

1.2 **Definitions**

“Common Study Area” shall mean a discrete portion of the Company EPS where the operation of multiple Interconnecting Customers’ Facilities may have cumulative impacts and/or require Common System Modifications on the Company’s EPS. The Company shall determine if Interconnection Applications fall within a Common Study Area. A Common Study Area may include, but is not limited to, an area that: (1) is fed from a common substation, or (2) is bounded by a circuit.

“Common System Modification” shall mean any System Modification that is required for more than one Interconnecting Customer’s Facility as determined by the Company.

“Group” shall mean two or more Interconnection Applications for proposed Facilities (by the same or different Interconnecting Customer(s)) in a Common Study Area. The order of Interconnection Applications within a Group shall be determined on the basis of the date the Interconnection Applications were deemed complete by the Company. References to a Group member shall mean the Interconnecting Customer for the Facility included within the Group. Where Group consent is required by the Company, such consent shall be in writing signed by duly authorized members of each Group member, in form and substance satisfactory to the Company.

“Group Study” shall mean a single study that may be performed at the same time for a Group, instead of each Interconnection Application undergoing such study separately (either sequentially or in parallel as determined by the Company). The Company may elect to commence a Group Study before or after the Preceding Study, if any, is completed. The Group Study will produce an estimate for the cost of System Modifications to the Company’s EPS within +/- 25%, or, to the extent a Group unanimously requests an extended Group Study (“Extended Group Study”), the Group Study will produce an estimate for the cost of System Modifications to the Company’s EPS within +/- 15%. An Extended Group Study will only be performed to the extent that a Group requests such a study by unanimous consent using the Extended Group Study Consent Form at Exhibit ____.

“Preceding Study” shall mean any study of an Interconnecting Customer’s Facility within a Common Study Area that is in process prior to the formation of a Group. A Preceding Study shall be considered to be “in process” from the effective date of the fully executed study agreement through the effective date of a fully executed Interconnection Service Agreement. A Group Study will be considered a Preceding Study for any Interconnection Applications received after the Group Window (defined in Section 3.4.1.a.) has closed. Interconnecting Customers with a Preceding Study (that is not an on-going Group Study) shall not be required to be part of a Group or participate in a Group Study, except as set forth in Section 3.4.1.e) below.

3.4 **Standard Process**

3.4.1. Group Study Process

- a) The Company may form a Group any time it receives more than one Interconnection Application through the Expedited or Standard Process for proposed Facilities in a Common Study Area. The Company will notify Interconnecting Customers prior to the commencement of any individual Impact Study that such Interconnecting Customer's application will be processed as part of a Group ("Group Notification"). The Company may also, in its sole judgment, conduct a study for an Interconnecting Customer's Facility separate from the Group even if such Facility is within the Common Study Area. The Company will accept completed Interconnection Applications in a Common Study Area for a period not to exceed 40 days¹ from the first Group Notification ("Group Window"). The Company, in its sole discretion, may close the Group Window earlier. If an application is not deemed complete within the Group Window, it will not be included in the Group, even if the application was received within the Group Window.
- b) The Interconnection Application receipt and review, and all initial screening reviews (preceding an Impact Study) ("Required Reviews"), for each potential Group member is subject to the applicable Time Frames set forth in the Interconnection Tariff, Tables 2 to 4, as applicable. The Time Frames for the Group set forth in this Section 3.4.1 may be affected and/or suspended if there is a Preceding Study, and as otherwise set forth in this Interconnection Tariff.

The Company shall invite all potential Group members to a Group Study scoping meeting to discuss the feasibility of the Group Study ("Scoping Meeting"). The Scoping Meeting will be set by the Company and held within 20 days of the end of the Group Window or the Company's completion of the Required Reviews, whichever is later. The Company reserves the right to add Group members after the Group Window and/or Scoping Meeting for critical or compelling business cases and all Group members will be informed immediately of the changes.

- c) Group members shall have 10 days after the Scoping Meeting to notify the Company as to whether the Group member wishes to proceed. If a Group member fails to provide such notice, the Group member's Interconnection Application shall be deemed withdrawn and the Facility will not be included in the Group Study.

