

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 1 - Program Components

Program Components, 2605(a), 2605(b)(1) – Assurance 1, 2605(c)(1)(C)

1.1 Check which components you will operate under the LIHEAP program. (Note: You must provide information for each component designated here as requested elsewhere in this plan.)

		Dates of Operation	
		Start date	End date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Heating assistance	11/17/14	12/31/14
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cooling assistance	5/1/15	8/31/15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Crisis assistance	1/2/15	3/16/15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Weatherization assistance	10/1/14	9/30/15

Estimated Funding Allocation, 2604(c), 2605(k)(1), 2605(b)(9), 2605(b)(16) – Assurances 9 and 16

1.2 Estimate what amount of available LIHEAP funds will be used for each component that you will operate: The total of all percentages must add up to 100%.

64%	Heating assistance
1%	Cooling assistance
17%	Crisis assistance
10 %	Weatherization assistance
0%	Carryover to the following federal fiscal year
8%	Administrative and planning costs
0%	Services to reduce home energy needs including needs assessment (Assurance 16)
0%	Used to develop and implement leveraging activities
100%	TOTAL

Alternate Use of Crisis Assistance Funds, 2605(c)(1)(C)

1.3 The funds reserved for winter crisis assistance that have not been expended by March 15 will be reprogrammed to:

- Heating assistance
- Weatherization assistance
- Cooling assistance
- Other (specify): to extend the crisis component

Categorical Eligibility, 2605(b)(2)(A) – Assurance 2, 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(8A) – Assurance 8

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1.4 Do you consider households categorically eligible if one household member receives one of the following categories of benefits in the left column below?

Yes No

	Heating	Cooling	Crisis	Weatherization
TANF	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SSI	No	No	No	No
SNAP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Means-tested Veterans Programs	No	No	No	No
Other (Specify): Code A SSI – defined as Code A for both federal and New York State SSI living arrangements.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

1.5 Do you automatically enroll households without a direct annual application?

Yes No -- If yes, explain:

Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients who are in receipt of ongoing benefits are considered to be categorically income eligible, but these recipients must also meet all other eligibility criteria in order to be eligible for a Regular benefit. These recipients consent to have their eligibility determined for HEAP through the Automatic Payment (Autopay) process when they complete and submit NYS “Statewide Common Application,” (LDSS-2921), “Recertification Application for TA or SNAP,” (LDSS-3174), or “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Application/Recertification,” (LDSS-4826). The consent language is found in the consent section of each application.

TA and SNAP recipients who are categorically income eligible, meet all other eligibility criteria and are in receipt of ongoing benefits at the time of the Autopay pull down are not required to complete a separate HEAP application.

OTDA uses the TA and SNAP eligibility information found in the Welfare Management System (WMS) at the time of the Autopay pull down to determine the household’s income eligibility for HEAP, as well as other eligibility criteria. If all HEAP eligibility factors can be collected from WMS, a Regular eligibility determination is made and a payment amount is electronically issued, as appropriate, to either the vendor or household. If required HEAP eligibility factors beyond income eligibility cannot be retrieved from WMS, the case appears on an exception report for required SSD review and eligibility determination.

1.6 How do you ensure there is no difference in the treatment of categorically eligible households from those not receiving other public assistance when determining eligibility and benefit amounts?

Eligibility criteria for each program component are applied uniformly to all applicant households.

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SNAP Nominal Payments

1.7a. Do you allocate LIHEAP funds toward a nominal payment for SNAP clients?

Yes No -- If you answered "Yes" to question 1.7a, you must provide a response to questions 1.7b, 1.7c, and 1.7d.

1.7b Amount of Nominal Assistance: \$21.00

1.7c Frequency of Assistance:

- Once per year
- Once every five years
- Other (describe): _____

1.7d How do you confirm that the household receiving a nominal payment has an energy cost or need?

OTDA and local social services districts confirm that a household that receives a nominal payment has an energy cost or need based on information contained in the case record and in WMS.

Determination of Eligibility – Countable Income

1.8 In determining a household's income eligibility for LIHEAP, do you use gross income or net income?

- Gross Income
- Net Income

1.9. Select all of the applicable forms of countable income used to determine a household's income eligibility for LIHEAP.

