



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

Iowa LIHEAP Program Notice 21-04

To: Executive Directors and LIHEAP Coordinators
From: Christine Taylor, Energy Assistance Bureau Chief
Bill Brand, DCAA Administrator
Date: April 29, 2021
Re: Changes to Iowa LIHEAP Programmatic Operations Due to COVID-19

Effective Dates: May 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021

Due to COVID-19, the administration of the LIHEAP program is changing to meet the needs of agencies and customers. Changes apply to the *Iowa LIHEAP Policy and Procedures* sections listed below.

2.20 LIHEAP Customer Confidentiality & Services

Agencies administering the Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program, funded by the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA), may access the LIHEAP database for the purpose of coordinating benefits and ensuring no duplication of benefits occurs between LIHEAP and IFA. The agency shall access the minimal amount of information required to make the determination.

15.00 Crisis Program

To qualify for the LIHEAP crisis program, households must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (previously 175%). Households previously denied in FY21 because they were over income, now qualify for crisis assistance, provided their income at the time of application was at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (income re-verification is not required).

Subsidized households where heat is included in the rent are eligible for the crisis program (households were previously ineligible). Subsidized households where both heat and electric are included in the rent are ineligible because the household has no energy burden.

Changes made in Section 15.00 apply to all sources of ECIP funds (LIHEAP-21, LIHEAP-20CA, supplemental funds, etc.).

Agencies currently have the latitude to determine the amount of assistance to be provided, up to the maximum allowed per crisis component. Effective with this program notice, agencies will award benefits for crises in the same manner, as described under each component. For example, individual agency matrices or additional criteria for accessing benefits are not allowable.

Households may receive crisis assistance multiple times throughout the year, up to the expenditure limits noted.

15.10 ECIP (Energy Crisis Intervention Payments)

The combined limit of \$1,650 is eliminated.

15.22 NOT with Weatherization

Households at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (previously 175%) qualify for heating unit tune & clean, repair, and/or replacement.

Expenditure limit is increased to \$4,000 for heating unit repair/replacement (previously \$3,000) and may include the cost of an A-coil repair/replacement. Email the state LIHEAP office a completed Heating Unit Expenditure Limit Waiver Request to exceed the expenditure limit.

15.40 Emergency Delivery

Expenditure limit is increased to \$800 for emergency delivery (previously \$500).

Deliverable fuel vendors will be instructed to make the minimal delivery amount (established by the vendor), not to exceed \$800 (previously \$500), to assure an uninterrupted supply of fuel. For a household to qualify for an emergency delivery, the fuel tank must be at or below 30% full (previously 20%), or empty. Emergency delivery for an empty tank must be coded separately from a tank that is 30% full (previously 20%), or less.

15.50 Emergency Reconnect

Expenditure limit is increased to \$3,000 for emergency reconnection (previously \$1,000).

Households experiencing a disconnection are to receive a benefit in the amount needed to establish reconnection of service and pay arrears, up to the limit. The agency may request a waiver to exceed the expenditure limit by emailing the state LIHEAP office (no formal request form).

15.60 Service Continuity

Expenditure limit is increased to \$3,000 for service continuity (previously \$1,000).

Households with a past due bill on the day of application are to receive a benefit in the amount needed to assure continuity of service and to pay arrears, up to the limit. The agency may request a waiver to exceed the expenditure limit by emailing the state LIHEAP office (no formal request form).

15.70 Emergency Cooling

Expenditure limit is increased to \$400 for emergency cooling (previously \$350). The agency may request a waiver to exceed the expenditure limit by emailing the state LIHEAP office (no formal request form).

Central Air Conditioning Unit

- Verbal declaration from the customer stating medical need is acceptable in lieu of a written statement from a health care provider. The customer will not be required to state the medical situation nor is the agency to determine whether the medical situation is a justifiable one.

Window Air Conditioning Unit/Portable Air Conditioning Unit/Evaporative Coolers

- Verbal declaration from the customer stating medical need is acceptable in lieu of a written statement from a health care provider. The customer will not be required to state the medical situation nor is the agency is to determine whether the medical situation is a justifiable one.