Within 2 days after the expiration of the above Time Frame, the Company shall provide notice to the remaining Group members that they have 5 days to opt into an Extended Group Study and provide the Company with the fully executed Extended Group Study Consent Form (Exhibit ____). Group consent must be unanimous to proceed with an Extended Group Study.

¹ All Time Frames referenced in this section shall, unless otherwise noted, be measured in Business Days.

The Company shall issue the Group Study agreement (Exhibit _) within 15 days of the expiration of the above Extended Group Study opt-in period. There will be no changes or modifications to the scope of the Group Study allowed once the Company sends the Group Study agreement to the Group, except as provided in subsection j) below. The Company may include an attachment to the Group Study agreement with any special conditions or requirements relating to the Group Study. Group members have 15 days to execute the Group Study agreement and submit payment of fees in a form acceptable to the Company.

- d) The Company shall not be required to conduct any Group Study without receiving full payment for such study from the Group. Once each Group member executes the Group Study agreement and pays the costs thereof, the Company will conduct the Group Study in accordance with the processing Time Frames below provided, however, that the Company may exceed these Time Frames where a Group has elected the Extended Group Study. The Company will provide updates to the Group as soon as practicable if the Company’s study will not be completed within the estimated Time Frames below.

Equal to or less than 3 Interconnection Applications with an aggregate Nameplate Capacity of equal to or less than 10 MW and estimated aggregate System Modifications less than \$1,500,000.00	100 days
Equal to or less than 5 Interconnection Applications with an aggregate Nameplate Capacity of equal to or less than 25 MW and estimated aggregate System Modifications less than \$1,500,000.00	125 days
Over 5 Interconnection Applications, over 25 MW of cumulative Nameplate Capacity, or any Group Study with estimated aggregate System Modifications \$1,500,000.00 or more	160 days

Where there are other potentially Affected Systems, and no single Party is in a position to prepare an Impact Study covering all potentially Affected Systems, the Company will coordinate but not be responsible for the timing of any studies required to determine the impact of the interconnection request on other potentially Affected Systems. Each Interconnecting Customer will be directly responsible to the potentially Affected System operators for all costs of any additional studies required to evaluate the impact of the interconnection on the potentially Affected Systems. To the extent

any studies or System Modifications are required, all associated agreements will be between the Affected System operator and the Interconnecting Customer. The Time Frames will be affected if ISO-NE determines that a system Impact Study is required. This will occur if the Interconnecting Customer's Facility is, or group of facilities are, equal to or greater than 5 megawatts ("MW") and may occur if the Interconnecting Customer's Facility is greater than 1 MW.

- e) Where there is a preceding Interconnecting Customer(s) with a proposed Facility in an area that becomes the subject of a Group Study, any individual interconnection solution(s) determined by an Impact and/or Detailed Study that would require modifications to the Company's EPS that include feeder reconfigurations or new feeders may be superseded by the Group Study interconnection solution. This shall apply when a Group Study solution is being developed as part of an ongoing Group Study (or has been determined by such Group Study) and the Company in its sole discretion, prior to the execution of the preceding Interconnecting Customer's Interconnection Service Agreement, determines that there is a compelling business, engineering, safety or reliability reason for the Group interconnection solution to supersede the individual solution(s). For purposes of the Company's determination under this subsection, a safety or reliability reason may include the avoidance of constructing an individual interconnection solution(s) that will materially conflict with the Group Study solution necessary to accommodate additional DG in the Common Study Area, such that the Company would be required to reconstruct, deconstruct or otherwise materially modify the individual interconnection solution(s). The Company may suspend any applicable Time Frames for the Preceding Study Interconnecting Customer until the Group Study has been completed, including the issuance of an Interconnection Service Agreement.

However, to the extent that the Company has not identified a compelling safety or reliability reason for the Group interconnection solution to supersede an individual solution(s), the Company shall provide an Interconnecting Customer that is the subject of a Preceding Study with a Preceding Study Opt-Out Agreement (Exhibit ____). The Preceding Study Interconnecting Customer shall have five (5) days from the date of receipt to return the executed Preceding Study Opt-Out Agreement to the Company. If the Preceding Study Opt-Out Agreement is not executed and returned to the Company in five (5) days, the Preceding Study Interconnecting Customer shall be part of the Group.

