



**Central California Rural Regional
Energy Network**

Workforce Education and Training Program Implementation Plan

Portfolio Administrator: Central California Rural Regional Energy Network

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Program ID: CCR-WET-001

CONTENTS

Program Overview	1
Implementation Plan Narrative	3
1. Program Description	3
2. Performance Tracking	4
3. Program Delivery and Customer Services	4
4. Program Design and Best Practices	8
5. Innovation	10
6. Pilots	10
7. Workforce Education and Training	10
8. Workforce Standards	11
9. Disadvantaged Work Plan	11
10. Market Access Programs	11
11. Additional Information	11
Supporting Documents	11
1. Program Manuals and Program Rules	11
2. Program Theory and Program Logic Model	14
3. Process Flow Chart	15
4. Measures and Incentives	16
5. Diagram of the Program Linkages	16
6. Program Measurement & Verification (M&V)	16
7. Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC) Program M&V Plan	18
8. Multi-DER IDSM Pilots	18
9. SEM Programs only	18

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Central California Rural Regional Energy Network's (CCR REN) Workforce Education and Training Program (WET) provides job training and employment in the energy efficiency market for opportunity youth in rural, hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and underserved areas of Central California. This program targets prospective workers identified and defined by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as hard-to-reach (HTR) or located in CPUC-defined Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) or Underserved Communities (Underserved).

The program provides disadvantaged youth with training and paid career experience, delivering meaningful energy savings to residents of local communities by conducting energy assessments and installing simple energy and water savings measures in their homes. The surveys and measures are offered through CCR REN's Residential Equity Program (Program ID: CCR-RES-001).

Table 1: Program Budget and Savings

Program Budget and Savings		
1	Program Name	Workforce Education and Training Program
2	Program ID Number	CCR-WET-001
3	Program Implementer	Rising Sun Center for Opportunity
4	Portfolio Administrator	CCR REN
5	Program Implementer Type	REN
6	Portfolio Segment	Equity
7	Total Program Budget	\$10,836,433
8	Program Budget by Year	
	2024	\$620,346
	2025	\$3,191,510
	2026	\$3,736,125
	2027	\$3,740,625
9	Program Duration (Start Date - End Date)	3/1/2025 - 12/31/2027

Table 1: Program Budget and Savings

Program Budget and Savings		
10	Total System Benefit (TSB)	NA
11	(Total Program TSB and TSB by Program Year)	
	2024	NA
	2025	NA
	2026	NA
	2027	NA
12	CO ₂ e (Lifecycle, First Year, Net, Gross)	
	Lifecycle Net CO ₂ e	NA
	First year Net CO ₂ e	NA
	Lifecycle Gross CO ₂ e	NA
	First Year Gross CO ₂ e	NA
13	KW (First Year, Net, Gross)	
	Net	NA
	Gross	NA
14	KWh (Lifecycle, First Year, Net, Gross)	
	Net Lifecycle	NA
	Gross Lifecycle	NA
	Net (First Year)	NA
	Gross (First Year)	NA
15	Therms (Lifecycle, First Year, Net, Gross)	
	Net Lifecycle	NA
	Net (First Year)	NA
	Gross (First Year)	NA
16	Program Cost Effectiveness: Total Resource Cost (TRC):	NA
	2024	NA
	2025	NA

Table 1: Program Budget and Savings

Program Budget and Savings		
	2026	NA
	2027	NA
	Total	NA
17	Program Cost Effectiveness: Program Administrator Cost (PAC): (Total)	NA
	2024	NA
	2025	NA
	2026	NA
	2027	NA
	Total	NA
18	Market Sector	Cross Cutting
19	Program Type	Non-Resource
20	Delivery Type	Downstream
21	Intervention Strategies	Training
22	M&V Methods	NA

