

**§ 143B-344.50. The State Energy Office designated agency; powers and duties.**

(a) The State Energy Office in the Department of Environmental Quality shall administer the Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Families established by 42 U.S.C. § 6861, et seq., and 42 U.S.C. § 7101, et seq.; the Heating/Air Repair and Replacement Program established by the Secretary under G.S. 143B-344.46; and any other energy-related assistance program for the benefit of low-income persons in existing housing. The State Energy Office shall exercise the following powers and duties:

- (1) Establish standards and criteria to carry out the provisions and purposes of this Part.
- (2) Develop policy, criteria, and standards for receiving and processing applications for weatherization assistance.
- (3) Make decisions and pursue appeals from decisions to accept or deny applications for weatherization, replacement of heating and cooling systems, and other energy-related assistance programs or otherwise participate in the State plan as a subgrantee or contractor.
- (4) Adopt rules, consistent with the laws of this State, that may be required by the federal government for grants-in-aid for the Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Families, the Heating/Air Repair and Replacement Program, or other energy-related assistance programs for the benefit of low-income residents in existing housing. This section shall be liberally construed in order that this State and its citizens may benefit from such grants-in-aid.
- (5) Establish procedures for the submission of periodic reports by any community action agency or other agency or entity authorized to manage a weatherization project, replacement of heating and cooling systems, or other energy-related assistance project.
- (6) Implement criteria for periodic review of weatherization, replacement of heating and cooling systems, or other energy-related programs in existing housing for low-income households.
- (7) Solicit, accept, hold, and administer on behalf of this State any grants or devises of money, securities, or property for the benefit of low-income residents in existing housing for use by the Department or other agencies in the administration of this Part.
- (8) Create a Policy Advisory Council within the State Energy Office that shall advise the State Energy Office with respect to the development and implementation of a Weatherization Program for Low-Income Families, the Heating/Air Repair and Replacement Program, and any other energy-related assistance program for the benefit of low-income persons in existing housing.

(b) The Secretary shall have final decision-making authority with regard to all functions described in this Part. (2006-206, s. 2; 2009-446, s. 2(a); 2011-284, s. 101; 2013-360, ss. 15.22(j), 15.22(k); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)