- f) Interconnecting Customers may be removed from the Group at any time (i) at their request by canceling the Interconnection Application; or (ii) by the Company because of non-conformance with Time Frames or other Interconnection Tariff requirements. It shall be considered a Time Frame non-conformance for any Interconnecting Customer to miss an Interconnection Tariff Time Frame deadline (including, without limitation, payments due under any applicable Group Study and/or Interconnection Service Agreement), and no Group member shall have a cure or extension period of such missed deadline under the Interconnection Tariff unless the Company and all Group members agree to such cure or extension period in writing. In the event of removal from the Group under item (ii) above, the Company will send notice to the

Group member and, unless the Group member provides satisfactory evidence within 10 days that either the Group member (1) was in compliance with the Interconnection Tariff requirements prior to the Company's notice, or (2) obtained Group consent for a cure or extension period (provided, in this case, the Company has also consented), the Interconnection Application will be considered withdrawn, any study and Interconnection Service Agreement (as applicable) will be considered terminated, and the Interconnecting Customer must submit a new Interconnection Application request if they wish to proceed with a project.

- g) Each member of the Group shall pay a percentage of the Group Study cost on the basis of the aggregated system design capacity for each applicant's Facility (in MW AC). The cost for any study(ies) that are not common shall be the sole responsibility of the Group member for whom the study(ies) are required.
- h) The Group Study shall be performed such that System Modifications, whether shared or individual, and associated costs shall be determined for the entire Group, along with allocated costs for each member of the Group. Cost allocations shall be assessed on the basis of the aggregated system design capacity for each applicant's Facility (in MW AC) for any Common System Modifications required. For purposes of Common System Modification cost allocations under this section only, and for no other purpose under the Interconnection Tariff, if an Interconnecting Customer proposes an inverter based generation Facility with an integrated energy storage system ("ESS"), and the Company, in its sole discretion, approves the Interconnecting Customer's export limiting scheme for the integrated Facility (i.e., inverter-based generation plus ESS) (if any) ("Maximum Export Capacity"), then the Common System Modification cost allocation for that Facility(ies) will be based on the aggregated system design capacity subject to the Maximum Export Capacity. The Interconnecting Customer must certify its Maximum Export Capacity and provide all necessary documentation for the Company's review prior to the commencement of the Group Study.

The cost for any System Modification(s) that are not common shall be the sole responsibility of the Group member for whom the System Modifications are required. System Modification costs associated with the Group Study shall be subject to Section 5.3 of this Interconnection Tariff. Group member(s) will be responsible to pay any third party cost associated with the interconnection directly to such third parties. The Company will not be responsible to determine cost allocation of these third party costs.

The Company shall not be required to order any of its equipment without receiving adequate payment from the Group, or initiate any construction before it has received full payment from all Group members for such work.

- i) Once the Group Study is completed it shall be distributed to the Group, and the Group member(s) shall have 15 days to notify the Company whether they wish to proceed through the remainder of the interconnection process ("Notice Period"). If the Company identifies Facilities in the Group that would not require Common System Modifications independent of whether or not the other Group members' Facilities move forward with interconnection, those Interconnecting Customer(s) will move forward with the interconnection process outside of the Group. Provided the Group membership does not change, the Company will send an executable Interconnection

Service Agreement to each Group member within 15 days of the end of the Notice Period if the Group has equal to or less than 3 Interconnection Applications, within 25 days if the Group has over 3 but less than or equal to 5 Interconnection Applications, and within 35 days if the Group has more than 5 Interconnection Applications. The Company may include conditions or requirements relating to the Group interconnection (including, without limitation, costs) in the Interconnection Service Agreement in a separate attachment and/or existing attachments.

