§ 143B-344.50. The State Energy Office designated agency; powers and duties.

(a) The State Energy Office in the Department of Environmental Quality shall administer the Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Families established by 42 U.S.C. § 6861, et seq., and 42 U.S.C. § 7101, et seq.; the Heating/Air Repair and Replacement Program established by the Secretary under G.S. 143B-344.46; and any other energy-related assistance program for the benefit of low-income persons in existing housing. The State Energy Office shall exercise the following powers and duties:

1. Establish standards and criteria to carry out the provisions and purposes of this Part.
2. Develop policy, criteria, and standards for receiving and processing applications for weatherization assistance.
3. Make decisions and pursue appeals from decisions to accept or deny applications for weatherization, replacement of heating and cooling systems, and other energy-related assistance programs or otherwise participate in the State plan as a subgrantee or contractor.
4. Adopt rules, consistent with the laws of this State, that may be required by the federal government for grants-in-aid for the Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Families, the Heating/Air Repair and Replacement Program, or other energy-related assistance programs for the benefit of low-income residents in existing housing. This section shall be liberally construed in order that this State and its citizens may benefit from such grants-in-aid.
5. Establish procedures for the submission of periodic reports by any community action agency or other agency or entity authorized to manage a weatherization project, replacement of heating and cooling systems, or other energy-related assistance project.
6. Implement criteria for periodic review of weatherization, replacement of heating and cooling systems, or other energy-related programs in existing housing for low-income households.
7. Solicit, accept, hold, and administer on behalf of this State any grants or devises of money, securities, or property for the benefit of low-income residents in existing housing for use by the Department or other agencies in the administration of this Part.
8. Create a Policy Advisory Council within the State Energy Office that shall advise the State Energy Office with respect to the development and implementation of a Weatherization Program for Low-Income Families, the Heating/Air Repair and Replacement Program, and any other energy-related assistance program for the benefit of low-income persons in existing housing.

(b) The Secretary shall have final decision-making authority with regard to all functions described in this Part. (2006-206, s. 2; 2009-446, s. 2(a); 2011-284, s. 101; 2013-360, ss. 15.22(j), 15.22(k); 2015-241, s. 14.30(u).)