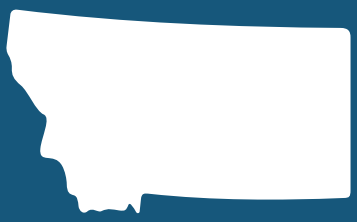
FREEING THE

GRID

Montana | Interconnection Grade



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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:*

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

Recommendations

- Incorporate the definition of "export capacity" in the rules and identify acceptable export control methods, including certified Power Control Systems
- Increase the system size limit for Level 2 review and use export capacity to determine eligibility for review under Levels 1-2
- Use 100% of minimum load as the default penetration screen under Level 2 initial review (cont.)

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.

Recommendations cont.

- Adopt a defined supplemental review process with specified screens
- Adopt more efficient timelines for Level 1 and Level 2 review and specify timelines for the additional review and study processes

*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.

IREC updated its interconnection scoring criteria in 2023 based on best practices that have emerged in recent years and issued another set of state interconnection grades. This 2026 report card uses that same criteria to grade all 50 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

For more information, visit **FreeingtheGrid.org**