- j) If any Group member requests a project change during the Group interconnection process, any potential need for additional information, documentation, time, fees, or the removal of that project from the Group shall be determined by the Company in accordance with Section 3.5 and the Company-specific technical standards. In addition to the requirements of Section 3.5, project changes that will delay the Group Study or the construction of Common System Modifications, or increase the cost share of such study or modifications for other members (collectively “Member Impact”), will not be allowed for any Group member unless the Company and all Group members agree to the project change(s) in writing, with the limited exception that a project change request that is solely to replace Facility equipment (in-kind, with no other requested changes) because the initially proposed equipment is no longer available will not require Group member consent (“Equipment Exception”). Project change requests will suspend the Company’s Time Frame for the applicable step in the interconnection process for the Group and each individual Group member.
- 1) A Group member will make a project change request by providing the Company with the necessary information and documentation for the Company to evaluate the project change and, except if it is an Equipment Exception, evidence of Group consent to the change request (“Change Request”). Upon receipt of a completed Change Request, the Company will, within 20 days of thereof, communicate to the Group member any study requirements, and estimated cost and time frames, if applicable (“Change Study”).
 - 2) The Group member shall notify the Company within 10 days whether it will move forward with the Change Study, which notice shall include evidence of Group consent to the Change Study (except if it is an Equipment Exception) and payment for the estimated study costs. If the Group member fails to notify the Company in accordance with this provision, the Change Request will be withdrawn, and the Company will continue to process the Group member’s Interconnection Application as-is.
 - 3) If the Group member moves forward with the Change Study, the Company will provide notice to the Group member of its determination on the Change Request within 10 days after the completion of any required studies (“Change Request Determination”).
 - i. A Group member with an Equipment Exception Change Request that has been approved by the Company will be responsible for any increased cost of System Modifications (common and individual).
 - ii. Except as set forth in item i. above, if the Company’s determination is that the Change Request is not allowed solely because of Member Impact

then the Group member requesting the project change shall either (a) obtain and deliver to the Company evidence of Group consent to the Change Request, or, (b) if the Member Impact is solely increased cost of studies and/or System Modifications, agree, at the individual Group member's sole risk, to pay the entirety of such increase in which case Group consent is not required.

- iii. A Group member shall have 10 days from the Change Study Request Determination to notify the Company that it wishes to proceed with the Change Request and, if applicable, to comply with items ii.(a) and ii.(b). If the Group member does not meet the requirements above, the Change Request will be deemed withdrawn, and the Company will continue processing that Group member's Interconnection Application as-is.
- k) Time Frame extensions permitted under Section 3.6.2 of this Interconnection Tariff that may result in Member Impact will not be allowed for any Group member unless the Company and all Group members agree to the extension in writing. Extension requests will suspend the Company's Time Frame for the applicable step in the interconnection process for the Group and each individual Group member. A Group member will make a time frame extension request by providing the Company with evidence of Group consent to the extension request along with the necessary information and documentation for the Company to evaluate the extension request ("Extension Request"). The Company will review the completed Extension Request and, within 20 days thereof, either approve or deny the request. If the Company has denied the extension request solely because of Member Impact, the Group member requesting the extension shall have 10 days to (i) obtain and deliver to the Company evidence of Group consent to the extension request; or (ii) notice that it withdraws its request, in which case the Company will continue processing that Group member's Interconnection Application as-is (provided the Group member is in compliance with such Time Frames).
- l) To the extent that a change to the Group composition requires revised or additional studies, the remaining Group member(s) shall pay their cost, and the completion date of such study shall be re-estimated by the Company. The Company may reassess study costs and Common System Modification costs subsequent to a change in composition of the Group and any increase in such costs must be paid by the remaining Group members.

If a member ceases to belong to the Group for any reason, any payments made to the Group Study or Common System Modification cost from that member shall be non-refundable. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if all members of the Group withdraw from the interconnection process, any Group member may request final accounting of such Group member's System Modification payments pursuant to Section 5.2 of the Interconnection Service Agreement, provided, however, that the Company shall not refund any portion of such costs that have been expended or committed by the Company.

- m) Group members understand and agree that the Company is authorized to share each Group member's contact information and project details, except for unredacted

versions of one-line diagrams, three-line diagrams, and any other design drawings, with other members participating in the Group. Each Group member shall provide the Company with redacted copies of these diagrams and design drawings that can be shared with the Group in the Company's sole discretion. The Company may, but shall not be required to, copy all Group members on communications sent to or received from any Group member, including, without limitation, pursuant to subsections j) and k) above.