

# COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION (CCA)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The New York State Public Service Commission has adopted the use of templates to manage the State's Community Choice Aggregation program more effectively. While other templates used in the program should not have their formatting altered, **Administrators are free to modify the FAQ template formatting so long as the substance of the questions and answers remains unchanged.** Please include all the information below, formatted appropriately, when submitting a completed Municipality Filing.

### **What is Community Choice Aggregation?**

On April 21, 2016, the NYS Public Service Commission enabled Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) Opt-Out Programs, which offer residential and small-commercial customers an opportunity to receive more attractive energy supply terms through the bargaining power that aggregation provides. As well as educating, encouraging, and empowering communities and individuals to take control of their energy future through engagement with existing opportunities and development of new programs.

### **What is a CCA Administrator?**

The CCA Administrator is a company, non-profit, or local government that has been authorized by the Public Service Commission to administer a CCA program in New York State. The CCA Administrator is responsible for working with participating municipalities to design and implement a CCA program consistent with the goals of the municipality and its constituents and in compliance with the CCA program requirements. The CCA Administrator solicits bids, awards a supply contract, and performs the necessary program outreach and education to ensure residents are well educated about the program. For those customers who do not opt-out of the program, the CCA Administrator works with your utility to ensure proper enrollment.

### **What role does my municipality play?**

The municipality is the primary party responsible for meeting the requirements established by the Public Service Commission. First, to enable CCA in your municipality, there must be a Local Law passed that allows for opt-out enrollment for eligible residential and small-commercial accounts. The municipality would then either administer the CCA program themselves or select a CCA Administrator to perform the necessary CCA program requirements.

### **What does opt-out enrollment mean?**

Opt-out enrollment means that you will automatically be enrolled to participate in the CCA program unless you are already receiving supply service from an ESCO, have a ESCO block on your account, or take action to opt-out of the program. You will continue to receive your electric and/or gas bill from your utility. However, under the Supply section of your utility bill you will see the CCA supply rate and the name of the CCA program and ESCO serving the program. Once you opt-out of the program, that choice will be recognized for the life of the program.

### **Who is eligible to participate?**

Most residential and small-commercial customers are eligible to be opt-out enrolled in the CCA program. However, if you have placed a ESCO block on your account or are currently receiving supply services from a ESCO you would not be eligible for opt-out enrollment. If you are an Assistance Program Participant (APP) you would be eligible to participate only if the CCA program has an approved guaranteed savings product offering.

**Does the CCA Program replace my utility company?**

No. You will still receive one bill from the utility company, but the supply section of your bill will show the name of the ESCO/CCA Program. The utility company will still be responsible for your billing and responding to any power outages.

**Will I save money on my monthly bill?**

Unless you are receiving a guaranteed savings supply product offering, such as what is required for APP customers, there is not a savings guarantee over the utility supply rate. However, with the ability to aggregate or pool demand this would potentially lead to competitive pricing for CCA program participants that would potentially provide greater savings than what the individual account would receive without participating. If your municipality has chosen a renewable supply product offering, you may pay a premium over the default utility supply rate.

**How will my bill change?**

You will continue to receive your bill from the utility company. The only portion of the bill that will change will be the Supply section which would now include the name of the ESCO and CCA Program serving your municipality.

**What products are available?**

CCA programs are designed with municipalities deciding which supply products will be offered to their constituents, including the default supply product that your account would automatically be enrolled under. These products can be a standard supply product or, for electric supply, a renewable product. While your municipality will decide what the default product offering is, you may have other product options available to you, contact the CCA Program Administrator to find out more.

**How do I opt-out?**

There are multiple ways to opt-out of participation: by phone, online, or by mail. The specific contact information, as well as the date you must opt-out by, will be included on the opt-out letter.

**Can I participate if I opted out previously?**

Yes, you can always opt-back into the program after previously opting-out, but you may need to wait until the next billing period for the change to take effect. Contact your CCA Administrator to join the program.

**Will this program affect my APP status?**

The CCA program will not affect APP status. If a CCA intends to serve APPs, it must first get approval of the guaranteed savings product that it intends to provide to its APP customers to ensure that the product will provide them with a guaranteed savings.

**Is there a fee for cancellation or opting-out?**

No, there is never a fee for cancellation or opting-out. [revise language if fee exists after 3 billing cycles allowed under CCA Framework Order]

**What account information is being shared?**

Customer energy usage data is aggregated and anonymized and used for bid solicitations, this does not contain any customer specific details. Your name and address are provided in order to send the opt-out letter. Upon enrollment, your information, including energy usage data and APP status will be provided to the ESCO serving the CCA program.

**How is my information being protected?**

Before receiving any data from the utility, the CCA Administrator and ESCO must sign a Data Security Agreement (DSA) with your utility. The DSA ensures they have the appropriate cybersecurity and privacy protections in place to protect your information.

**Who can I contact to report a problem or voice a complaint?**

Complaints should be made to the CCA Administrator, Municipal Liaison, or the ESCO supplier. There information should be listed on the opt-out letter and website. Additionally, complaints can always be made to the NYS Department of Public Service Office of Consumer Services at 1-800-342-3377.