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN NARRATIVE

1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

CCR REN's Workforce Education and Training program (also known as Climate Careers) trains and employs youth in underserved and disadvantaged areas of CCR REN's territory. Youth can be disconnected from work and/or school and struggle to secure paid work experience on a meaningful career track. The program offers employment opportunities for youth that help foster personal autonomy, positive relations with peers and adults, and a sense of meaning and purpose, all of which build resiliency. Meaningful "earn and learn" employment opportunities, where youth develop relevant workforce skills while earning a paycheck, help instill long-term resiliency. The WET program embodies CCR REN's guiding principles of equity, community, and collaboration. It helps achieve all three of CCR REN's portfolio objectives of supporting rural equity customers, reducing

energy use and carbon emissions, and developing and employing local community members in well-paying, energy-related jobs.

2. PERFORMANCE TRACKING

Program performance is quantified and tracked primarily by the number of youth trained and employed, “externship” placements, full-time, seasonal hires, and participating youth’s hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, or underserved attributes. Table 2 below presents the key targets and associated numeric values to quantify and track program progress and success.

Table 2: WET Program Metrics/Indicators and Targets

Program Year	Youth Energy Specialists Trained	Youth Externship Placements	Full-Time Seasonal Hires	% Equity Youth Participation
2024	0	0	0	0
2025	36	28	14	100
2026	54	42	23	100
2027	72	56	32	100
Totals	162	126	69	100

Additional indicators will be monitored to assess program performance, including:

- Establishment of Site Offices and location selections
- Community partnerships recruitment
- Supervisory/support staff hiring
- Externship host recruitment
- Seasonal staff trained
- Annual site setup
- Professional development training workshops
- Permanent placement of youth after program completion

3. PROGRAM DELIVERY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

he program is delivered by Rising Sun Center for Opportunity (Rising Sun) under a contract with CCR REN. The basis of the program is Rising Sun’s innovative and effective youth employment model, Climate Careers. The program hires and trains youth ages 15-

24 from across eight CCR REN counties using this social enterprise or earn-and-learn model. The youth work as Energy Specialists supporting CCR REN's Residential Equity Program.

After working as Energy Specialists, these youth continue their employment locally, taking on paid externships in a wide variety of "climate-adaptive" roles at other companies and organizations in CCR REN territory as a deeper step into the world of work, with the program provider, Rising Sun, continuing to act as their employer of record and providing ongoing support and coaching. The Climate Careers model allows youth to earn competitive wages (starting at \$19 per hour), build essential transferable skills, gain knowledge and confidence, and support their communities. Early career exposure with avenues for advancement can potentially change the whole direction of a young person's life. By providing youth with their first green job, the WET program helps carry out CCR REN's key objectives of assisting rural communities in implementing energy efficiency measures and building local economies and workforces.

ENERGY SPECIALIST PROGRAMMING

Climate Careers begins with the recruitment of local youth. Staff partner with local youth-serving organizations, attend career fairs and other community events, and visit high schools, community colleges, trade schools, and universities, distributing collateral and answering questions. The program utilizes traditional job recruitment methods, such as job boards and online postings. Youths apply online and then are interviewed by program staff. Youth receive a job offer and complete an onboarding process, becoming Rising Sun employees, starting at \$19 per hour, with over 250 hours of employment before their externship. Youth must be between the ages of 15-22 (up to 24 years for a Leader in Field Training (LIFT) role), reside in the local community, and be available to work 4 days per week throughout the summer. Energy Specialists work out of a local site office supervised by a Site Program Manager and a Summer Program Manager, where they have access to inventory and materials, support, and training.

Youth employment begins with a week of paid training, including proper measure installation, soft skills training (teamwork, customer service, time management), career panels, design challenges, and environmental justice training. For the next six weeks, youth Energy Specialists are sent in teams of two to conduct Green House Calls. One

member of the team must be over the age of 18 years old, and one member must have access to a car and a valid license and insurance, for which they earn a higher rate of pay. Youth participate in at least five paid professional development workshops during the summer, including resume writing, mock interviews, cover letters, networking, and financial management. Youth have access to a Youth Development Specialist for additional mentoring and support, as well as access to a mental health platform, Spring Health.