- Wages
- Self-employment income
- Contract income
- Payments from mortgage or sales contracts
- Unemployment Insurance
- Strike pay
- Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits
 - Including Medicare deduction
 - Excluding Medicare deduction
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Retirement / pension benefits
- General Assistance benefits
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
- Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC) benefits
- Loans that need to be repaid
- Cash gifts
- Savings account balance
- One-time lump-sum payments, such as rebates/credits, winnings from lotteries, refund deposits, etc.
- Jury duty compensation

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- Rental income
- Income from employment through Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Income from work study programs
- Alimony
- Child support
- Interest, dividends, or royalties
- Commissions
- Legal settlements
- Insurance payments made directly to the insured
- Insurance payments made specifically for the repayment of a bill, debt, or estimate
- Veterans Administration (VA) benefits
- Earned income of a child under the age of 18
- Balance of retirement, pension, or annuity accounts where funds cannot be withdrawn without a penalty.
- Income tax refunds
- Stipends from senior companion programs, such as VISTA
- Funds received by household for the care of a foster child
- Ameri-Corp Program payments for living allowances, earnings, and in-kind aid.
- Reimbursements (for mileage, gas, lodging, meals, etc.)
- Other

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

The Heating Assistance component may be expanded beyond the proposed 12/31/2014 closing date if New York State receives additional funding. This Plan is based on the President's proposed budget.

The Cooling Assistance component will run until 8/31/2015 or until funding is exhausted, whichever comes first.

The Crisis Assistance component may be expanded beyond the proposed 3/16/2014 closing date if New York State receives additional funding. This Plan is based on the President's proposed budget.

Income Guidelines are attached.

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Section 2 - Heating Assistance

Eligibility, 2605(b)(2) – Assurance 2

2.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the heating component:

2014 HHS poverty income level 11+ Households (HH)150%

OR

FY 2015 state's median income 1-10 HH 60%

2.2 Do you have additional eligibility requirements for HEATING ASSISTANCE?

Yes No

2.3 Check the appropriate boxes below and describe the policies for each.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Do you require an assets test?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for:

Renters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Renters living in subsidized housing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Renters with utilities included in the rent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Do you give priority in eligibility to:

Elderly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young children?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Households with high energy burdens?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Determination of Benefits, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

2.4 Describe how you prioritize the provision of heating assistance to vulnerable households, e.g., benefit amounts, application period, etc.

New York State provides early application access to households with a vulnerable member. In addition, these households receive an additional \$25 to their base benefit.

2.5 Check the variables you use to determine your benefit levels. (Check all that apply):

Income
 Family (household) size
 Home energy cost or need:
 Fuel type
 Climate/region
 Individual bill

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- Dwelling type
- Energy burden (% of income spent on home energy)
- Energy need
- Other (Describe)

Benefit Levels, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

2.6 Describe benefit levels:

\$ 21.00 Minimum benefit \$ 625.00 Maximum benefit

2.7 Do you provide in-kind (e.g., blankets, space heaters) and/or other forms of benefits?

Yes No -- If yes, describe.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Eligibility policy for renter’s explanation:

Households do not make payments directly to a vendor for their primary heating but make undesignated payments for heat as a portion of their rent and are in an eligible living arrangement will receive a benefit based on the two-tier payment structure. A household’s tier is based on their gross monthly income taking into account household size.

Variables that determine benefit level explanation:

Households with income that fall in Tier I will receive an additional \$25 to their base benefit.

New York State’s regular HEAP benefit structure assists households that pay a high proportion of household income for energy. As research has shown that heat included households consume less energy than households that pay directly for heat and are, therefore, less likely to have a high home energy burden, higher benefit levels are provided to households that pay directly for heat than to heat included households. In addition, to target high burden households, higher benefits are provided to those households that have the lowest income

Benefit Levels are attached.

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Section 3 - Cooling Assistance

Eligibility, 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(2) – Assurance 2

3.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the cooling component:

2014 HHS poverty income level 11+HHs 150%

OR

FY 2015 median income 1-10HH 60%

3.2 Do you have additional eligibility requirements for COOLING ASSISTANCE?

Yes No

3.3 Check the appropriate boxes below and describe the policies for each.

	Yes	No
Do you require an assets test?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for:

Renters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Renters living in subsidized housing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renters with utilities included in the rent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Do you give priority in eligibility to:

Elderly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Households with high energy burdens?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants with a documented medical need.		

3.4 Describe how you prioritize the provision of cooling assistance to vulnerable households, e.g., benefit amounts, application period, etc.

Applicants with a documented medical need.

Determination of Benefits 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

3.5 Check the variables you use to determine your benefit levels. (Check all that apply):

- Income
- Family (household) size
- Home energy cost or need
 - Fuel type
 - Climate/region
 - Individual bill
 - Dwelling type
 - Energy burden (% of income spent on home energy)

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Energy need

Other: Applicant households must meet HEAP eligibility criteria and have a documented medical need.

