

## CERTA FAQ (Updated 5/20/2026)

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## GENERAL PROGRAM QUESTIONS

### What is CERTA?

CERTA stands for *Climate Equity and Resilience Through Action*. It is Oregon DEQ’s implementation grant under EPA’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program, funded by the Inflation Reduction Act.

OHA administers Measure 9 (Residential Weatherization for Low-Income Households) and passes CERTA funds to HHGP grantees as Participant Support Costs (PSCs).

### How does CERTA relate to the Healthy Homes Grant Program (HHGP)?

CERTA and HHGP are separate funding streams with different rules, but **they can be used together in the same home** if tracked separately.

Key differences:

- HHGP: broad health & safety repairs, can fund admin/overhead, state-funded.

- CERTA: only specific GHG-reducing weatherization, **no admin/indirect costs**, federally funded, stricter requirements.
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## Are CERTA-funded grantees listed on the program website?

A: Not currently, but this information will be added to the website shortly.

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## FUNDING & ELIGIBILITY

### What are Participant Support Costs (PSCs)?

A PSC is:

- A **one-time rebate** paid after eligible weatherization work is completed
  - A **direct benefit** for the homeowner/tenant
  - Limited to the cost of eligible equipment and installation
  - Not a subgrant/subaward and not an advance payment
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### What activities are eligible under CERTA-PSC funds?

Only **two** activities:

1. **Insulation & Sealing**

Examples: attic/wall insulation, weatherstripping, caulking, foam sealing.

2. **Window & Door Replacement**

Examples: double-pane windows, ENERGY STAR doors, storm windows, sliding glass door replacements.

No other HHGP activities (lead, mold, HVAC, etc.) may be funded with CERTA.

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### What is the funding cap?

CERTA-PSC benefits are capped at **\$5,000 per residence**, across all CERTA sources combined.

You cannot combine PSC funds from multiple CERTA programs to pay for the same activity

in the same residence (“deduplication rule”).

Extra costs can be covered by HHGP base funds or other funding sources.

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## What expenses are eligible?

Eligible:

- Materials (insulation, weatherstripping, efficient windows/doors)
- Labor and installation costs connected to eligible measures
- In-house staff labor with itemized hours, rates, and materials (no overhead/admin)
- Reasonable contractor charges

Ineligible:

- General home maintenance
  - Appliances or non-GHG-reducing equipment
  - Any administrative, overhead, or indirect costs
  - Undocumented costs (missing receipts/invoices)
- 

## Could we transfer CERTA funds for properties we own over to doing more residential work?

A: Possibly, but it will require an amendment and a meeting.

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## If a project involves work on both agency-owned and general-public properties, is this treated differently?

Yes. This would require different grant amendment structures. Let the HHGP team know if this is your plan ASAP.

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## Are CERTA grantees required to replace entire doors or windows, or are repairs—such as replacing broken windowpanes, degraded seals, or damaged door frames—allowed?

Grantees are not required to replace an entire door or window if a repair will adequately address the issue. Under CERTA, repairs that correct the problem and restore proper function or weatherization are allowed.

Examples of allowable repairs include:

- Replacing a broken pane of glass
- Repairing or replacing worn or degraded weather seals
- Fixing a damaged door frame
- Adjusting or repairing window hardware so the unit closes and locks properly

In contrast, full replacement is generally only necessary when the door or window cannot be effectively repaired, or when repairing it would not meet program requirements for durability or performance.

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## We collect only household income category (e.g., at or below 80% AMI) and not the client's actual income. Is this acceptable? We prefer not to retain detailed personal information.

A: This approach is acceptable and grantees do not need to retain actual income values, however actual values must be entered into the HHGP Household Survey.

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## Is there a required timeframe for updating income eligibility documentation?

A: Requirements mirror HHGP procedures. There is no specific timing requirement in CERTA guidance; an annual update is acceptable.

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## Are there restrictions on installing vinyl windows?

A: No. There are no restrictions on window type. You will need to document and report on the efficiency rating of the installed products.

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Is the conflict of interest going to be changed with added federal funding?  
We allow employees to qualify for funds. We have had issues in the past with federal funding.

We have not heard anything about this from DEQ staff. No issues with this for state funding. The main conflict of interest HHGP is watching is if the organization owns the unit.

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If only a pane is broken, can we repair individual panes instead of replacing the entire window?

A: Yes. Replacement of just the broken pane is allowed if it is the more cost-effective option to achieving greenhouse gas reduction goals.

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Can whole home assessments be done using CERTA funds?

No. This would need to be done with HHGP funds to perform assessment.

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## PSC BENEFICIARY AGREEMENT

What is the PSC Beneficiary Agreement?

A required, **signed agreement with the homeowner or landlord BEFORE any work begins.**

OHA provides the template (Exhibit A, Attachment 2).

