



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

Iowa LIHEAP Program Notice 21-06

To: Executive Directors and LIHEAP Coordinators
From: Christine Taylor, Energy Assistance Bureau Chief
Bill Brand, DCAA Administrator
Date: July 7, 2021
Re: Policy Revisions

This program notice clarifies policy that will end September 30, 2021 and policy that will continue for the FY22 LIHEAP Program.

2.20 LIHEAP Customer Confidentiality & Services

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

Per LIHEAP PN21-04, 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.

4.20 Application Methods

Effective October 1, 2021

Applications may be made in-person or by remote method, which includes but is not limited to: mail, email, fax, online, and by telephone. Agencies **cannot** require that an application is made in-person. Online application submission **must** be offered by each agency.

Applications require the customer's signature. In some cases, such as when taking an application by phone, the customer signature cannot be obtained. In these cases, the worker taking the application is to read the Certification Statement (at the end of the application) to the applicant. If the applicant agrees that the information submitted is true, a note is to be made why the signature cannot be obtained. The worker's name is to be noted as well (in the signature or comments field). Agencies must make a good faith, reasonable effort to obtain the customer's signature.

Section 4.40 Automatically Eligible (AE) Households

Effective October 1, 2021

Applicants cannot be required to apply for the program in-person nor re-verify income in-person.

Section 4.50 Mail Applications/Home Visits

Effective October 1, 2021

Applicants cannot be required to apply for the program in-person.

Section 5.10 Eligibility Determination

Effective October 1, 2021

Households must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines in order to qualify for the LIHEAP program.

Section 5.41 Eligible Dwellings

Effective October 1, 2021

Subsidized households where heat is included in the rent are eligible for energy assistance, provided the household has a secondary utility burden.

Section 6.00 Income

Ends September 30, 2021

Hardship cases for those applicants unable to present income documentation ends. Missing documentation is to be obtained no later than October 30, 2021. Agencies must make a good faith, reasonable effort to obtain required documentation.

Section 6.10 Eligibility Period to Qualify for Energy Assistance

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

If applicants are unable to qualify for the program using a standard verification period, agencies are authorized to use a 30-day look-ahead period in cases of layoffs or reduction in hours. This applies to Regular LIHEAP and Crisis applications.

Section 7.00 Social Security Number (SSN) Documentation Requirements

Ends September 30, 2021

Hardship cases for those applicants unable to present SSN documentation ends. A Social Security Number Waiver Request may be submitted to the state as outlined in the *LIHEAP Policy and Procedures Manual*.

15.00 Crisis Program

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

Households must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines in order to qualify for the LIHEAP crisis program.

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, LIHEAP-21ARPA, LIHEAP-22, etc.).

Agencies are not allowed to use any type of matrix or point system when approving crisis funds, nor can any burden be placed on the applicant, such as a co-pay or requiring financial classes to secure approval of the application or disbursement of crisis assistance, unless expressly stated otherwise by the State LIHEAP Office.

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

15.22 Heating System Repair/Replacement NOT with Weatherization

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

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

The expenditure limit for heating unit repair/replacement is \$4,000, which 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

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

The expenditure limit for Emergency Delivery is \$800.

Deliverable fuel vendors will be instructed to make the minimal delivery amount (established by the vendor), not to exceed \$800, 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, or empty. Emergency delivery for an empty tank must be coded separately from a tank that is 30% full, or less.

15.50 Emergency Reconnect

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

The Emergency Reconnect expenditure limit is \$3,000.

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. Email the state LIHEAP office a completed Energy Crisis Expenditure Limit Waiver Request to exceed the expenditure limit.

15.60 Service Continuity

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

The Service Continuity expenditure limit is \$3,000.

Renter-Occupied Households

Applicants at imminent risk of disconnection (a disconnect notice has been issued or missing a utility payment under an agreement will cause a disconnect notice to be issued) are to be assisted immediately with crisis funding. Approved households are to receive a benefit in the amount needed to assure continuity of service and to pay arrears, up to the limit. Email the state LIHEAP office a completed Energy Crisis Expenditure Limit Waiver Request to exceed the expenditure limit.

If renter-occupied households are not currently experiencing imminent risk of disconnection, agencies should refer customers to the IFA program for assistance with arrearages.

Owner-Occupied Households

Households with a past due bill on the day of application, or at imminent risk of disconnection (a disconnect notice has been issued or missing a utility payment under an agreement will cause a disconnect notice to be issued), are eligible for the service continuity component of the crisis program. Approved households are to receive a benefit in the amount needed to assure continuity of service and to pay arrears, up to the limit. Email the state LIHEAP office a completed Energy Crisis Expenditure Limit Waiver Request to exceed the expenditure limit.

15.70 Emergency Cooling

Continues for FY22 (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022)

The Emergency Cooling expenditure limit is \$400. Email the state LIHEAP office a completed Energy Crisis Expenditure Limit Waiver Request to exceed the expenditure limit.

Up to \$400 per household may be used for:

- Central Air Conditioning Unit
 - Homeowners only (supporting documentation to be maintained in the electronic file)
 - Where medically necessary
 - Verbal declaration from the customer stating medical need is acceptable; customer is not required to state the medical situation nor is the agency to determine whether the medical situation is a justifiable one
 - Repair (including tune and clean), purchase of unit, installation of unit
 - No new installation allowed with crisis funds in cases where no existing central air condition unit is present
 - Payment toward a replacement unit is allowed but cannot exceed the expenditure limit. *Note – Expenditure limit waivers cannot be approved in this scenario as the intent of a waiver for Emergency Cooling is to address repair costs for existing units that exceed \$400.00 and are necessary to restore functionality of the unit.*
 - Energy Crisis Expenditure Limit Waiver may be requested for repairs necessary to restore functionality of the unit
 - Weatherization approved HVAC contractor required
 - Customers who have had central air conditioning repaired/replaced by a contractor not approved by the Weatherization Program and wish to be reimbursed up to the expenditure limit must present an invoice from a legitimate contractor

- Window Air Conditioning Unit/Portable Air Conditioning Unit/Evaporative Coolers
 - Homeowners and renters (must have signed landlord, owner, or property manager approval statement, to be included in the file)
 - Where medically necessary
 - Verbal declaration from the customer stating medical need is acceptable; customer is not required to state the medical situation nor is the agency to determine whether the medical situation is a justifiable one
 - Repair (including tune and clean), purchase of unit, installation of unit
 - Household may receive the number of units appropriate for their situation, up to the expenditure limit (Energy Crisis Expenditure Limit Waiver may be requested for unique situations)

- No household can receive a window air conditioner/ portable air conditioner/ evaporative cooler in two consecutive program years
- A garage without a restroom and a separate meter is ineligible for this component
- NOTE: Once an air conditioner is paid for with program funds and distributed to the LIHEAP customer, the CAA is no longer responsible regarding ownership of the unit.

ECIP funds may also be used for both homeowners and renters:

- Fans
 - Medical need is not required
 - Household may receive both fan and air conditioner assistance in the same year, up to the expenditure limit
- Transporting LIHEAP customers to cooling centers
- Other measures that may provide life-saving benefits to combat excessive heat