Benefit Levels, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

3.6 Describe benefit levels:

\$ N/A Minimum benefit \$ N/A Maximum benefit

3.7 Do you provide in-kind (e.g. fans, air conditioners) and/or other forms of benefits?

Yes No -- If yes, describe.

New York State’s Cooling Assistance component provides an air conditioner or fan and no cash benefit.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Additional eligibility explanation:

In addition to meeting New York State’s income eligibility and living arrangement eligibility criteria, all applicants for the Cooling Assistance component must have a medical need, which is exacerbated by heat and verified in writing by a physician, physician’s assistant, or nurse practitioner.

Households that reside in subsidized housing and with heat included are not eligible for the Cooling Assistance component.

The size of the dwelling and cooling room established inside the dwelling will determine the size of the air conditioner, which dictates the benefit amount. Additionally, dwellings which cannot accommodate an air conditioner will receive a fan for a lower cost.

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Section 4 - CRISIS ASSISTANCE

Eligibility - 2604(c), 2605(c)(1)(A)

4.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the crisis component:

2014 HHS poverty income level 11+HH 150%

OR

FY 2015 state median income 1-10HH 60%

4.2 Provide your LIHEAP program's definition for determining a crisis.

The definition of a crisis emergency is when loss of heat is imminent. Imminent loss of heat is defined as less than ¼ tank for oil, kerosene or propane or less than a ten-day supply for other deliverable fuels, or heat or heat related utility service is scheduled for termination. Any HEAP eligible household's crisis emergency must be resolved within 48 hours from the time of the emergency application.

4.3 What constitutes a life-threatening crisis?

The definition of a life threatening emergency is when a HEAP applicant or recipient household is without heat or utility service to operate a heating source. Any HEAP eligible household's life threatening emergency must be resolved within 18 hours from the time of the emergency application.

Crisis Requirements, 2604(c)

4.4 Within how many hours do you provide crisis assistance that will resolve the energy crisis for eligible households? 48 Hours

4.5 Within how many hours do you provide crisis assistance that will resolve the energy crisis for eligible households in life-threatening situations? 18 Hours

Crisis Eligibility, 2605(c)(1)(A)

4.6 Do you have additional eligibility requirements for CRISIS ASSISTANCE?

Yes No

4.7 Check the appropriate boxes below and describe the policies for each.

	Yes	No
Do you require an assets test?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you give priority in eligibility to:		
Elderly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Young children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Households with high energy burdens?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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In order to receive crisis assistance:	Yes	No
Must the household have received a shut-off notice or have a near empty tank? - Yes, less than a ¼ of a tank of oil, kerosene, or propane or ten-day supply of other deliverable fuels.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Must the household have been shut off or have an empty tank?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Must the household have exhausted their regular heating benefit? - Yes, if available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Must renters with heating costs included in their rent have received an eviction notice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Must heating/cooling be medically necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Must the household have non-working heating or cooling equipment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
See comments below	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for:		
Renters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Renters living in subsidized housing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renters with utilities included in the rent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Determination of Benefits

4.8 How do you handle crisis situations?

- Separate component
- Fast Track
- Other

- If the regular HEAP program component is open and if a household has yet to apply and receive a regular benefit, NYS will utilize the regular benefit to ameliorate an emergency crisis situation.

4.9 If you have a separate component, how do you determine crisis assistance benefits?

- Amount to resolve crisis, up to a maximum of \$ 575 _____
- Other

Crisis Requirements, 2604(c)

4.10 Do you accept applications for energy crisis assistance at sites that are geographically accessible to all households in the area to be served?

- Yes No

- Applicants may apply for crisis assistance via a phone application with the exception of heating equipment repair replacement assistance. There is also, a certification network in all SSDs for walk-in applicants.

4.11 Do you provide individuals who are physically disabled the means to:
Submit applications for crisis benefits without leaving their homes?

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Yes No If yes, explain.

- Yes, all local districts have homebound unit staff that can travel and assist homebound applicants in their own home.

Travel to the sites at which applications for crisis assistance are accepted?

Yes No if yes, explain.

Benefit Levels, 2605(c)(1)(B)

4.12 Indicate the maximum benefit for each type of crisis assistance offered.

Winter Crisis \$ 575 maximum benefit
 Summer Crisis \$ NA maximum benefit
 Year-round Crisis \$ NA maximum benefit

4.13 Do you provide in-kind (e.g. blankets, space heaters, fans) and/or other forms of benefits?

Yes No If yes, describe.

