

# State Energy or Climate Plan

## Description:

State energy plans (SEPs) are developed in order to provide guidance for meeting current and future energy needs sustainably, reliably, and cost-effectively. While the motivations for developing a SEP are likely to vary across states, it appears that most state plans address emerging environmental and energy security concerns. These two sources of motivations are most obvious in the use of Climate Action Plans (CAPs), which in many states also serve as SEPs.

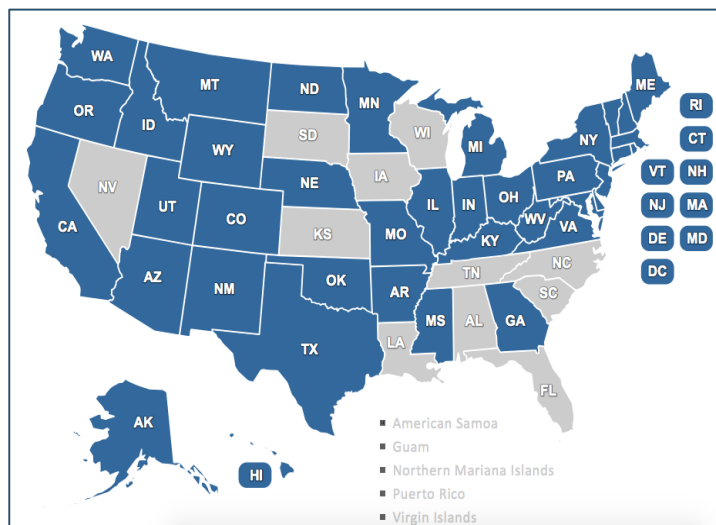
## Discussion of the Policy:

Plan development and planning procedures are typically mandated by either legislative or executive action, and State Energy Offices (SEOs) and / or Public Utilities Commissions (PUCs) generally lead the SEP process. Plan development typically involves input from multiple public and private stakeholders and provides a public comment period. Ideally, SEPs are comprehensive documents that set clear goals, action items for meeting those goals, and metrics for evaluating success. In practice, existing plans vary from state to state. Differences exist in the amount of coverage provided to existing policies and programs and the development of new policies and programs. Plans also vary in the range of energy-related issue areas covered. For example, while some plans focus on clean energy and reducing carbon emissions (CAPs), others cover a broader area of energy-related issues. Lastly, plans vary in the amount of attention paid to evaluating outcomes. While some set clear, measurable goals, outline specific timelines, and provide metrics and processes for evaluating success, others provide more general goals and action items. However, there may be an emerging trend towards increasing comprehensiveness and attention to program evaluation.

Because the effects of climate change are now observable, many states are already experiencing the impact of climate change. As a result, climate plans may also include an adaptation component which scientifically attempts to identify potential impacts to the state in the foreseeable future and propose adaptation strategies.

## Example State Programs:

To date, 38 U.S. states and the District of Columbia have SEPs. Of these, 17 states and the District of Columbia are either updating or developing new plans.



Source: [NASEO](http://www.naseo.org/)

- Missouri Comprehensive State Energy Plan  
<http://energy.mo.gov/energy/about/comprehensive-state-energy-plan>
- New York State Energy Plan  
<http://energyplan.ny.gov/>
- Washington State Energy Strategy  
<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Programs/Energy/Office/Topics/Pages/EnergyStrategy.aspx>
- West Virginia State Energy Plan  
<http://www.wvcommerce.org/%28S%280uowl15y2kryj2vnxbbor25%29%29/energy/energyplan/default.aspx>

The U.S Department of Energy's [State Energy Program](#) provides a wealth of information and resources for states. Among other activities, the Program also offers energy planning assistance.

## Key Components:

- Energy planning should provide opportunities for capitalizing on and developing available resources, human capital, and infrastructure. Plans should strive for comprehensiveness.
- Plan development should allow input by and consensus building among multiple public and private stakeholders.
- Plans should set clear, measurable goals, outline actions items (including policy adoption), set timetables, and provide metrics and methods for evaluating and tracking outcomes.
- In order to account for changing conditions, emerging technologies, and new regulatory requirements, states should provide for regular reviews and periodic updates to energy plans.
- Plans may include a climate adaptation strategy that seeks to identify the potential changes in weather, impacts on state resources and major industries as well as potential adaptation strategies to mitigate negative effects of these changes.

## More Information:

- Center for Climate Strategies  
[http://www.climatestrategies.us/policy\\_tracker/state/](http://www.climatestrategies.us/policy_tracker/state/)
- EnergyWire:  
<http://www.eenews.net/energywire/stories/1060006535>
- Missouri Energy Initiative  
<http://www.moenergy.org/publications/whitepapers/seppaper>
- National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO):  
<http://www.naseo.org/>

- NASEO SEP Guidelines:  
<http://www.naseo.org/news-article?NewsID=422>
- National Conference of State Legislatures:  
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/energy/a-policymaker-s-guide-to-comprehensive-state-energy-planning.aspx>