EXTERNSHIPS

When the Energy Specialists' employment providing Green House Calls ends, their externship begins, with a goal of moving 80% on to externships. Externships connect our Climate Careers youth to career pathways in the clean economy through paid internships at trusted local companies and organizations. Through these opportunities, Energy Specialists and LIFT employees gain real-life, first-hand career experience in positions such as contractors, researchers, educators, event coordinators, outreach associates, troubleshooters, marketers, and more. This opportunity allows youth to explore a wide variety of career options in climate-related fields, helping them build their resumes and preparing them to be a part of the future green workforce. Once placed into a career exploration opportunity, they'll work up to an additional 150 paid hours within six to eight weeks. Externships have four pathways:

- **Managers and Community Facilitators.** This track includes government agencies, non-profits, and other community-based organizations. They connect with communities and/or manage projects with environmental and/or social benefit.
- **Makers and Innovators.** This track includes manufacturing products that use less energy, emit fewer greenhouse gases, and/or have other environmental benefits. It also includes entrepreneurs and startups developing ideas for new products and services to address climate change and its impacts.
- **Builders and Movers.** The buildings, infrastructure, and products we use daily likely contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. People who build, repair, and upgrade our buildings and infrastructure, transport, store, and package the products we use, their raw materials, and components, are on the frontlines of cleaning the economy and addressing climate change.
- **Thinkers and Researchers.** People on this track seek a deeper understanding of climate change and its impacts. They observe the impacts on ecosystems and the

organisms that populate them and develop ways to measure impacts and mitigate them through creative and/or science-based solutions.

The program recruits host organizations from our network. Previous employers have included Accenture, Brightline Defense Fund, Catholic Charities of Stockton, Central Valley Air Quality Coalition, GRID Alternatives - North Valley, HATCH Workshop, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Oakland Unified School District, Redwood Energy, and many more. Staff work with selected hosts to develop a job description for each opportunity and then compile those opportunities into a catalog. Youth program participants then choose the opportunities of most interest to them and interview with Rising Sun staff and volunteers to determine fit. The program then places youths at their host organization, with Rising Sun acting as the employer of record.

At their placements, youth are trained, supervised, and mentored by professionals like contractors, scientists, policy experts, writers, researchers, fundraisers, engineers, and more. Support and regular check-ins ensure the placement mutually benefits the youth and host employers. They conclude their externship with a group presentation on their experience and learnings.

SEASONAL STAFF AND ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

While the focus is primarily on our youth Energy Specialists, the seasonal managers and other seasonal staff also participate in workforce education and training, including the option to participate in externships for seasonal managers under the age of 24 years old. Many of the permanent Climate Careers staff began as seasonal managers, learning about climate change, grassroots outreach, operations, opportunities in the clean economy, and program management. Climate Careers represents a tremendous and rare opportunity for a young professional to gain early supervisory and program management experience in a supportive, coached environment with on-the-job training. Climate Careers has pathways built into its staffing model: youth may start as an Energy Specialist, return at a higher rate of pay as an Energy Specialist Driver, return for another pay increase and more training and responsibilities as a LIFT, and then come back as a Site Program or Summer Program Manager.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Seasonal hiring, youth recruitment, and resident outreach occur from January to May. Youth employment begins in June and runs through August (non-school period). Paid youth externships run from August to October.

The program also spends each year building knowledge of and partnerships with counties and communities we plan to serve the subsequent year.

PLANNED COORDINATION

CCR REN coordinates the program with the other Portfolio Administrators' (PAs) programs as outlined in the Joint Coordination Memorandum.

4. PROGRAM DESIGN AND BEST PRACTICES

The WET program represents an innovative and effective design that provides training and career development for underserved youth. Table 4 below summarizes specific program strategies and tactics to address market barriers to effective education and training of a local, rural energy efficiency workforce.