- The SSD's provide eligible households temporary relocation with a maximum total benefit not to exceed \$500 during the HEAP season. The SSD's also provide propane tank deposits to eligible households with a maximum total benefit not to exceed \$500 during the HEAP season.

4.14 Do you provide for equipment repair or replacement using crisis funds?

Yes No

4.15 Check appropriate boxes below to indicate type(s) of assistance provided:

	Winter Crisis	Summer Crisis	Year-round Crisis
Heating system repair	✓		
Heating system replacement	✓		
Cooling system repair			
Cooling system replacement			
Wood stove purchase	✓		
Pellet stove purchase	✓		
Solar panel(s)			
Windmill(s)			
Utility poles / Gas line hook-ups			
Other (Specify):			

4.17 Do any of the utility vendors you work with enforce a winter moratorium on shut offs?

Yes No _____

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4.18 Describe the terms of the moratorium and any special dispensation received by LIHEAP clients during or after the moratorium period.

- The New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) regulated utilities agree to provide a two week moratorium around Christmas and the New Year holidays.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Crisis assistance eligibility criteria:

In addition to meeting income, residence, citizenship, living situation, responsibility for heating costs, eligibility criteria, and providing a valid Social Security number for all household members, applicants for crisis assistance must have exhausted their regular benefit, have a shut-off notice or less than ¼ tank of deliver fuel/10-day supply of other deliverable fuel, be customer of record and meet the asset test in order to be eligible.

Applicants for the Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement component must meet the income eligibility criteria in addition to having primary heating equipment that is unsafe or inoperable, the heating equipment must have been the primary equipment for the 12 months prior to the month of application, and they must own the dwelling and have resided in it for the 12 months prior to the month of application.

Households residing in certain living arrangement categories listed below are only eligible for a maximum annual HEAP regular benefit of \$21.00 and are not eligible for emergency HEAP or any other benefit under HEAP, except that eligible households in government subsidized housing with heat included in the rent that pay a supplier directly for heat-related utility service may be eligible for a HEAP heat-related emergency benefit if such benefit is necessary to resolve the heat-related energy crisis of the household.

The following living arrangements are eligible for a \$21.00 benefit:

Government subsidized housing with heat included in the rent;

Publically operated or State-certified private nonprofit residential drug or alcoholic treatment facilities;

Private nonprofit residential drug or alcoholic treatment facilities that are authorized as a SNAP retailer

by the USDA or are in receipt of a letter from the certifying State agency stating that the facility operates to further the goals Title XIX;

Publically operated or State-certified private nonprofit enriched housing;

Publically operated or State-certified private nonprofit residential group living facilities serving no more than 16 residents;

Publically operated or State-certified private nonprofit supervised or supportive living arrangements;

and
State-operated community residences)

Eligibility criteria for elderly applicants:

Applicants with a household member age 60 or older have an asset test up to \$3,000 rather than the \$2,000 for all other applicants.

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Section 5: Weatherization Assistance

Eligibility, 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(2) – Assurance 2

5.1 Designate the Income eligibility threshold used for the weatherization component:

2014 HHS poverty income level 11+ HHs 150 %

OR

FY 2015 state median income 1-10 HH 60%

5.2 Do you enter into an interagency agreement to have another government agency administer a weatherization component? Yes No

5.3 Name the agency. New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR)

5.4 Is there a separate monitoring protocol for weatherization? Yes No

WEATHERIZATION - Types of Rules

5.5 Under what rules do you administer LIHEAP weatherization? (Check only one.)

Entirely under LIHEAP (not DOE) rules

Entirely under DOE WAP (not LIHEAP) rules

Mostly under LIHEAP rules with the following DOE WAP rule(s) where LIHEAP and WAP rules differ: (Check all that apply.)

Income Threshold

Weatherization of entire multi-family housing structure is permitted if at least 66% of units (50% in 2- & 4-unit buildings) are eligible units or will become eligible within 180 days.

Weatherization of shelters temporarily housing primarily low income persons (excluding nursing homes, prisons, and similar institutional care facilities) is permitted.

Other (describe)

Mostly under DOE WAP rules, with the following LIHEAP rule(s) where LIHEAP and WAP rules differ: (Check all that apply.)

Income Threshold

Weatherization not subject to DOE WAP maximum statewide average cost per dwelling unit.

Weatherization measures are not subject to DOE Savings to Investment Ratio (SIR) standards.

