

Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens (CHECK) Rebate Program



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

Josh Shapiro
Governor

Richard Negrin
Secretary

Effective July 5, 2023
7200-BK-DEP5506 Rev. 7/2023

Table of Contents

I.	Funding Opportunity Description	1
II.	Program Eligibility	2
	A. Eligible Applicants	2
	B. Eligible Projects	2
	C. Ineligible Projects	2
III.	Rebate Information	3
	A. Available Funding	3
	B. How the Program Works	4
IV.	How to Apply	5
V.	How to Redeem a Rebate Voucher	6

Cover photo: All-electric kitchen at Esther Barazzone Center, Chatham University Eden Hall campus in Pittsburgh (photo credit: Bruce Damonte).

This rebate program is supported through funding from the United States Department of Energy's (DOE) State Energy Program.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

According to the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS), “food service takes up approximately 2% of total commercial floor space, but accounts for about 6% of primary energy consumption. This makes it one of the highest energy-use-per-square-foot segments of the commercial sector and presents a significant opportunity for savings.” In addition, DEP recognizes the health benefits to kitchen staff from fuel switching and improved ventilation systems. Converting from natural gas equipment to all electric would significantly reduce harmful emissions and thereby improve indoor air quality for chefs and other kitchen staff.

To help commercial kitchens in Pennsylvania modernize and become healthier places to work via energy efficiency and electrification, DEP has developed the Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens (CHECK) rebate program for nonprofits, higher education institutions, K-12 schools, and restaurants. Under this program, eligible entities may apply for first-come, first-served rebates for a variety of combustion-free cooking equipment, as well as associated electrical upgrades. **Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until program funds are depleted but no later than December 31, 2023.**

II. Program Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are limited to Pennsylvania-based K-12 schools, higher education institutions, restaurants, not-for-profit hospitals, and nonprofits whose missions are geared toward community services, such as soup kitchens, shelters, or food banks. Please note that up to 40% of the total funding amount for this rebate program will be allotted for community service nonprofits, minority-owned businesses, or buildings located in or servicing environmental justice areas, as defined by PADEP's Office of Environmental Justice.

Entities who applied for and received a CHECK rebate during year one of the program (between October 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023) ARE eligible to apply again in this round for the maximum rebate amount of \$8,500 for new projects.

Education is key when it comes to understanding and implementing new technologies. Thus, in order to apply for this rebate program, a representative from your school, institution, business, or nonprofit must watch a pre-recorded CHECK webinar, attend a live CHECK webinar, or attend an in-person workshop. The pre-recorded webinars, as well as dates for the in-person workshops and live webinar, can be found on the [CHECK webpage](#).

B. Eligible Projects

Eligible equipment, as described in Table 1 below, includes: commercial steam cooker, fryer, combination oven, convection oven, griddle, and hot food holding cabinet, all of which must be ENERGY STAR certified and combustion-free (i.e. electric). Demand control kitchen ventilation systems and induction ranges, cooktops, woks, and griddles, as well as associated electrical infrastructure upgrades to accommodate additional load from induction equipment are also eligible. All equipment must be installed in buildings located in Pennsylvania. Those buildings can be new construction or existing.

C. Ineligible Projects

- Cooking equipment powered by fossil fuels is not eligible.
- Projects for residential homes are not eligible.
- Any equipment that was purchased prior to July 1, 2023 or after December 31, 2023 is ineligible for this round of funding.
- Projects that have received or applied for DEP's Small Business Advantage Grant (SBAG) funding for the same equipment are not eligible to also apply for this rebate, unless the SBAG application was either withdrawn or not selected for funding.

III. Rebate Information

A. Available Funding

Applications will be accepted, reviewed, and approved on a **first-come, first-served** basis. Applications must be submitted prior to installing the equipment. Funding is available at the rebate levels identified in Table 1. Approximately \$150,000 is available statewide for rebates under this pilot program. These guidelines and associated rebate levels will remain in effect until rebate vouchers have been issued totaling available funding, or until no later than December 31, 2023. Forty percent of the total funding amount for this rebate program is reserved for community service nonprofits or buildings located in or servicing environmental justice areas, as defined by PADEP's Office of Environmental Justice. DEP may modify or update the program guidelines at its discretion. Any future guideline modifications or updates will be posted at <https://www.dep.pa.gov/CommercialBuildings>

The CHECK Program will provide:

- Rebates as a percentage of equipment costs up to a maximum rebate amount, whichever is less. (See Table 1)
- Rebates only for the project types listed in Table 1.
- Rebates for necessary electrical installation, equipment, and material costs required to perform electrical upgrades to accommodate additional load from induction equipment.
- Product specs are required to be submitted with the application.
- Applicants may apply under each technology category, all on a single application or as separate applications, one per technology category.
- Only one rebate will be awarded for each technology category, per applicant.