Table 4: Barriers, Strategies, and Tactics

Barrier(s)	Strategy	Tactic
Accessibility: Hands-on practicums are necessary for a complete skillset	Localize program services to enable in-person training	Coordinate with CCR REN Partners and mission-aligned organizations
Undersupply of trained local workers and an aging workforce	Hire and train in-community youth	Develop office/training site locations in numerous communities within the CCR REN region.
High costs lead the younger generation to choose alternatives to traditional education pathways.	On-the-job training	Offer training at no cost and pay a competitive wage for on-the-job training.
Soft skills training and wraparound services are needed	Integrate soft skills into technical training	Teach teamwork, customer service, and time management
Lack of awareness of the rapidly evolving green industry and career opportunities	Design training to be adaptable to the needs of green job markets	Review the curriculum frequently, seek feedback from the industry, and stay apprised of industry trends

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

WET draws on the experience of the CCR REN and Rural Hard to Reach Working group, which has developed over the last eight years, as well as Rising Sun Center for

Opportunity's 15+ years of experience in designing, implementing and refining workforce development programs, as described below.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT MODEL

Climate Careers' social enterprise, or earn-and-learn, model hires and trains youth ages 15-24 from across CCR REN counties to work as Energy Specialists serving underserved households in their communities. After working as Energy Specialists, these youth continue their employment locally, taking on paid externships in a wide variety of "climate-adaptive" roles at other companies and organizations in CCRREN territory as a deeper step into the world of work, with Rising Sun continuing to act as the employer of record and providing ongoing support and coaching.

This tested model empowers young people to earn competitive wages starting at \$19 per hour while building essential transferable skills, gaining knowledge, and increasing their confidence. Early exposure to a career with opportunities for advancement can significantly change a young person's life trajectory. By offering these youths their first green job, the program supports CCR REN's overarching goals of providing EE services to its communities, reducing energy use and GHG emissions, developing local workforces, and creating clean energy jobs.

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

Data is important for understanding outcomes, impact, and opportunities for improvement. Youth participate in pre- and post-program self-assessment and evaluation surveys and receive feedback from their managers. All responses, along with youth demographics, are tracked and analyzed. Youth participants and seasonal staff also provide feedback to improve program design.

KEY SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

Table 5 lists and describes software solutions used in the WET Program.

Table 5: Key Software Applications and Descriptions

Software	Description
CCR REN CRM	Provide a system of record for all CCR REN activities, including WET, for participation and compliance reporting.

Box / SharePoint	Box and SharePoint provide cloud-based storage that meets data security requirements.
Salesforce Field Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach event tracking • Youth and seasonal staff recruitment/onboarding • Youth demographics and surveys • Overall contact management • Reporting

5. INNOVATION

Not applicable.

6. PILOTS

Not applicable.

7. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The WET program supports workforce education and training to:

a. Expand/Initiate Partnerships with Entities That Do Job Training and Placement

The program coordinates with local governments, agencies, and others involved in workforce education and training in and around the CCR REN counties to make them aware of the program and build mutually beneficial relationships to make all WET programs more successful.

CCR REN is also a member of SoCalREN's WE&T Regional Workforce Alliance. The SoCalREN Regional Workforce Alliance brings together industry, local government, community-based organizations, training, and education stakeholders to collaborate, network, share tools and resources, and take meaningful action that will advance our region's workforce ecosystem. The purpose is to gain and provide insight into programs, policies, opportunities, gaps, and challenges facing workforce development initiatives in Southern California.

b. Require Placement Experience

The WET program provider has over 15 years of placement experience.

c. Require "First Source" Hiring

The WET program deploys a “First Source” hiring approach by prioritizing hiring from the local community.

d. Facilitate Job Connections and Utilize Energy Training Centers

The WET program facilitates job connections by working with implementer and contractor partners for the program’s “externships” and permanent placements, as described in the sections above.

8. WORKFORCE STANDARDS

Not applicable.

