Eligibility Guidelines for the New Jersey SHARES Energy Assistance Grant

About the Program

SHARES provides energy (gas and electric) assistance grants to moderate and fixed-income households experiencing a temporary financial crisis. Eligibility is based on household size and income. Households who have income at 60.1% - 100% of the State Median Income (SMI) guidelines can receive up to $700 per utility per calendar year. Grants will be used for energy consumption only – not for deposits, reconnection fees, repairs, etc. Grants must result in continuance and/or restoration of service. All grant payments are issued directly to the utility company on the Account holder's behalf and no account holder will receive a credit balance.

Eligibility Guidelines

Households MUST:

- Have an active residential account with one of these utilities: Atlantic City Electric, Elizabethtown Gas, JCP&L, New Jersey Natural Gas, PSE&G, Rockland Electric and South Jersey Gas.
- Reside at the service address listed on the utility bill.
- Be experiencing a temporary financial crisis, such as a job loss or illness.
- Be in arrears on their energy bill.
- Have made a good faith payment of at least $100 within 90 days prior to the application date.
- If applying for a NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant from two energy utilities on the same day, the good faith payment of at least $100 within 90 days of applying can be a cumulative total of $100 made amongst both utilities.

Households MAY:

- Receive one grant of up to $700 for electric, once between January 1 and December 31 of a given year. **The actual amount awarded will depend on the arrearage on the bill at the time it is confirmed with the utility company. For example: If the utility company confirms a bill balance of $300, the approval will be in the amount of $300.**
- Receive one grant of up to $700 for natural gas, once between January 1 and December 31 of a given year. **The actual amount awarded will depend on the arrearage on the bill at the time it is confirmed with the utility company. For example: If the utility company confirms a bill balance of $157, the approval will be in the amount of $157.**

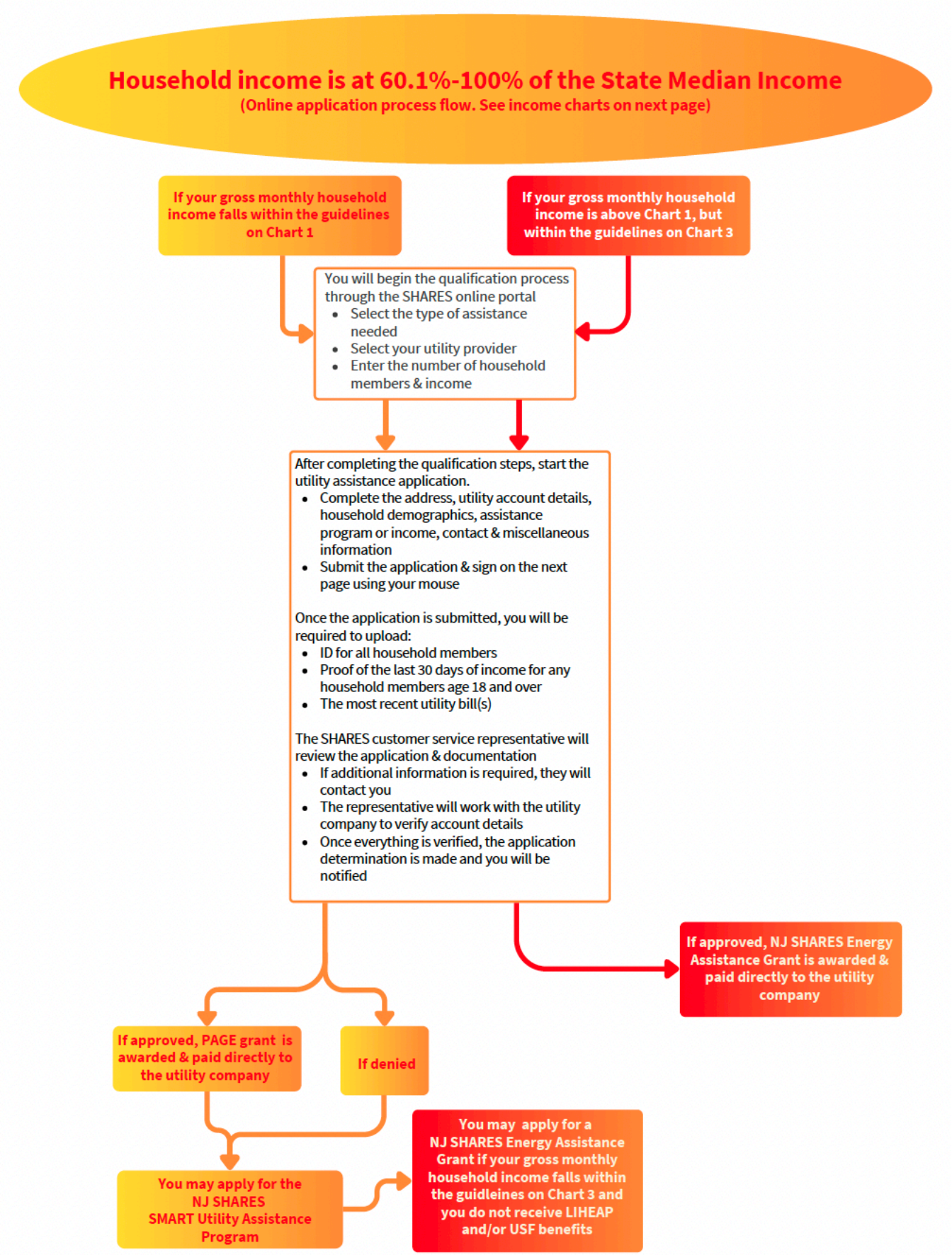
Income Eligibility

- Household income must be between 60.1%-100% of the State Median Income and either not qualify for federal programs such as the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or state programs such as Universal Service Fund (USF) **OR** receive benefits from any/all of these programs and are still in need of assistance. **See income chart 2 on page 3.**
  - If a household is at or below 60% of the State Median Income and has applied to both LIHEAP and USF and has been denied (with proof) from both programs, the household may be eligible for a NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant. **See income chart 1 on page 3**
  - A household that is coded by the utility company for receiving LIHEAP and/or USF benefits is not eligible for NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant.

