



IMPERIAL COUNTY

GOOD NEIGHBOR

COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENT PROGRAM



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Imperial County's Good Neighbor CBA Program

The County of Imperial (County) is committed to advancing our region to create a robust economy who is a leader in renewable energy, agriculture exports, emerging technologies, and more. The County will continue to position itself as a region open to industrial growth and collaboration with government, businesses, education, workforce, and community entities. In addition to an economic impact analysis, existing or new industrial businesses locating in the County are encouraged to opt in to Imperial County's "Good Neighbor" Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) Program (Good Neighbor CBA Program).

About The Good Neighbor CBA Program

The Good Neighbor CBA Program is an opportunity for industry to legally commit to the advancement and prosperity of residents in the County.

Benefits of a CBA

The Department of Energy states that "CBAs provide local governments the information they need to illustrate successful delivery of promised benefits, like job creation. Very few state or local economic development entities can easily quantify their outcomes when questioned by legislatures or the public about the success of programs or return on investment. CBAs are a vehicle to gather and maintain information that demonstrates jobs and other benefits actually materialize."

The Good Neighbor CBA Program will provide benefits to both the community and developers:

Key Community Benefits

- Local job creation
- Workplace quality and safety
- Support for local small businesses
- Improvements to infrastructure
- Education partnerships

Key Developer Benefits

- Community support lowers risks for developers by encouraging collaboration between government entities and local organizations
- Demonstrated community commitment can lead to developers obtaining private partnerships, public subsidies, and government grants and loans more consistently
- Community coalition may support the project(s) with public testimony and written statements
- Engagement and support for the community



The Six Pillars of the Good Neighbor CBA

While Good Neighbor CBAs with each company will be unique, at a minimum, they will include the following six pillar approach:





Local & Priority Hiring

Companies commit to local hiring, upskilling, and providing opportunities for advancement of local employees. Specifically, direct project jobs will be prioritized for residents of Imperial County. Companies are encouraged to provide preferential hiring for minority and tribal individuals, where possible. Hiring data including advancement of internal employees will be required on an annual basis.



Workplace Safety & Quality Standards

Companies commit to workplace safety and quality standards. At a minimum, companies must have an Employee Safety Committee, provide details of their employee benefits program and demonstrate that they pay a living wage. Company programs that support employees and/or workplace culture should be included.



Education & Skill-Building

Companies commit to supporting education and skill-building in Imperial County. This may include things like curriculum collaboration and in class presentations with K-12 and/or local colleges and universities, paid-internships, support of apprenticeships, scholarships for Imperial County residents, and reimbursement to their employees for pre-approved professional development.





Community Engagement

Companies commit to consistent engagement with the community of Imperial County. At a minimum, companies will provide project updates quarterly through a community meeting, or an update posted to the company website on a publicly accessible community engagement page. Any commitment to annual engagement/resources including volunteerism or donations to Imperial County organizations should be included.



Advancing Infrastructure

Companies commit to supporting infrastructure such as transportation and road improvements in their operating areas. Details for any planned improvements, in the next two years, should be included. Water conservation will be prioritized and any conservation practices above and beyond permitting requirements will be shared in this CBA. Companies are encouraged to have conservation and sustainability goals and include tracking metrics as part of their good neighbor commitments.



Supporting the Local Economy

Companies commit to using Imperial County for the point-of-sale use tax, where possible. Additionally, companies will prioritize procurement from local vendors and services. A summary of impact from any existing contracts is encouraged. Lithium extraction companies commit to participating in the Lithium Extraction Excise Tax, as outlined in SB125.



Establishing a Good Neighbor CBA with the County of Imperial

To establish a Good Neighbor CBA with Imperial County, a company commits to meeting or exceeding the County’s six pillar standards. A company may seek to establish a Good Neighbor CBA for the company as a whole or for an individual project.

Additionally, the company commits to a minimum of five Community Engagement Meetings (CEM’s) to align the community’s feedback and needs with the company’s commitment to being a good neighbor. CEM’s will be directly with the respective community organization(s) and are not required to be public forums. During CEM’s, a company should meet with at least one representative from the following community organizations: agriculture, commerce, education, environmental, faith-based, health and wellness, labor, location-based community groups, Sovereign Tribes, and veteran. A minimum of seven out of ten categories listed, will be included in the review of a company’s commitment to the community. Additional organizations within the above categories as well as residents of the area where the company operates may also be included, however, no one category should exceed representatives beyond a 2:1 ratio of the other categories represented, to ensure diverse community representation. Location-based community groups will be defined as organizations who primarily live and operate within the directly impacted city or area that the company operates. Organizations participating in each category will be listed within the agreement. The County may facilitate Good Neighbor CBA meetings between the company and community entities, or the company may work directly with those listed in their agreement.

The following template should be used to document organizations who were engaged for feedback, development, and review of the CBA. Those in support should be marked green.

ORGANIZATION/NAME	CATEGORY
■	Agriculture
■	Commerce
■	Education
■	Environmental
■	Faith-Based
■	Health and Wellness
■	Labor
■	Location-Based Community Group
■	Sovereign Tribe
■	Veteran

Examples of Support in Addition to Requirements	
■	Location-Based Government
■	Location-Based Resident



The company agrees to provide annual reports to the County of Imperial that document the metrics outlined in their agreement. The company will receive a compliance score each year, which will be available to the public on the County of Imperial’s website. Companies must maintain a compliance score of meeting at least 80% of the commitments they have outlined to maintain an active Good Neighbor CBA with the County of Imperial. After five years, there will be a review of the company’s agreement and the opportunity to modify, update, and renew their Good Neighbor CBA with the County of Imperial. During the renewal process, the company may choose to engage with the same community organizations included in the previous agreement or work with new organizations if the entities satisfy the required categories of engagement.

Companies participating in the Good Neighbor CBA will receive a digital badge that they can use on their own website, presentations, or marketing materials. A special edition badge will be provided for each five-year milestone.

Community Engagement Meetings (CEM’s)

At a minimum, a company must document the date, category, name of organizations, and attendees of each CEM that is held for their CBA. These meetings can be held virtually or in person. Below is an example of a table that may be used to document the CEM’s:

DATE	ORGANIZATION	CATEGORY	ATTENDEES
		Agriculture	
		Commerce	
		Education	
		Environmental	
		Faith-Based	
		Health and Wellness	
		Location-Based Community Group	
		Sovereign Tribe	
		Labor	
		Veteran	

Good Neighbor CBA Support Organizations

The final section of the CBA should include logos of all organizations in support of the CBA. Letters of support may be included but are not required.

Approving a Good Neighbor CBA

The Good Neighbor CBA will be reviewed for approval by the County of Imperial once all six pillar conditions have been outlined as described below by the company and a minimum of 70% of community organizations from the ten categories have endorsed the agreement. To meet the requirements of the six pillars, a company must describe its policies, operations, or commitments that fulfil each pillar and agree to provide data/metrics each year to the County of



Imperial that document they are fulfilling the commitments that they have outlined. Approval of any Good Neighbor CBAs will be done during a public meeting of the Imperial County Board of Supervisors. Approval of a Good Neighbor CBA by the Board of Supervisors does not constitute approval of any project proposed by the company as part of its commitments described in the Good Neighbor CBA.



References

<https://www.energy.gov/justice/articles/community-benefit-agreement-cba-resource-guide>