

**Income Qualified North Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee:**  
2019 Workforce Development Working Group  
Section A- Discussion Questions

1. **Optimizing Utility EE Workforce and Business Development Efforts:** Per utility stipulations; as seen in Section B- how can the current efforts be optimized and refined based on inputs from the IQ North Committee?
  - a. **Utility Workforce Development Programs:**
    - i. What are the existing utility programs?
    - ii. How can these programs be optimized?
    - iii. What are challenges, areas of improvement and lessons learned / best practices from each program?
    - iv. Can we coordinate with FEJA grantees on the recruiting efforts for future cohorts?
  - b. **Challenges to Implementation:** What are some barriers and challenges currently being experienced by workforce development FEJA grantees? How can these be addressed?
    - i. Potential Working Group Deliverable: A report or framework summarizing recommendations on how the utilities (ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas – North Shore Gas), can optimize their existing workforce and business development efforts.
  - c. **ComEd Call for Ideas Workforce Pilots:** What are the workforce development pilots being implemented via the *Call for Ideas* initiative? How can the IQ North Committee best support these efforts?
2. **Addressing Workforce Needs for IHWAP and Other IQ Programs**
  - a. **IHWAP Questions:**
    - i. What weatherization trainings are currently offered to support IHWAP program?
    - ii. What challenges exist in training weatherization contractors?
    - iii. What are the barriers faced by Community Action Agencies when training for IHWAP programs? How can these barriers be addressed?
    - iv. What are the possibilities for diverse engagement and training for the IHWAP program?
  - b. **Other IQ Programs:** Are there workforce development topics that need to be addressed in this Working Group?
    - i. How do we identify and solve barriers for small minority businesses who need lines of credit to bid on RFPs as the primary contractor?
3. **Supporting Job Development and Training Initiatives in IQ Communities:** Assessing how the EE workforce can be diversified by increasing the number of workers trained and hired from economically disadvantaged/diverse communities to become vendors,

local-based trainees and employees of the EE workforce. This section will address how the utilities (ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas – North Shore Gas) can best support IQ communities with these efforts.

- a. **Current Landscape and Addressing Community Needs:** Diverse communities are very underserved, both in accessing programs and in job development. What are the barriers faced that we can feasibly address?
  - i. What are some barriers to training for community members in economically disadvantaged and diverse communities?
  - ii. How can we ensure that people are being trained based on their needs?
- b. **Job Development**
  - i. How can we support job development in IQ communities?
  - ii. When efforts are made to increase diversity, programs may focus on entry level initiatives. How do we also focus on existing accomplished minority businesses that have been excluded from the process?
- c. **Publicizing the Training Programs/Program Visibility:** It has been shared that certain communities are not being made aware of the FEJA job opportunities and training programs.
  - i. How should job opportunities be best communicated?
  - ii. How are community members being made aware of EE job opportunities? What is the best way to share information about job openings with IQ communities?
  - iii. Do IQ implementers have any contractual requirements (or are they encouraged) to support job development in IQ communities, with either local and/or diverse hiring?
  - iv. **Coordination with IL Solar for All:** How can diverse candidates training and hiring and/or utility workforce and business development efforts be coordinated with IL Solar for All programs?
    1. Potential Working Group Deliverable: A summary of recommended goals for the utilities (ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas – North Shore Gas), to utilize for their efforts to increase the diversity within the EE workforce.
  - v. **Collective Job Board/Website:** Ameren Illinois has created and published a job board at [IllinoisEnergyEfficiencyjobs.com](http://IllinoisEnergyEfficiencyjobs.com) in collaboration with the Springfield Urban League to share information about EE job openings specifically for IQ Communities.
    1. How can the Northern territory learn more about the job board and get IQ North utilities to be a part of it?
    2. How can we promote this job board as a resource to IQ Communities?
- d. **Providing Support for Existing IQ Small Businesses**
  - i. What are the barriers faced by small minority businesses from becoming primary contractors?