Other (describe)

Eligibility, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5

5.6 Do you require an assets test? Yes No

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5.7 Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Renters? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Renters living in subsidized housing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

5.8 Do you give priority in eligibility to:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Elderly? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disabled? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Young children? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Households with high energy burdens? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other? Declared disasters | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

*If you selected "Yes" for any of the options in questions 5.6, 5.7, or 5.8, you must provide further explanation of these policies in the text field below.

- Subgrantees are required to give priority for service to HEAP households with elderly persons, households with children under 18 years of age, households that include persons with disabilities, HEAP recipients with extremely high energy use or high energy burdens, and affordable housing projects assisted by HCR.

Benefit Levels

5.9 Do you have a maximum LIHEAP weatherization benefit/expenditure per household?

- Yes No

5.10 What is the maximum amount? \$6,200.00

Types of Assistance, 2605(c)(1), (B) & (D)

5.11 What LIHEAP weatherization measures do you provide? (Check all categories that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weatherization needs assessments/audits | <input type="checkbox"/> Major appliance repairs |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caulking and insulation | <input type="checkbox"/> Major appliance replacement? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Storm windows | <input type="checkbox"/> Install windows/sliding glass doors |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Furnace/heating system modifications/repairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Install doors (interior/exterior)? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Furnace replacement | <input type="checkbox"/> Install water heater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooling system modification /repairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooling system replacement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water conservation measures | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Electronic baseboard reduction measures, energy related health & safety measures such as smoke detectors and ventilation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compact florescent light bulbs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy related roof repair | |

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Section 6 - Outreach, 2605(b)(3) – Assurance 3, 2605(c)(3)(A)

6.1 Select all outreach activities that you conduct that are designed to assure that eligible households are made aware of all LIHEAP assistance available:

- Place posters/flyers in local and county social service offices, offices of aging, Social Security offices, VA, etc.
- Publish articles in local newspapers or broadcast media announcements.
- Include inserts in energy vendor billings to inform individuals of the availability of all types of LIHEAP assistance.
- Mass mailing(s) to prior-year LIHEAP recipients.
- Inform low income applicants of the availability of all types of LIHEAP assistance at application intake for other low-income programs.
- Execute interagency agreements with other low-income program offices to perform outreach to target groups.
- Other (specify):
 - Toll free information hotline operated by NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and NYS Office for the Aging.
 - Information about the program and a printable application are available on the OTDA internet site when the program is open.
 - Identification of household potentially eligible for LIHEAP funded weatherization services and assessing the scope of need for identified households.
 - State and local resources dedicated to implementing mandated outreach plans and program dissemination activities.
 - Targeting efforts to provide program information and access to vulnerable households.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

**LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)
MODEL PLAN**

Section 7 - Coordination, 2605(b)(4) – Assurance 4

7.1 Describe how you will ensure that the LIHEAP program is coordinated with other programs available to low-income households (TANF, SSI, WAP, etc.)

- Joint application for multiple programs
- Intake referrals to/from other programs
- One-stop intake centers
- Other – describe:

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

MyBenefits provides applicants the ability to jointly apply for both SNAP and HEAP, when HEAP is open.

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Section 8 - Agency Designation, 2605(b)(6) – Assurance 6 (Required for state grantees and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico)

8.1 How would you categorize the primary responsibility of your State agency?

- Administration Agency
- Commerce Agency
- Community Services Agency
- Energy/Environment Agency
- Housing Agency
- Welfare Agency
- Other – describe:

Alternate Outreach and Intake, 2605(b)(15) – Assurance 15

If you selected “welfare Agency” in question 8.1, you must complete questions 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4, as applicable.

8.2 How do you provide alternate outreach and intake for HEATING ASSISTANCE?

- As with other income tested assistance programs administered by the NYS OTDA, HEAP is State supervised / locally administered with 58 local social service districts (SSD) designated as the lead local agencies for outreach, certification and payment. Prior to program start-up, each SSD must establish a local certification network that provides for an alternative non- SSD site(s) for a reasonable share of outreach and intake for regular and emergency HEAP assistance. The SSD may contract with other State or local government entities or community- based organizations to fulfill this mandate. Examples of community-based organizations include not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations, local offices for the aging and community action agencies.

8.3 How do you provide alternate outreach and intake for COOLING ASSISTANCE?

- As with other income tested assistance programs administered by the NYS OTDA, HEAP is State supervised / locally administered with 58 local social service districts (SSD) designated as the lead local agencies for outreach, certification and payment. Prior to program start-up, each SSD must establish a local certification network that provides for an alternative non- SSD site(s) for a reasonable share of outreach and intake for regular and emergency HEAP assistance. The SSD may contract with other State or local government entities or community- based organizations to fulfill this mandate. Examples of community-based organizations include not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations, local offices for the aging and community action agencies.