Income Eligibility for Seniors and the Disabled

- Applicants 65 years of age or older, with households of one or two members only, will be eligible for a NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant if the maximum household income does not exceed $163,050 gross annually or $13,588 gross monthly. Applicants must show proof of age.

- Applicants receiving Social Security Disability (SSD) benefits, with households of one or two members only, will be eligible for a NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant if the maximum household income does not exceed $163,050 gross annually or $13,588 gross monthly. Applicants must show proof of current SSD benefit.



Income Guidelines

LIHEAP/USF
Income Guidelines

HOUSEHOLD SIZE / GROSS MONTHLY INCOME

1 person / $0 - $4,273
2 people / $0 - $5,587
3 people / $0 - $6,902
4 people / $0 - $8,217
5 people / $0 - $9,532
6 people / $0 - $10,846
7 people / $0 - $11,093
8 people / $0 - $11,339
9 people / $0 - $11,586
10 people / $0 - $11,832
11 people / $0 - $12,079
12 people / $0 - $12,325

For households greater than 12 people, add $246 per additional person

NJ BPU PAGE Program / NJ SHARES SMART Utility Assistance Program
Income Guidelines

HOUSEHOLD SIZE / GROSS MONTHLY INCOME

1 person / $0 - $7,121
2 people / $0 - $9,313
3 people / $0 - $11,504
4 people / $0 - $13,695
5 people / $0 - $15,886
6 people / $0 - $18,077
7 people / $0- $18,488
8 people / $0 - $18,899
9 people / $0 - $19,310
10 people / $0 - $19,721
11 people / $0 - $20,132
12 people / $0 - $20,543

For households greater than 12 people, add $410 per additional person

NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant
Income Guidelines

HOUSEHOLD SIZE / GROSS MONTHLY INCOME

1 person / $4,274 - $7,121
2 people / $5,588 - $9,313
3 people / $6,903 - $11,504
4 people / $8,218 - $13,695
5 people / $9,533 - $15,886
6 people / $10,847 - $18,077
7 people / $11,094 - $18,488
8 people / $11,340 - $18,899
9 people / $11,587 - $19,310
10 people / $11,833 - $19,721
11 people / $12,080 - $20,132
12 people / $12,326 - $20,543

For households greater than 12 people, add $410 per additional person

NJ SHARES Energy Assistance Grant Policies and Procedures

Residence and Billing

- Account holder must be a New Jersey resident with an active residential account.
- Account holder and all household members must reside at the service address listed on the utility bill. A family member, spouse or significant other can apply for assistance provided they reside in the home.
    - If multiple names appear on the utility bill, and those people are either not disclosed on the application or unaccounted for as part of the household, we will require additional documentation.

Status with Energy Providers

The gas or electric Account holder must be "at risk" of service termination, which can be any of the following:

- Account holder has received a written notice of arrears (can be a bill showing arrears balance)
- Account holder has a written termination or shut off notice
- Account holder's service is shut off

Required Documentation

SHARES must receive these documents within 14 days of the application date to process an application.

If a household has received assistance from any of the programs below within the current calendar year, they **may** provide the SHARES application number (not required) received instead of providing income and ID for the household.

- Atlantic City Electric Customer Relief Fund
- Atlantic City Electric Smart Energy Network Meter Pan Grant
- FirstEnergy Repairs Assistance Program
- New Jersey American Water H2O Help to Others Program
- NJ BPU PAGE Program
- NJ SHARES SMART Utility Assistance Program
- NJ SHARES Mortgage Assistance, Rent, and Taxes (NJ SMART) Program

Personal ID for the Applicant and All Household Members

Any unexpired government issued ID. ID must be provided for the applicant and all household members. If an adult (18 and older) household member's ID shows a different last name than applicant, additional proof of residency is required. If the address is listed on the ID provided and it does not match the service address, additional proof of residency is required.

Proof of Residency

If any documentation provided throughout the application process includes an address that does not match the service address, further proof of residency will be required. To prove residency, additional documentation dated within 30 days of the application date showing name and address must be provided.

Proof of Income

Proof of the last four consecutive weeks of income from the date of the application for all household members ages 18+. Any household members ages 18+ without income should be listed on the online application or Zero Income Affirmation form, if applying with paper. Proof of income includes:

Paystubs If paystubs cannot be produced**:** A letter signed and dated by the employer verifying paid in cash and the total gross monthly income.	**Self-employed**: Letter confirming the total gross income for the last 30 consecutive days.	**Unemployment**: Determination letter along with proof of receipt of last 30 days of unemployment benefit.
Rental Income: Current lease and rental payment receipt.	**Social Security Income**: Award letter for current year.	**Pension Income**: Most recent check or letter verifying lifetime receipt of benefits.
Workers' Compensation: Current bank statements showing identified direct deposits with recipient's name and address.	**Alimony and/or Child Support**: Proof of payment and frequency.	

Most Recent Energy Provider Bill

Provide the most recent gas and/or electric bill to include all pages. This information is verified with the designated utility provider.

Completed Signed and Dated Application

- The application must be signed and dated.
- If a volunteer, family member, or social worker is completing the application for an account holder that is elderly or disabled and unable to complete the application on their own a Power of Attorney document or letter of authorization will be required.