It includes:

1. Background and project info
2. Eligibility certifications
3. Activity description
4. PSC amount
5. Completion documentation requirements
6. Equipment & materials ownership

## 7. SAM.gov certification (no debarment)

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### When will the Participant Support Cost Agreement be available to grantees?

The Participant Support Cost Agreement will be included in the amendment as an attachment and will be posted on the HHGP website/ Smartsheet dashboard by the end of May.

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### Do I need to run a SAM.gov check?

Yes — unless you use the OHA-provided template, which includes a beneficiary attestation.

If not using the template, you must check sam.gov and document the search **before the agreement is signed**.

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## DOCUMENTATION & REIMBURSEMENT

### When can CERTA-PSC funds be claimed?

CERTA-PSC funds are **reimbursements (from DEQ)**, paid (to OHA) only **after** work is completed. OHA is providing funding up front as a courtesy, but unspent or undocumented funds must be repaid.

Completion means:

- All measures installed
  - All required inspections passed
  - Work Acceptance Statement signed
  - Receipts/invoices equal the PSC amount
  - Any additional documentation requested by OHA/DEQ is on file
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## What documentation is required?

You must submit:

- Receipts and invoices totaling the PSC amount
- Household Survey (noted in several slides—sometimes called Satisfaction Survey in error)
- GHG data (square footage, year built, heat source)
- Work Acceptance Statement
- PSC Beneficiary Agreement

Anything undocumented must be returned to OHA.

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If a contractor submits an invoice that includes both CERTA-eligible and non-CERTA work, do we need a separate invoice for CERTA activities?

A: A redacted invoice is acceptable. You may remove or black out sections unrelated to CERTA work.

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Our program uses a form that includes both a lien waiver and payment request signed by the homeowner and contractor. The lien waiver indicates the contractor has been paid. Can this serve as proof of payment?

A: Yes. This type of documentation is acceptable. We also provide a template—vetted by the Oregon Department of Justice—for programs that do not already have similar documentation. You are encouraged to use our template, but you may continue using your existing paperwork. In either case, receipts or paid invoices will be required.

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If we are the property owner, do we have to complete a SAM.gov check on ourselves?

A: No. If your organization owns the property and will be working closely with OHA under this funding, OHA will be performing the SAM.gov verification.

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# REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

## What are the reporting requirements for CERTA?

### 1. Quarterly Expenditure Reports

- Submitted via Smartsheet
- Show CERTA and HHGP expenditures separately
- Due 45 days after each quarter
- Require total number of homes served with CERTA funds, total amount of CERTA funds spent in the quarter, and a list of the payments and descriptions of CERTA activities in the quarter

### 2. Annual Activity (“STAT”) Reports

- Narrative updates including GHG-reducing work
- Submitted via Smartsheet
- Mostly unchanged by CERTA, but narrative updates should include description of CERTA work

### 3. Household Surveys

- Submitted **immediately** after completion of each CERTA-funded residence
- Must include GHG data and all receipts
- Primary source of activity and expenditure data

Accurate reporting ensures OHA can be reimbursed by DEQ.

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## When will the CERTA household survey be available?

There is no separate CERTA-specific Household Survey, reporting flows through existing mechanisms. CERTA reporting options are currently available. Let the HHGP team know if you have questions after reviewing the updated Household Survey.

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## DISBURSEMENT & BUDGET

### How are CERTA funds disbursed?

CERTA funds (and all HHGP funds) are issued as **advance payments**.

Grantees may **only retain funds spent on eligible activities**.

Unspent funds must be returned to OHA at the end of the grant period.

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### As we braid CERTA with HHGP funding, can we (how should we) adjust our budget to compensate for admin costs?

There are several options for this and different grantees may do this differently. If grantees know how much they will need to adjust their budgets to support their CERTA work, they can request this now. If grantees will not know how much administrative support they will need to complete this work until a later time, they can request a budget adjustment then as well.

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### What is the timeline for spending down CERTA funds?

A: Amendments are being issued without changes to the underlying HHGP timeline. The spend-down period aligns with the HHGP grant's end date. Any unspent funds will be returned to OHA. Let the HHGP team know if you think you will require more time to complete the work described in your workplan.

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## PROCESS OVERVIEW

### What is the timeline for CERTA amendments?

The first amendment has already been sent out with the remaining 14 for “non-unit-owners” to follow in short order. Remaining 6 are being completed this week and will be sent out when ready. Email with amendment will come from Danielle Pompe.

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## What are the steps for completing a CERTA-PSC project?

1. Identify eligible low-income home and eligible measure
2. Check SAM.gov (document the search)
3. Execute PSC Beneficiary Agreement
4. Complete the work and collect documentation
5. Confirm completion, get Work Acceptance signature
6. Submit Household Survey + receipts in Smartsheet; report in next quarterly report

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## ADDITIONAL HELP

### Who do I contact with questions?

Email: [healthyhomes@odhsoha.oregon.gov](mailto:healthyhomes@odhsoha.oregon.gov)

Website: <https://www.oregon.gov/healthyhomes>