


Ralph M. Perrey, Executive Director



**MEMORANDUM: LIHEAP 23-01**

TO: Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Subgrantees

FROM: Semoine Pearson, Housing Program Manager- Energy 

DATE: October 2, 2022

SUBJECT: LIHEAP Program Allowances for PY 2023

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This memo serves to provide guidance on LIHEAP programmatic updates for PY 2023 effective immediately:

- *2.7.1 Public Housing and Section 8 Clients.* Clients that provide an energy usage bill directly from public housing are eligible for half of the standard benefit amount. Subgrantees must also have a signed Vendor Agreement with the public housing agency in order to provide direct payments to the agency. Clients residing in public housing that provide an energy bill in their name directly from the utility provider are responsible for 100% of their energy bill and are eligible for the full benefit.

The “Utility Allowance” is used to determine the rent amount for Section 8 clients this may/or may not be a benefit directly paid to the clients. Those clients are still responsible for their energy costs. Section 8 clients that receive a “Utility Reimbursement” must provide documentation that their energy costs are higher than the reimbursement that is provided.

- Utility reimbursement amount must be deducted from the monthly energy usage amounts before entering the amount into THO.
- If a client does not fit into one of the two categories please contact THDA for additional guidance.
- The THO “Overage Amount Paid” is to be used in cases that Public Housing Clients pay an overage. The “Energy burden detail” section in THO must include the entire energy burden amount. This includes the portion that the housing authority is paying as well as the overage that the client pays. This total will be entered in the 12 month energy burden detail. The monthly Overage Amount must be entered into this separate field. This is the average overage amount or the most recent overage.

- Applicants with a credit or remaining LIHEAP benefit on their utility account may be eligible for a new annual benefit provided they meet specific eligibility requirements. If the household has a credit on Utility A (i.e. electric) and demonstrates an energy burden on Utility B (i.e. gas) this client may apply for an additional benefit in PY23 for Utility B.
- Households with only one energy source with a credit on their account due to a previous LIHEAP benefit the applicant is not eligible for a new benefit until the previous benefit credit is spent.
- Digital, electronic, scanned or photographed copies of signatures are allowed on applications and all forms. Agencies should have a dedicated email address used for clients to send applications.
- Verbal verification via telephone can be taken for application signatures and form verification.
  - The person obtaining verbal confirmations/verifications must document the following on each item verified:
    - Date of initial contact by client
    - Name of person taking the verbal information (subgrantee)
    - Person they are receiving information from (applicant)
    - Date verbal verification received
    - Time of verbal verification
    - Method of receipt (i.e. Telephone)
  - The subgrantee must receive verbal consent from the client to allow verbal verification on each form. The client's consent to allowing verbal verification must be documented on each form in the steps outlined above and noted in THO. If a client refuses to allow verbal verification another intake method must be provided. (i.e. mail, drop off, electronic)
- Zero Income can be determined with proof of client employment termination or the Zero Income Form. Zero Income can be determined at the time of application and projected forward instead of using the past 30 days.
- Any type of unemployment payments with the exception of stimulus unemployment will be counted as income as described in Section 2.6.2 Calculation of Unemployment Income of the LIHEAP Manual.
- Emailed documents, scanned documents, faxed documents and photographed documents are acceptable. The sub grantee should have one dedicated email address for applications and documents. Subgrantees must notify clients that applications and/or verification documents have been received. Document the method of notification (i.e. phone call or return email) to include date and staff signature.

- After all verification avenues listed in LIHEAP Operational Manual are exhausted applicants can be allowed to use the Social Security award letter for the prior year. The subgrantee must add the COLA adjustment.
- In case-by-case situations the applicant's sole bank statements or other non-standard documentation could be used to verify income if approved by THDA. Requests to use bank statements or other non-standard documentation must be sent to [LIHEAP@thda.org](mailto:LIHEAP@thda.org) for review a case-by-case basis.

Please reach out to THDA for verification and exception requests. Any rule exception request must be submitted by email to [LIHEAP@thda.org](mailto:LIHEAP@thda.org) and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.