**Technical Advisory Group for** [**RCW 19.405.120**](https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=19.405.120) **(Sec. 120)**

**Background**

Washington’s 100% clean electricity standard, the Clean Energy Transformation Act ([SB 5166, 2019](http://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5116-S2.SL.pdf?q=20210822161309)), enshrines four principle values into Washington electricity policy. These four principles are best captured by the acronym:

CARE: Clean, affordable, reliable, equitable

A key component of the second and last letter of the acronym, i.e. “affordable” and “equitable,” is Sec. 120. This section requires electric utilities to make programs and funding available to low-income households and demonstrate progress towards providing energy assistance to these households.

Utilities are required to submit program data and assessments to Commerce. Commerce is required to collect additional data and submit a biennial report to the Legislature, providing a statewide summary of utility data and assessments, and evaluating the effectiveness of additional measures to improve assistance.

Commerce’s first report was published in March of 2023. It is [available here](https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/file/1159460337791?s=qazu3yweu5w6udvnvw97qk5dwzop56p5). Commerce will submit its next report to the Legislature by Jan. 1, 2025.

**Purpose**

The technical advisory group provides programmatic leadership and guidance to Commerce in the implementation of Sec. 120. This includes providing constructive input on data collection during odd numbered years, such as 2023, and on data aggregation and data analysis in even numbered years, such as 2022 and 2024.

In past years, the advisory group teed up public discussions about “additional mechanisms of assistance” per Sec. 120. Commerce will not be having the advisory group discuss these sections of the statute this year. Advisory group members are encouraged to actively participate in the public workshops where these policy area focused discussions will take place.

Advisory group meetings are to be constructive, collaborative, and dedicated to advancing the Legislature’s intent to demonstrate progress toward making energy assistance funds available to low-income households consistent with the policies identified in Sec. 120.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

* Advise Commerce in the data aggregation process
* Advise Commerce in the analysis of utility data and assessments

**Structure and participation**

The advisory group will consist of at least one representatives from the following agencies and groups:

* Commerce
* Utilities and Transportation Commission
* Investor-owned utilities
* Public utility districts
* Rural electric cooperatives
* Municipal utilities
* Community action programs
* Low-income ratepayer advocates
* Environmental advocates

Commerce intends for the advisory group to be a small group of programmatic staff to encourage interactive discussions among folks most familiar with utility data. Participation is voluntary.

The contributions and experiences of past advisory group members are valued. Members of the 2019 and 2022 advisory groups will be asked if they would like to remain on the advisory group. Commerce may limit the number members on the team to encourage interactive discussions. A public workshop and comment period to review and provide input on the reporting tool will be held near the end of the advisory group process.

A complete list of advisory team members will be posted on Energy Assistance webpage once members are selected.

**Schedule**

Commerce intends for this workgroup to meet three times between July 22 and Sept. 31. Meetings will last roughly two hours.

Commerce will hold a public workshops and comment periods on the data and other aspects of the Sec. 120 report process. Advisory members are encouraged to participate in those workshops as well.