8.4 How do you provide alternate outreach and intake for CRISIS ASSISTANCE?

- As with other income tested assistance programs administered by the NYS OTDA, HEAP is State supervised / locally administered with 58 local social service districts (SSD)

Detailed Model Plan (LIHEAP)

designated as the lead local agencies for outreach, certification and payment. Prior to program start-up, each SSD must establish a local certification network that provides for an alternative non- SSD site(s) for a reasonable share of outreach and intake for regular and emergency HEAP assistance. The SSD may contract with other State or local government entities or community- based organizations to fulfill this mandate. Examples of community-based organizations include not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations, local offices for the aging and community action agencies.

<u>8.5 LIHEAP Component Administration</u>	<u>Heating</u>	<u>Cooling</u>	<u>Crisis</u>	<u>Weatherization</u>
8.5a Who determines client eligibility?	SSD	SSD	SSD	New York State Division of Homes and Community Renewal's (HCR) subgrantee network
8.5b Who processes benefit payments to gas and electric vendors?	SSD	SSD	SSD	N/A
8.5c Who processes benefit payments to bulk fuel vendors?	SSD	SSD	SSD	N/A
8.5d Who performs installation of weatherization measures?	N/A	N/A	N/A	New York State HCR's subgrantee network

8.6 What is your process for selecting local administering agencies?

- As with other income tested programs administered by the NYS OTDA, HEAP is State supervised and locally administered with 58 local social services districts (SSD) designated as the lead local agencies for outreach, certification, and payment. Prior to program start-up, each SSD must establish a local certification network that provides for an alternative non- SSD site(s) for a reasonable share of outreach and intake for regular and emergency HEAP assistance. The SSD may contract with other State or local government entities or community- based organizations to fulfill this mandate. . Examples of community-based organizations include not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations, local offices for the aging and community action agencies.

8.7 How many local administering agencies do you use? 58

8.8 Have you changed any local administering agencies from last year?

Yes No

8.9 Why?

- Agency was in noncompliance with grantee requirements for LIHEAP
- Agency is under criminal investigation
- Added agency
- Agency closed

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Other – describe

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 9 - Energy Suppliers, 2605(b)(7) – Assurance 7

9.1 Do you make payments directly to home energy suppliers?

Heating Yes No

Cooling Yes No

Crisis Yes No

Are there exceptions?

Yes No

- Eligible households who cut their own wood may receive a direct payment if there is reasonable evidence to support that the household has a sufficient supply for the heating season and the household does not have a utility vendor.

9.2 How do you notify the client of the amount of assistance paid?

- All applicants are provided with a notice which advises them of their eligibility for the HEAP benefit, the vendor to which the payment was authorized and the amount paid on their behalf.

9.3 How do you assure that the home energy supplier will charge the eligible household, in the normal billing process, the difference between the actual cost of the home energy and the amount of the payment?

- Each home energy vendor must sign a New York State HEAP vendor agreement to participate in both the regular and emergency components of HEAP. The vendor agreement provides that the home energy vendor agrees and assures to the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to charge HEAP recipients, in the normal billing process, the difference between the cost of the home energy and the amount of the HEAP payment made.

9.4 How do you assure that no household receiving assistance under this title will be treated adversely because of their receipt of LIHEAP assistance?

- Each home energy vendor must sign a New York State HEAP vendor agreement to participate in both the regular and emergency components of HEAP. The vendor agreement provides that the home energy vendor agrees and assures to OTDA to not adversely treating households receiving assistance from HEAP because of such assistance under applicable provision of State law or public regulatory requirements.

9.5 Do you make payments contingent on unregulated vendors taking appropriate measures to alleviate the energy burdens of eligible households? Yes No. If so, how?