9. DISADVANTAGED WORKER PLAN

The WET program provides Disadvantaged Workers¹ with improved access to career opportunities in the EE industry, as described in detail in the sections above. The program tracks and reports Disadvantaged Worker participation by entering all required parameters of applicants/employees in the program database.

10. MARKET ACCESS PROGRAMS

Not applicable.

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. PROGRAM MANUALS AND PROGRAM RULES

The following sections delineate eligibility requirements and rules of the Workforce Education and Training program.

¹ “Disadvantaged Worker” means a worker that meets at least one of the following criteria: lives in a household where total income is below 50 percent of Area Median Income; is a recipient of public assistance; lacks a high school diploma or GED; has previous history of incarceration lasting one year or more following a conviction under the criminal justice system; is a custodial single parent; is chronically unemployed; has been aged out or emancipated from the foster care system; has limited English proficiency; or lives in a high unemployment ZIP code that is in the top 25 percent of only the unemployment indicator of the CalEnviroScreen Tool. “ (Decision 18-10-008)

1.1 ELIGIBLE MEASURES

Not applicable.

1.2 CUSTOMER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Energy Specialist candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Age from 15 to 22 years, up to 24 for Leaders in Field Training (LIFT) candidates
- Reside in the local community
- Be available to work four days per week throughout the summer

1.3 CONTRACTOR ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Not applicable.

1.4 UPSTREAM AND MIDSTREAM PARTNERS

Not applicable.

1.5 ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There are no additional services in the WET program.

1.6 AUDITS

Not applicable.

1.7 PROGRAM QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS

Quality assurance for the WET program ensures compliance with trainee eligibility requirements, training procedures, assessing and evaluating trainee performance. It also focuses on the quality of services provided to Green House Calls customers, and importantly, safety.

Specific quality measures undertaken by the program include:

- Youth applying for the program are screened for a place of residence in the required area of the local site office.
- All candidates are screened using background checks, and applicants for driving positions must pass comprehensive motor vehicle checks.
- Evaluating and assessing trainees to measure understanding and skill acquisition, provide feedback for improvement, and/or certify competency in specific areas.
- Program managers conduct ride-along and drop-in visits during Green House Calls to ensure compliance with all procedures.