- ii. How do we ensure that training programs do not exclude and bypass existing accomplished minority businesses from building capacity?
  - iii. How do we identify these businesses?
    - 1. Potential Working Group Deliverable: A framework and/or action plan for primary contractors to provide mentorship/guidance for minority small businesses facing barriers.
  - e. **Training Initiatives**
    - i. What community college training programs exist in northern IL to support EE jobs (HVAC, weatherization, etc.)?
    - ii. How can we support coordination between utilities, implementers, and community colleges related to EE training opportunities?
4. **Workforce Development Best Practices from Other Jurisdictions:** What are some best practices in solar and EE training programs that are transferrable to Illinois?
- a. **Diversity and Inclusion Workforce Development Initiatives:** What have other jurisdictions done?
  - b. **Publicizing EE Programs to IQ Communities:** What are some best practices from other jurisdictions for the most effective strategy to get the word out about EE job opportunities?
  - c. **IHWAP and Workforce Development Initiatives:** What have other jurisdictions done to integrate workforce development initiatives with IHWAP and other IQ Programs?
    - i. Potential Working Group Deliverable: A summary of workforce development best practices in other jurisdictions; lessons that Illinois could learn from.

## Section B- Utility Stipulations

- I. **Northern Illinois Gas Company aka Nicor Gas Company:** The Northern Illinois Gas Company aka Nicor Gas Company’s 2018-2021 Energy Efficiency Settlement Stipulation Plan’s section on Workforce Development and Supplier Diversity states that Nicor Gas acknowledges the importance of fostering economic activity in Illinois through the use of energy efficiency dollars to support Illinois-based jobs through the following steps:
- Nicor Gas shall investigate ways to integrate workforce development initiatives, in coordination with ComEd and other workforce development entities, including, if practicable, IHWAP, within its Market Transformation program as described in the EEP 2018-2021.
  - Nicor Gas shall engage in discussions within the Income Qualified Advisory Committee convened pursuant to Section 8-103B© of the Act (“Income Qualified Advisory Group”) aimed at increasing the diversity and number of locally-based trainees, vendors, and employees of the energy efficiency workforce within the

Nicor Gas territory and integrating workforce development initiatives, as described above.

- Nicor Gas shall collaborate with stakeholders to develop reporting metrics on diverse vendor activity as part of its quarterly reporting requirements.

**II. The North Shore Gas Company and The Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company aka**

**Peoples Gas- North Shore Gas:** The North Shore Gas Company and The Peoples Gas Light and Coke Company Stipulated Settlement of their Energy Efficiency Plan’s section on Workforce Development and Reporting states that the company shall work in good faith to consult with, and reach consensus with the Income Qualified Advisory Committee on issues including but not limited to the following:

- Diversity in training and hiring of individuals for energy efficiency from economically disadvantaged and diverse communities; including training offered through the IHWAP program necessary to increase capacity to deliver services in the Companies territories;
- Discussion and establishment of goals and best practices outside the context of Docket No. 17-0309, in consultation with the Income Qualified Advisory Committee and other job training initiatives, for increasing the diversity and number of locally-based trainees, vendors and employees of its energy efficiency workforce, and for establishing tracking methodologies for reporting purposes. NS/PG will coordinate and consult with the Income Qualified Advisory Committee, IHWAP, and other workforce development program administrators to establish best practices and methodologies for attracting, training, and employing diverse candidates for the 2018-2021 Plan and other workforce development efforts.

**III. Commonwealth Edison Company aka ComEd:** The ComEd 2018-2021 Energy Efficiency and Demand Response Settlement Stipulation Plan’s section on Workforce Development and Supplier Diversity states the following:

- ComEd agrees to work with the Income Qualified Advisory Committee in the development of a metric to be added to quarterly energy efficiency reports filed with the Commission that reports the number of businesses and employees based in economically disadvantaged communities hired to assist in the delivery of energy efficiency programs.
- ComEd agrees to discuss and establish goals and best practices outside the context of Docket No. 17-0312, in consultation with the Income Qualified Advisory Committee and other job training initiatives for increasing the diversity and number of locally-based trainees, vendors and employees of its energy efficiency workforce, and for establishing tracking methodologies for reporting purposes. ComEd will coordinate and consult with the Income Qualified Advisory Committee, IHWAP, and other workforce development program administrators to establish best practices and methodologies for attracting, training, and employing diverse candidates for the EE 2018-2021 Plan and other workforce development efforts.

- Job training in economically disadvantaged and diverse communities within its service territory that is supported by ComEd's efficiency program portfolio funding, including training offered through the IHWAP program necessary to increase capacity to deliver services in ComEd's territory.