DEP will not issue more than \$8,500 in rebate vouchers total to any one applicant. \$8,500 is the maximum total rebate award under this program if an applicant applies under all technology categories.

Table 1. CHECK Rebate Amounts

Technology (all equipment must be combustion-free; electric-only)	Eligible Equipment	Maximum Rebate Amount Per Applicant
ENERGY STAR certified commercial cooking equipment	Steam cooker, fryer, combination oven, convection oven, griddle, hot food holding cabinet	Up to 50% of purchase cost \$4000 max
Ventilation	Demand control kitchen ventilation system	Up to 50% of purchase cost \$7,500 max
Induction cooking equipment	Range, cooktop, wok, griddle	Up to 50% of purchase cost \$7,500 max
Associated electrical infrastructure upgrades to accommodate additional load from induction equipment	Electrical equipment (circuits/breaker/wiring for new load)	Up to 50% of infrastructure costs \$1,000 max

B. How the Program Works

The CHECK Program is offering funding as a rebate/voucher program.

1. Applications to the CHECK Rebate Program **must be submitted prior to the start of equipment installation**. See Section IV, How to Apply, for more details.
2. Successful applicants will be issued a rebate voucher that secures the approved rebate amount for **180 days from the date of issuance**. The rebates are first-come, first-served, and the voucher is your assurance that funding has been set aside for your project.
3. Following project installation, the voucher recipient must then provide all required documentation to DEP prior to the voucher expiration date to receive rebate funds. See Section V, How to Redeem a Rebate Voucher, for more details.

If an applicant initiates project installation after applying but prior to DEP approval of a rebate voucher, no costs will be reimbursed if the application is not approved.

IV. How to Apply

- A. DEP will only accept rebate applications submitted through the Commonwealth's eGrants website, which is the Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Electronic Single Application website: <https://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us/Login.aspx>.

Please see the CHECK Program Application Instructions Guide for detailed, step-by-step instructions for registering in eGrants and applying for the rebate. Applications will be accepted until funding is depleted, but no later than **December 31, 2023**.

- B. All applications will require the following information to be submitted via eGrants.
1. Applicant name; address; contact information; EIN, UEI and SAP Vendor numbers
 2. Project location
 3. Whether the project involves a community service nonprofit, minority-owned business, or a building located in or servicing an environmental justice area
 4. Whether an applicant representative has viewed a pre-recorded webinar on the CHECK webpage or participated in a live online training or in-person induction cooking workshop
 5. The number and type(s) of equipment being installed or replaced
 6. Estimated project costs including price quotes for the equipment (refer to Table 1 for eligible equipment). Price quotes will be uploaded as an attachment.
 7. Product specifications will be uploaded as an attachment.

Applications are public documents and subject to disclosure to the public. Any information included in the rebate application that the applicant wishes the commonwealth to consider as confidential must be uploaded to the eGrants system as a separate file and must be clearly marked as confidential.

Questions regarding the registration, access, and use of the eGrants application system should be directed to the Enterprise Help Desk, PA Office of Administration at 833-448-0647 between the hours of 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM EST Monday – Friday, excluding holidays.

Inquiries related to the project requirements, application requirements, and other aspects of this rebate program should be directed to DEP's Energy Programs Office by phone at 717-214-4243 or by e-mail to RA-EP-CHECKProgram@pa.gov.

V. How to Redeem a Rebate Voucher

The rebate recipient must submit the information listed below following project completion to redeem the rebate voucher. Upon DEP approval of the final documentation, DEP will issue payment of the rebate to the voucher holder. DEP will not approve voucher redemption requests for unpaid invoices. Payment may take at least 6-8 weeks after the request is submitted. Detailed submission instructions for redeeming the voucher will be included in the notification email provided to successful applicants. Required documentation:

- A. Equipment invoice(s) that clearly shows the equipment purchased, quantity, purchase date, and equipment cost.
- B. Proof of payment of all eligible equipment. Proof of payment could include either a copy of the canceled check, or an invoice that clearly shows that it was paid with a balance due of “zero.”
- C. Equipment specifications for all equipment purchased under the rebate program. This could include a manufacturer spec sheet, product brochure, or website content for the equipment.
- D. For all replacement projects, before and after photos of the equipment that clearly show the installation location (i.e. one photo of the equipment replaced and one photo of the newly installed equipment).
- E. For new install projects, photos of the equipment that clearly show the installation location.

Applicants with vouchers which expire prior to project completion and submission of final documentation may reapply for a new voucher. DEP does not guarantee that a new voucher will be issued. If a new voucher is issued, retroactive project costs going back to the original rebate voucher date will be eligible under the rebate amounts in effect at the time of re-application.