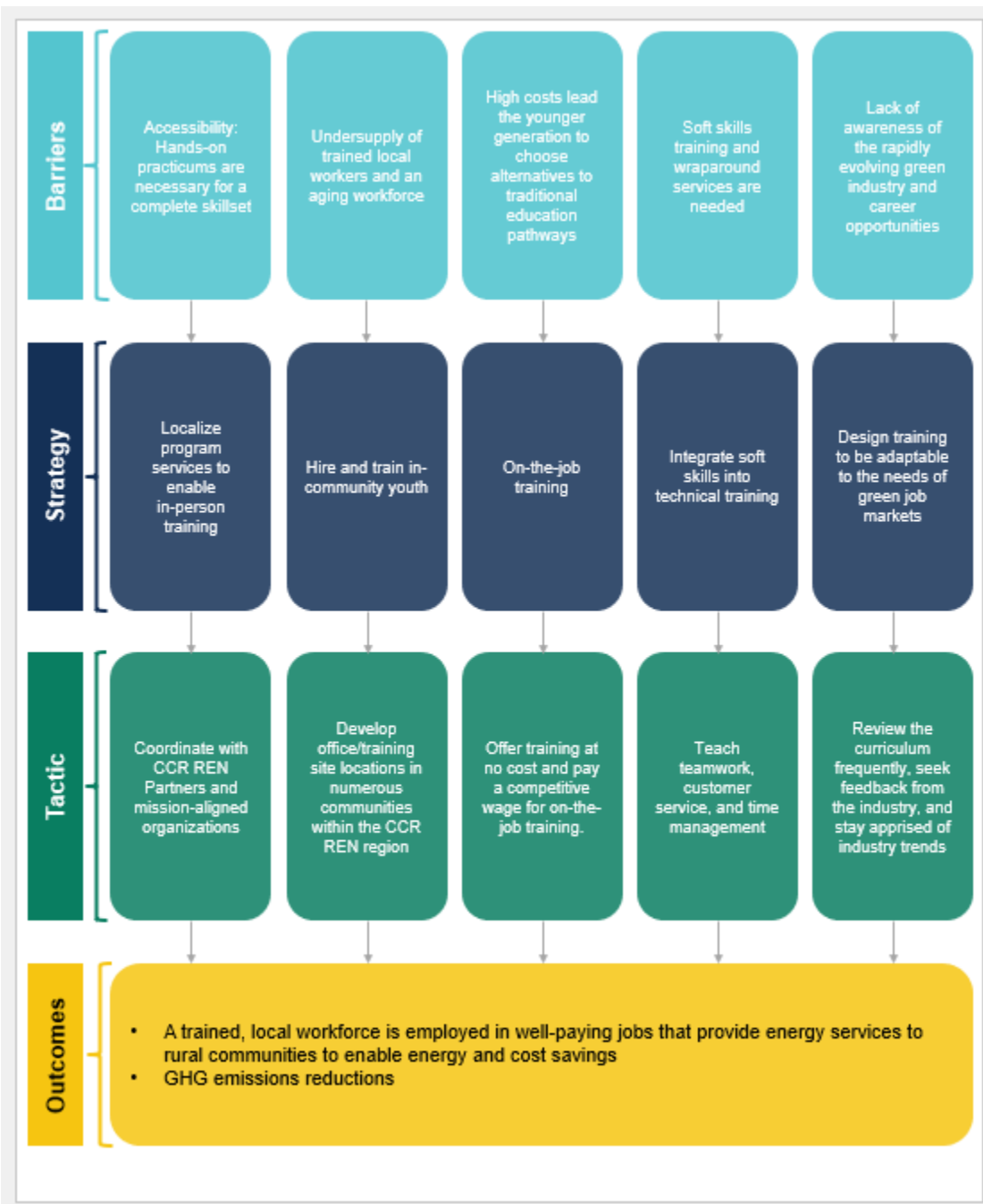
- Follow-up calls are made to customers to assess their satisfaction and gather feedback about the program and staff.
- All participants must adhere to safety rules and procedures.
- Continuous “check your knowledge” assessments and partner evaluations take place in the field.

1.8 OTHER PROGRAM METRICS

Program metrics will be calculated using the WET program CRM and database.

