription for LI
- Affordable Housing and community solar
- Assigning existing LI waitlist to available projects
- Updated media engagement plan
- Energy Assistance and Community Solar - The PA team is currently working with utilities to explore all possible impacts community solar subscriptions can have on LIHEAP and other forms of Energy Assistance. We are also working with the Oregon Energy Fund and LIHEAP partners directly to explore options and ensure minimal harm to LI participants.

Program Updates

Waitlist Management System

This month, LI subscribers will begin moving from the waitlist as they are assigned to projects. The current Portland General Electric waitlist will be assigned to projects that have been recruiting through October and have asked for LIF support. Pacific Power customers will remain on the waitlist. Low-income customers recruited by the LIF will be assigned equally among projects that are (1) actively recruiting general market participants and (2) have an expected Certification date within three months. To be sure that the LIF is allocating customers among all projects that meet these criteria, Project Managers should be sure to list their project as “Accepting Participants” in the ORCSP platform once they have begun general market enrollment, and to keep the expected Certification dates updated with any changes. Project Managers should contact the PA team at administrator@oregoncsp.org with any questions on this process.

LI Waiver Decision

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the PUC has granted a waiver to Project Managers to move forward with certification even if the 10% low-income recruitment has not yet been completed. The allocation will still be reserved for low-income, and they have 12 months from certification to complete recruitment.

Consent Forms

Intake has been made easier for LI participants this month. A significant barrier to completing intake has been signing paperwork to give consent to look at utility use history and around income verification. Over 20% of the waitlist was pending this paperwork. As of this month, verbal consent can now be given via telephone or by signing paperwork. This will speed up assignment and reduce turnover.

Current Barriers to Recruitment:

COVID-19:

Frontline communities face a large and disproportionate impact by COVID in job loss, business loss, contagion contraction, and death. Additionally, millions of unemployed have entered the system at one time, overwhelming agencies.

- CEP is not utilizing in-person outreach methods until it is safe to have gatherings again. This is a drastic alteration to the original LI recruitment plan, education delivery, and internal operations. CEP normally participates in 20+ outreach events per year and would have provided over 160 skill-building workshops to LI customers this year, all of which were either outright cancelled or moved to online formats. This has reduced direct engagement by over 1,000 people since February.
- *The Digital Divide* some groups of individuals do not have access to the internet at all, let alone services that allow them to live-stream content like webinars. Community centers and libraries are currently closed. This divide applies largely to low-income communities, as well as people of color and seniors, all of whom are target demographics for this program. Online outreach methods not very effective.
- *Low-Income Partner Engagement* is much slower as LI communities suffer financially because of the virus, and large numbers have become LI and entered the system. Many housing partners rely on rent to run programs, and due to rent freezes have had to furlough most of their staff. New programs and referrals are low on the priority list. We are connecting regularly with some of our closer partners regularly to check in. Some groups have found their footing while others (such as those connected with schools) have their hands full.
- *Media is Consumed* with COVID-19, racial justice, social unrest, fires, hurricanes and national politics, so getting media attention is difficult right now.