



**FY 2024 Louisiana Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Model Plan**

The mission of the Louisiana Housing Corporation is to ensure that every Louisiana resident is granted an opportunity to obtain safe, affordable, energy efficient housing.

The goal of the Louisiana Housing Corporation Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is to reduce the national and state consumption of fossil fuels and imported oil and assist eligible low income families reduce their residential heating and cooling energy costs.

**Components of the FY2024 LA LIHEAP Program**

- Heating Assistance 11/15/2023 – 3/15/2024
- Cooling Assistance 4/1/2024 – 9/30/2024
- Crisis Assistance 10/1/2023 – 9/30/2024
- Weatherization Assistance 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025

**Allocation of FY2024 Funding**

The percentages of funds used to operate each of the components are:

- Heating Assistance 25.00%
- Cooling Assistance 40.50%
- Crisis Assistance 10.00%
- Weatherization Assistance 12.00%
- Administrative 10.00%
- Assurance 16 (Client Education) 2.50%

**Eligibility and Monitoring**

- Program will use 60% of the State’s median income to determine eligibility
- Clients are eligible once for each of the 4 components.
- 39 Sub-grantees serving 64 parishes for utility assistance
- 4 Sub-grantees serving 64 parishes for weatherization assistance

**LIHEAP Heating and Cooling Benefit Matrix**

- No Changes.



## FY2024 Plan Changes from FY2023

- **Section 1.4** Removed the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) from programs that categorically qualify individuals for LIHEAP. Both programs utilized the same client application and income limits; however, the LIHWAP program and funding have ended. Also removed corresponding comment in **Section 1.6**.
- **Section 4.7** Added to the explanations “Crisis is First Come – First Serve” due to the nature of the need.
- **Section 8.8** Changed from No to Yes - Have you changed any local administering agencies in the last year?
- **Section 8.9** Added “Other – describe: One Weatherization Agency was removed for reoccurring poor performance and one Weatherization Agency withdrew from being a Weatherization Subgrantee. An RFP was conducted, and the territories are now covered by two existing Weatherization Subgrantees. This changed the number of Weatherization Agencies from 6 to 4.”
- **Section 9.1** Updated “There are 22 out of 195 energy vendors that are not set up to receive payments directly from the LHC.” to “10 out of 147”.
- **Section 9.2** Added the following language from the Louisiana Service Delivery Guide: “The notification of eligibility letter certified from the HES computer system with amount shall be (1) provided to the applicant at time of application or (2) e-mailed or mailed to the applicant. For home-bound and/or disabled applicants, the notification of eligibility must occur within 15 days of the date of application. A copy of the notification of eligibility letter must be filed in the applicant’s case record.”

When HES determines that an applicant does not meet eligibility requirements, the request for assistance shall be denied. The HES computer system generated denial letter shall be mailed within five (5) business days of the date of application and a copy shall be filed in the applicant’s case record. If applying in person, the applicant should be provided a denial letter at the time of application.”

- **Section 10.8** Removed “LHC will begin on-site monitoring in the Fall of 2022 (post COVID-19).” and Added “LHC will begin on-site monitoring in the Fall of 2023 (post COVID-19). Monitoring was delayed an additional year in order to revise Grantee's Subgrantee Monitoring forms/procedures and due to Grantee turnover and training.”
- **Section 10.11** FY2023 – 0 (Subject to next monitoring)



- **Section 10.12** FY2023 – 0 (Subject to next monitoring)
- **Sections 11.1 – 11.6** Updated entire sections based upon public participation, Policy Advisory Council, and public hearing comments.
- **Section 11.1** Added “Other – Describe: Comments regarding LIHEAP program administration may also be received via email, mail, or phone from the public, applicants, or employees throughout the year at any event or directly to the State office.”
- **Section 13.3** Updated – “LHC’s software reported 58,990 unduplicated households benefitted from Assurance 16 funds this year. The LHC is currently working with sub-grantees to utilize FY 2023 Client Education funds prior to the end of the 09/30/2024.”
- **Section 13.6** Updated to 58,990.
- **Section 15.1.c** Changed “LHC holds bi-annual meetings with major utility vendors.” to “LHC holds annual meetings with all utility vendors. LHC also holds regular phone calls and emails with vendors as needed to resolve issues and payments.”
- **Section 16.1** Updated – “LHC has worked with APPRISE, our HES software Developer, and LHC Technical Support department to collect the required performance data. There is still some trouble converting and matching the data received from the vendors to achieve an unduplicated count. The recent increased number of supplemental grants has also increased the difficulty in achieving an unduplicated count due to the extremely large data sets. In November 2020 (FFY 2021), LHC released the full version of the Hancock LIHEAP Cloud software which has promised improvement to Performance Measure tracking. In October 2023, we will begin requesting vendor data for FY2023 and anticipate continued improvement in data collection as we have increased Subgrantee training.”
- **Section 17.1.a** Added “Dedicated Fraud Reporting Hotline”.
- **Section 17.10 Removed** “Grantee attempts collection of improper payments. If so, describe the recoupment process: Overpayment or an ineligible payment made as a result of an error by the contractor shall be corrected immediately by notifying LHC of the error. The overpayment must be absorbed by the contractor. The contractor may appeal the cost of the overpayment or ineligible payment to the LHC.

Underpayment made as a result of an error by the contractor shall be corrected immediately by notifying LHC of the error. But if the payment was already made to the energy vendor, then the contractor has to pay the remaining costs.



Applicants who have received an overpayment or ineligible payment as a result of their failure to provide accurate or correct information, whether intentional or non-intentional, shall have the overpayment reversed on their energy accounts through the energy vendor.

When a contractor identifies an overpayment or ineligible payment due to applicant error, the contractor shall notify and provide support documentation to LHC. LHC will give the applicant an opportunity to dispute the finding prior to reversing the benefit through the energy vendor.

The applicant shall be advised of his or her right to appeal the reversing decision to LHC.”

**Added to align with the LIHEAP Service Delivery Guide** “Other – Describe: If the investigation determines that fraudulent activity did indeed occur, then the following steps may follow depending upon the time of discovery:

- a. If it is determined that it appears that false information was provided during the application process, the applicant file must be denied and the client notified in writing.
- b. If it is determined that the client received benefits based on false information provided by the client, it is considered an overpayment. The Subgrantee should attempt to recapture the funds and the client must be given an opportunity to repay the funds in question by either reimbursement to the Subgrantee/Grantee or recoupment from the Utility Vendor.

If the client makes contact with the Subgrantee, payment arrangements may be discussed and formalized per the Subgrantee's policy. The Subgrantee should track all payments and notify the client when the obligation has been met.

Once every attempt has been made to contact and work with the client for recovery of overpayments and the client has been unresponsive or uncooperative, the information should be turned over to local law enforcement.

The Subgrantee should continue to work with the prosecuting officials, and the Subgrantee can, if requested, receive and track repayments from the client. All repayments must be returned to the Grantee.

The Subgrantee must contact Grantee and keep staff informed as to the progress of the investigation, the disposition, and if any funds will be returned.”

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