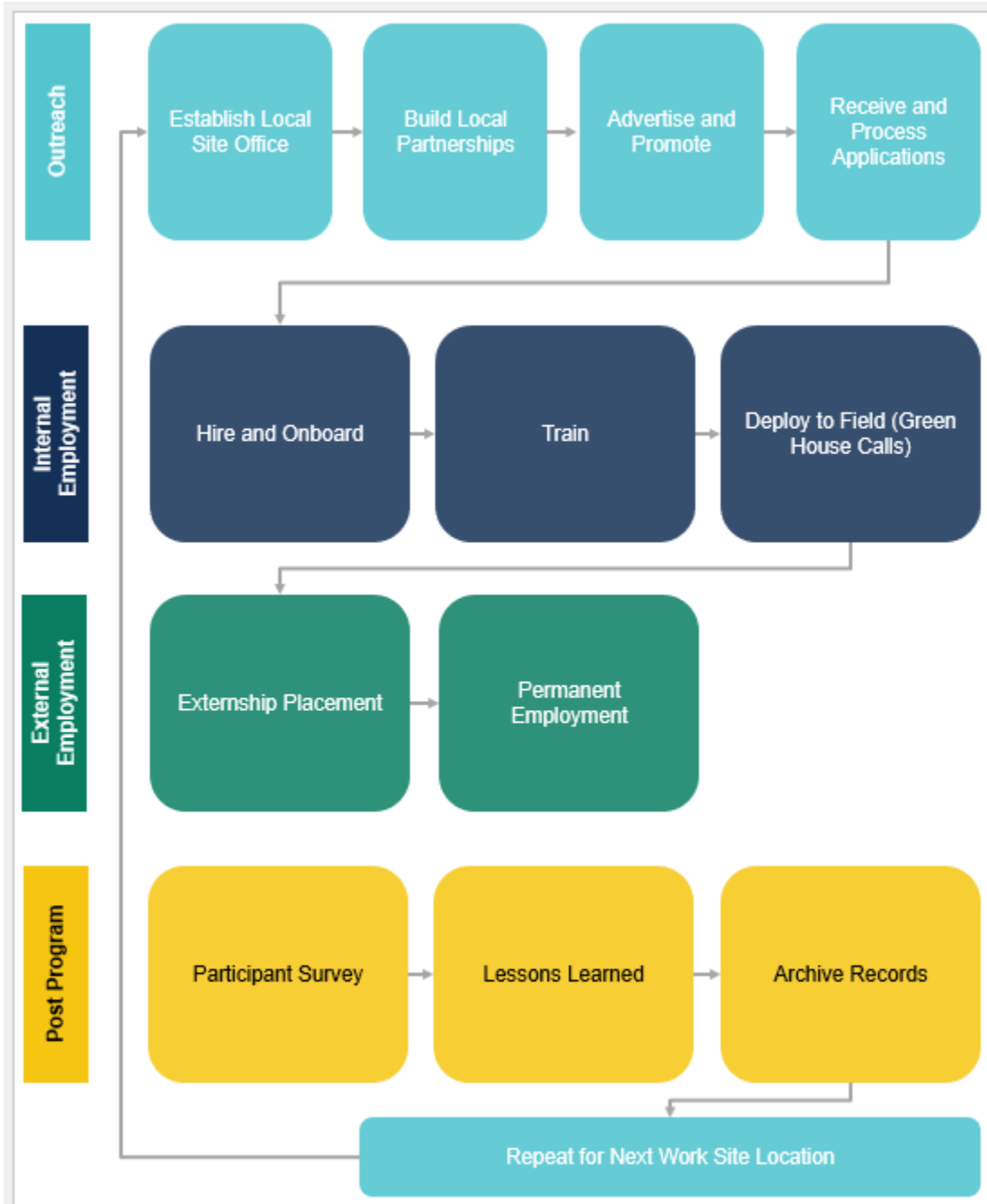
2. PROGRAM THEORY AND PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Figure 1: Program Theory and Logic Model