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If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 10: Program, Fiscal Monitoring, and Audit, 2605(b)(10) – Assurance 10

10.1 How do you ensure good fiscal accounting and tracking of LIHEAP funds?

- NYS OTDA utilizes fiscal and fund accounting procedures similar to those utilized by the agency and local social services districts (SSD) in the administration of other income-tested assistance programs. Districts are provided with allocations for administration and for district payments. All claims by the SSDs are monitored by NYS OTDA fiscal staff to ensure that allocation levels are not exceeded. The NYS OTDA Welfare Management System (WMS) is used to monitor application activity and benefits authorized outside of NYC. NYC utilizes its own computer system to authorize and pay HEAP benefits and NYC provides reports to NYS OTDA from its system for review.
- The use of LIHEAP funds sub allocated to the NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) and the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) is governed by a Cooperative Agreement which OTDA enters into with these agencies on an annual basis. The Cooperative Agreements require that HCR and NYSOFA transmit fiscal reports to OTDA on a quarterly basis that show the amount of LIHEAP funds obligated and expended by category of expenditure.
- OTDA conducts periodic reviews of HCR's and NYSOFA's administration of LIHEAP funded weatherization programs.

Audit Process

10.2 Is your LIHEAP program audited annually under the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133?

Yes

10.3 Describe any audit findings rising to the level of material weakness or reportable condition cited in the A-133 audits, Grantee monitoring assessments, inspector general reviews, or other government agency reviews of the LIHEAP agency from the most recently audited fiscal year.

Finding	Type	Brief Summary	Resolved?	Action Taken
None				

10.4 Audits of Local Administering Agencies

What types of annual audit requirements do you have in place for local administering agencies/district offices?

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- Local agencies/district offices are required to have an annual audit in compliance with the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133.
- Local agencies/district offices are required to have an annual audit (other than A-133).
- Local agencies/district offices' A-133 or other independent audits are reviewed by Grantee as part of compliance process.
- Grantee conducts fiscal and program monitoring of local agencies/district offices.

Compliance Monitoring

10.5 Describe the Grantee's strategies for monitoring compliance with the Grantee's and Federal LIHEAP policies and procedures select all that apply:

Grantee employees:

- Internal program review
- Departmental oversight
- Secondary review of invoices and payments
- Other program review mechanisms are in place. Describe:

Local Administering Agencies/District Offices:

- On-site evaluation
- Annual program review
- Monitoring through central database
- Desk reviews
- Client File Testing/Sampling
- Other program review mechanisms are in place. Describe:

10.6 Explain, or attach a copy of your local agency monitoring schedule and protocol.

- OTDA conducts an operational review that includes, but is not limited to: an assessment of pending applications; client and vendor complaints logged by OTDA; client program access to; emergency benefit phone procedures; compliance with the 18-48 hour emergency resolution rules; and compliance with all Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement procedures. Any contracts with alternate certifiers and other agencies performing HEAP related services are also reviewed. OTDA's review period/schedule runs January through March each year.

10.7 Describe how you select local agencies for monitoring reviews?

Site Visits:

Five of the top 10 SSDs with the largest case loads are monitored every other year, plus five additional agencies on a six year, rotating basis.

Desk Reviews:

Five of the top 10 SSDs with the largest case loads are monitored every other year, plus five additional agencies on a six year, rotating basis.

10.8 How often is each local agency monitored?

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- Top ten districts every other year, other 48 on a six-year rotating basis.

10.9 OPTIONAL QUESTION: What is the combined error rate for eligibility determinations?

10.10 OPTIONAL QUESTION: What is the combined error rate for benefit determinations?

10.11 How many local agencies are currently on corrective action plans for eligibility and/or benefit determination issues? 4

10.12 How many local agencies are currently on corrective action plans for financial accounting or administrative issues? 0

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 11: Timely and Meaningful Public Participation, 2605(b)(12) – Assurance 12, 2605(c)(2)

11.1 How did you obtain input from the public in the development of your LIHEAP plan?

Check all that apply:

- Tribal Council meeting(s)
- Public Hearing(s)
- Draft Plan posted to website and available for comment
- Hard copy of plan is available for public view and comment
- Comments from applicants are recorded
- Request for comments on draft Plan is advertised
- Stakeholder consultation meeting(s)
- Comments are solicited during outreach activities
- Other, describe: Blockgrant/ Interagency, advisory committees

11.2 What changes did you make to your LIHEAP plan as a result of this participation? **TBD**

Public Hearings, 2605(a)(2)

11.3 List the date(s) and location(s) that you held public hearing(s) on the proposed use and distribution of your LIHEAP funds?

