

26.1 INTRODUCTION

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) provides financial assistance to eligible households that are responsible for a home heating cost. It is not the purpose of this program to meet the entire cost of home heating during the winter season, but it is designed to partially offset the cost.

The program is time-limited and dependent on the availability of federal funds. It is subject to closure without prior notice when funds are deemed to have been exhausted. Funds are normally disbursed on a first-come, first-serve basis, but may also be subject to disbursement based on need. When this occurs, priority will be given to those groups of individuals with the greater energy burden as demonstrated by income, household size and heating cost.

Program operation is accomplished by mail-out applications, outreach, and an open application intake period for both Regular and Emergency LIEAP.

A. MAIL-OUT APPLICATIONS

The LIEAP mail-out contains an application form and an instruction sheet. It is mailed to targeted households, usually those that have at least one person age 60 or older, but could also include those with one or more disabled persons of any age, at least one child under age 6, or any household which received LIEAP during the last LIEAP season. These applications are mailed prior to the program starting date.

B. OUTREACH

1. The Department's Role

Outreach is a federal requirement to insure that potentially eligible, low-income households are made aware of and encouraged to apply for benefits. Outreach is accomplished as follows:

- Applications mailed as described above
- LIEAP informational leaflets provided to all appropriate agencies and interested individuals
- Contracts with Area Agency on Aging offices and the State Office of Economic Opportunity which permit senior citizen centers, local Community

Action agencies, homeless shelters, and/or other interested parties to receive LIEAP applications or provide information and referral services as desired

- Statewide media releases and provision of program data to information and referral service organizations

2. Role Of The Sub-Grantee Agency

If the sub-grantee organization wishes to participate in the program, the outreach role may consist of accepting applications from persons who have received a mail-out application, reviewing the applications for completeness, obtaining required verification and forwarding the completed applications to the local DHHR office for final disposition. Outreach may also include providing forms and assisting in the completion of applications for those who wish to apply but did not receive the mail-out. This service may also include home visits as needed.

Instead of receiving or accepting applications, the sub-grantee agency may simply inform interested persons about the program. Such activity involves providing the LIEAP Fact Sheet and referring those who wish to apply to the local DHHR office.

Sub-grantees interested in expanding their role may also provide follow-up counseling in energy conservation and/or money management.

C. OPEN APPLICATION INTAKE PERIOD

During the annual open application intake period, individuals who were not included in the mailing may apply for LIEAP at their local DHHR office or at any of the outreach locations listed in item B,1. The application is also available on the DHHR website and may be printed and mailed to the local DHHR office.

D. LIEAP FORMS

One or more of the following forms may be used in connection with the application itself and the processing of the LIEAP payment.

- The DFA-LIEAP-1, Application Form, is used to determine eligibility and the amount of payment. This form is also available in a printable version on the DHHR web site just prior to the opening of the program.

- The DFA-LIEAP-1a, Instructions for Completing the Application Form, also provides the current LIEAP income guidelines and directions for mailing the form and obtaining additional assistance.
- The ES-LIEAP-3, Repayment Agreement, is used to initiate the repayment process when a LIEAP payment has been issued in error.
- The ES-LIEAP-4, Zero Income/Home Heating Cost Verification form, is used when the applicant reports zero income.
- The DF-67, Authorization For Payment, is used to authorize Regular LIEAP payments on behalf of the applicant experiencing a heating emergency.
- The OFS-LIEAP-5, Authorization for Delivery and Payment of Emergency Regular LIEAP, is used as an option to the DF-67 when desired by the local LIEAP staff and accepted by the vendor.
- The OFS-67, Authorization For Payment, is a RAPIDS-generated voucher for the authorization and payment of Emergency LIEAP.
- The OFS-LIEAP-6, LIEAP Application Log, can be used by the county DHHR office to track LIEAP applications and insure timely processing and issuance of checks. Use of this form is optional, but the use of some type of log is mandatory.
- The DFA-LIEAP-7, LIEAP Fuel Supplier Agreement, is used to register all vendors who accept LIEAP payments.

In addition to the forms listed above, the LIEAP Fact Sheet is provided to local offices for distribution to the public.