3. PROCESS FLOW CHART

Figure 2: Process Flow Chart



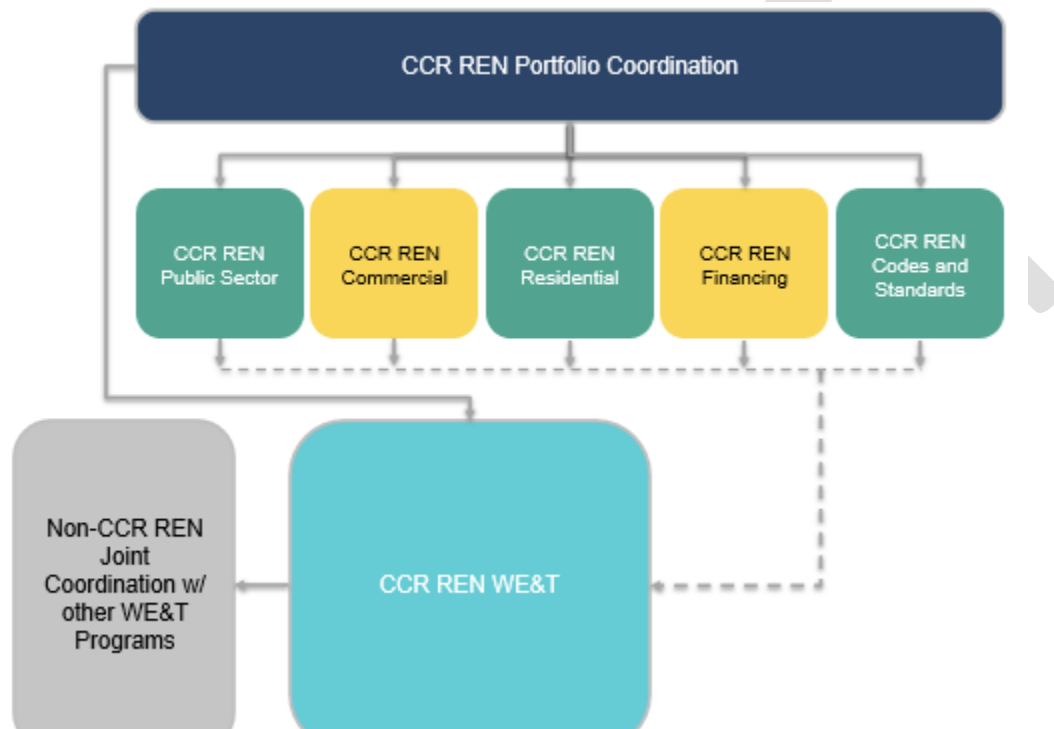
4. MEASURES AND INCENTIVES

There are no measures or incentives in WET.

5. DIAGRAM OF PROGRAM (LINKAGES)

CCR REN's WET program is coordinated both internally within the CCR REN program portfolio, and externally with other WET programs. Figure 3 is a graphic representation of these linkages.

Figure 3: Diagram of Program Linkages



6. PROGRAM MEASUREMENT & VERIFICATION (M&V)

A. DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

WET uses the following data collection strategies in the program design to support near-term feedback and internal performance analysis. Independent evaluators also retain all data collected to support future Evaluation, Measurement and Verification (EM&V) of the program.

B. METHODS USED TO QUANTIFY AND REPORT AGAINST PERFORMANCE METRICS

SJVCEO, CCR REN's assigned program Quality Control lead, consults with the program provider to review the completed work on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Table 6 below lists review items and frequency of evaluation.

Table 6: M&V Timeline, Actions, and Key Performance Indicators

Timeline	Action	Key Performance Indicators
Monthly	Meet with the program lead to review program progress, discuss emerging barriers, and deploy corrective actions, if needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Specialist Hiring Status • Energy Specialist Training Status • Program budget and schedule status • Community partnerships recruitment • Supervisory/support staff hiring • Externship host recruitment • Seasonal staff trained • Annual site setup • Professional development training workshops
Quarterly	Review goal achievement and trends no less than quarterly and deploy corrective actions if needed to ensure achievement of goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Specialist Hiring Status • Energy Specialist Training Status • Youth Demographics • Externships • Program budget and schedule status • Community partnerships recruitment • Supervisory/support staff hiring • Externship host recruitment • Seasonal staff trained • Annual site setup • Professional development training workshops • Externships • Permanent Placements
	Review project documentation for completeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of required documentation is available for review • 100% of necessary additional information for calculating and reporting metrics has been collected
Annual	Review final claims data and compare program goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Specialist Hiring Status • Energy Specialist Training Status • Externships • Youth Demographics • Program budget and schedule status • Community partnerships recruitment • Supervisory/support staff hiring • Externship host recruitment • Seasonal staff trained • Annual site setup • Professional development training workshops • Permanent Placements

C. SUPPORT FOR FUTURE EM&V BY INDEPENDENT EVALUATORS

CCR REN collects the necessary data to support future independent evaluation. Data is stored in the program CRM system to ensure that any requested data and reports can be provided promptly and accurately.

D. JUSTIFICATION OF NON-NMEC M&V METHODS

Not applicable.

7. NORMALIZED METERED ENERGY CONSUMPTION (NMEC) PROGRAM M&V PLAN

Not applicable.

8. MULTI-DER IDSM PILOTS

Not applicable.

9. SEM PROGRAMS ONLY

Not applicable.