B

California | Interconnection Grade

Interconnection policies specify the processes, timelines, and costs associated with connecting distributed energy resources — like solar and energy storage systems — safely and reliably to the grid. This state's interconnection grade is based on the following criteria:*

Recommendations

- Incorporate the definition of "export capacity" in the rules and add clarity around which screens may be based on export capacity

- Require utilities to provide additional data in the queue to allow for tracking of interconnection process timelines

- Incorporate an inadvertent export screen as part of Initial Review

✓ **Rule Applicability**

Facility types and system sizes eligible to interconnect

✗ **Updated Standards & Export Provisions**

Incorporation of IEEE 1547-2018 and export provisions

✓ **Streamlined Review**

Use of simplified and expedited screening processes

✗ **Initial Review Screens**

Technical screens used as part of expedited review

✓ **Modifications**

Facility and distribution system modifications

✓ **Supplemental Review Screens**

Technical screens used in supplemental review

✓ **Timelines & Efficiency**

Timelines specified for review and other processes

✓ **Data Sharing & Reporting**

Provision of queue, timeline, cost, and site-specific data

✓ **Interconnection Costs & Requirements**

Fees and other requirements for interconnection

✓ **Dispute Resolution**

Interconnection-specific processes for resolving disputes

IREC

VOTE SOLAR

Freeing the Grid grades states on key statewide policies that impact clean energy growth, helping them identify best practices and benchmark their existing policies against other states'.

NOTEWORTHY BEST PRACTICES

This section recognizes noteworthy interconnection best practices, from among the evaluation criteria. Badges (🏅) are awarded to the states that meet these noteworthy criteria.

ENERGY STORAGE

Awarded to states that have included energy storage as an eligible technology in their interconnection rules, incorporated the concept of export capacity, and identified acceptable export control methods.

❌

TRANSPARENCY

Awarded to states that require pre-application reports, detailed screening and study results, itemized upgrade cost estimates, and at least monthly public queue reporting that allows for the tracking of the interconnection process steps.

❌

IEEE 1547-2018

Awarded to states that have incorporated the IEEE 1547-2018 Standard and identified or referenced performance categories as well as voltage and frequency settings.

❌

*For a detailed summary of all evaluation criteria, please visit FreeingtheGrid.org/Criteria

Freeing the Grid is a joint initiative of the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) and Vote Solar that grades states on specific policies that help to increase clean energy adoption and access to the grid. The state grades are intended to assist policymakers and other stakeholders with identifying policy best practices for enabling the growth of distributed energy resources (DERs), such as solar and energy storage, and benchmarking their existing policies against those adopted in other states.

Between 2007 and 2017, the project team released ten report cards that included state grades for both interconnection and net metering policies. In this 2023 release, IREC used updated interconnection scoring criteria based on best practices that have emerged in the last five years to grade all 50 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Future releases will include grades on statewide DER compensation policies from Vote Solar, as well as information on the important equity implications of interconnection policies.

For more information, visit

FreeingtheGrid.org