

FY 2021 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 FY2021 LA LIHEAP Program

- Heating Assistance 11/15/2020 – 3/15/2021
- Cooling Assistance 4/1/2021 – 9/30/2021
- Crisis Assistance 10/1/2020 – 9/30/2021
- Weatherization Assistance 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022

Allocation of FY2021 Funding

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

- Heating Assistance 25.00%
- Cooling Assistance 37.50%
- Crisis Assistance 10.00%
- Weatherization Assistance 15.00%
- Administrative 10.00%
- Assurance 16 (Client Education) 2.50%

**No changes proposed from FY2020*

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.
- 40 Sub-grantees serving 64 parishes for utility assistance
- 6 Sub-grantees serving 64 parishes for weatherization assistance

Increases to the LIHEAP Heating and Cooling Benefit Matrix

- \$200 increase to the >25% Energy Burden Group
 - \$150 increase to the 18% - 24.9% Energy Burden Group
 - \$100 increase to the 10% - 17.9% Energy Burden Group
 - \$50 increase to < 10% Energy Burden Group
- ❖ Increased Crisis Cap from \$475 to \$600

FY2021 Plan Changes from FY2020

- **Section 1.1** Added further explanation for the dates of operation: “Any Heating assistance funds that have not been expended by March 15 will be reprogrammed to Cooling assistance. Any Weatherization assistance funds that have not been expended by June 30 will be reprogrammed to Cooling Assistance.”
- **Section 2.6** Changed the Minimum Benefit from \$150 to \$200
Changed the Maximum Benefit from \$600 to \$800
- **Section 3.5** Added additional statement regarding determination of benefit levels: “LHC reserves the right to issue Supplemental Cooling Benefits to applicants who previously received Cooling assistance within the grant period based on funds available.”
- **Section 3.6** Changed the Minimum Benefit from \$150 to \$200
Changed the Maximum Benefit from \$600 to \$800
- **Section 4.2** Expanded the LIHEAP program’s definition for determining a crisis to include public health emergencies. “A crisis may also include natural disaster events, public health emergencies, and supply shortage emergencies declared by state or federal government.”
- **Section 4.9** Changed the amount of the Crisis cap from \$475 to \$600.
Changed the amount of the equipment repair/replacement cap from \$475 to \$600.
Changed the amount of the in-kind benefits cap related to disaster relief from \$475 to \$600 per household.
- **Section 4.9** Expanded how Louisiana determines crisis assistance benefits by adding “In the event that Supplemental funds are granted or available within the year due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. public health emergencies, etc.), LHC reserves the right to develop a separate benefit matrix to deliver bill payment assistance that meets the need of the particular crisis based on the amount of funds awarded or still available. Applicants impacted by the crisis will be eligible for Supplemental funds in addition to eligibility for regular crisis assistance.”
- **Section 4.12** Changed the Year-round Crisis maximum benefit from \$475 to \$600.

- **Section 4.13** Changed the in-kind benefit threshold to not exceed \$600 per household instead of \$475. Changed language from *obligate* to *expend* in the following sentence: “The contractor should expend the funds necessary to resolve the crisis situation in a timely manner.” Expanded Benefit Level explanations for other forms of benefits by adding “In the event that Supplemental funds are granted or available within the year due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. public health emergencies, etc.), LHC reserves the right to develop a separate benefit matrix to deliver bill payment assistance that meets the need of the particular crisis based on the amount of funds awarded or still available. Applicants impacted by the crisis will be eligible for Supplemental funds in addition to eligibility for regular crisis assistance.”
- **Section 4.15** Changed language in the “Other (Specify):” section from *obligate* to *expend* in the following sentence: “The contractor should expend the funds necessary to resolve the crisis situation in a timely manner.” Changed the cap for minor repair or replacement from \$475 to \$600.
- **Section 9.1** There are 89 out of 322 energy vendors that are not set up to receive payments directly from the LHC. Changed to 86 out of 211.
- **Section 10.5** Changed Grantee’s strategies for monitoring compliance for Local Administering Agencies/District Offices to include “In the event of a natural disaster, statewide pandemic, or other emergency, LHC may adapt monitoring methods as a result of the event and the Agencies’ resources. Those methods will be determined based on circumstances surrounding the event and the associated timelines.”
- **Section 10.6** Added “(J) Written policies and procedures to detect, minimize, and eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse.”
- **Section 10.7** Changed language from “is required to conduct annual on-site compliance monitoring visits” to “conducts annual on-site compliance monitoring visits”
- **Section 10.11** Updated to be 7
- **Section 10.12** Updated to be 0
- **Sections 11.2 – 11.6** Updated entire sections based upon public participation, Policy Advisory Council, and public hearing comments.
- **Section 13.3** Updated - LHC is estimating 46,395 households will benefit from Assurance 16 funds based on preliminary numbers received from Subgrantees this year. The LHC is currently working with sub-grantees to utilize FY 2020 Client Education funds prior to the end of the 09/30/2021.
- **Section 13.6** Updated to 46,395
- **Section 15.1.b** Added On-site training “As needed”.

- **Section 16.1** Updated - LHC has worked with APPRISE, our HES software Developer, and LHC Technical Support department to collect the required performance data. LHC sent the vendor received data to APPRISE for assistance in determining the necessary calculations in March 2020. There is still some trouble converting and matching the data received from the vendors. This past year, LHC also had trouble collecting data from one of the largest electricity vendors due to software changes implemented in April 2019. LHC finalized the FY19 Performance Data in June 2020, with the help of Apprise. Due to software delays and COVID-19, LHC had to postpone the full release of the Hancock LIHEAP Cloud software which has promised improvement to Performance Measure tracking. This software will be released with the FY2021 Grant. In October 2020, we will begin requesting vendor data for FY2020 and anticipate continued improvement in data collection as we have increased Subgrantee training.

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