	Date	Event Description
1 Albany	8/11/2014	Public Hearing
2 New York City	8/12/2014	Public Hearing

11.4 How many parties commented on your plan at the hearing(s)? **TBD**

11.5 Summarize the comments you received at the hearing(s). **TBD**

11.6 What changes did you make to your LIHEAP plan as a result of the public hearing(s)? **TBD**

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Section 12: Fair Hearings, 2605(b)(13) – Assurance 13

12.1 How many fair hearings did the grantee have in the prior Federal fiscal year? 396

12.2 How many of those fair hearings resulted in the initial decision being reversed? 44

12.3 Describe any policy and/or procedural changes made in the last Federal fiscal year as a result of fair hearings?

- None

12.4 Describe your fair hearing procedures for households whose applications are denied.

- Individuals whose applications for HEAP benefits are denied are afforded an opportunity for a fair hearing conducted by NYS OTDA.
- Households whose applications for weatherization assistance have been denied are provided an opportunity for a fair hearing conducted by NYS HCR.

12.5 When and how are applicants informed of these rights?

- When a client first applies for a HEAP benefit, they are informed of their fair hearing rights in their initial eligibility notification. Also, this information is available on OTDA's website, contained in client informational booklets and the HEAP application instructions.

12.6 Describe your fair hearing procedures for households whose applications are not acted on in a timely manner.

- Local social services districts are required to make determinations and provide notification of eligibility decisions on applications for regular HEAP benefits within 30 business days after the filing of such application or within 30 business days of program opening for applications received during the early outreach period. Applications which are incomplete may be pended for up to 10 business days and the pending period is not counted in the 30 business day timeframe for providing notification.
- Individuals whose applications for HEAP benefits are not acted upon within the established timeframes are afforded an opportunity for a fair hearing conducted by NYS OTDA.

12.7 When and how are applicants informed of these rights?

- Applicants are advised of fair hearing rights for applications that are not acted on in a timely manner at the time of the application by the provision of the "Application Rights" language in the application instructions. This information is also on the OTDA website and in the client informational booklets

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If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

**LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)
MODEL PLAN**

**Section 13: Reduction of home energy needs, 2605(b)(16) – Assurance
16**

13.1 Describe how you use LIHEAP funds to provide services that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance?
N/A

13.2 How do you ensure that you don't use more than 5% of your LIHEAP funds for these activities? N/A

13.3 Describe the impact of such activities on the number of households served in the previous Federal fiscal year. N/A

13.4 Describe the level of direct benefits provided to those households in the previous Federal fiscal year. N/A

13.5 How many households applied for these services? N/A

13.6 How many households received these services? N/A

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 14: Leveraging Incentive Program, 2607A

14.1 Do you plan to submit an application for the leveraging incentive program?

Yes No

14.2 Describe instructions to the third parties and/or local agencies for submitting LIHEAP leveraging resource information and retaining records.

Protocol for submission on leveraging activities to OTDA: Submission of data on leveraging activities is due to NYS OTDA by October 15th of each year

OTDA instructs third parties and/or local agencies to follow the requirements of 45 CFR 96.87(d) in all submissions for the LIHEAP leveraging incentive program. Those requirements are as follows:

d) Basic requirements for leveraged resources and benefits.

(1) In order to be counted under the leveraging incentive program, leveraged resources and benefits must meet all of the following five criteria:

(i) They are from non-Federal sources.

(ii) They are provided to the grantee's low-income home energy assistance program, or to federally qualified low-income households as described in section 2605(b)(2) of Public Law 97-35 ([42 U.S.C. 8624\(b\)\(2\)](#)).

(iii) They are measurable and quantifiable in dollars.

(iv) They represent a net addition to the total home energy resources available to low-income households in excess of the amount of such resources that could be acquired by these households through the purchase of home energy, or the purchase of items that help these households meet the cost of home energy, at commonly available household rates or costs, or that could be obtained with regular LIHEAP allotments provided under section 2602(b) of Public Law 97-35 ([42 U.S.C. 8621\(b\)](#)).

(v) They meet the requirements for countable leveraged resources and benefits throughout this section and section 2607A of Public Law 97-35 ([42 U.S.C. 8626a](#)).

(2) Also, in order to be counted under the leveraging incentive program, leveraged resources and benefits must meet at least one of the following three criteria:

(i) The grantee's LIHEAP program had an active, substantive role in developing and/or acquiring the resource/benefits from home energy vendor(s) through negotiation, regulation, and/or competitive bid. The actions or efforts of one or more staff of the grantee's LIHEAP program—at the central and/or local level—and/or one or more staff of LIHEAP program subrecipient(s) acting in that capacity, were substantial and significant in obtaining the resource/benefits from the vendor(s).

(ii) The grantee appropriated or mandated the resource/benefits for distribution to low-income households through (that is, within and as a part of) its LIHEAP program. The resource/benefits are provided through the grantee's LIHEAP program to low-income households eligible under the grantee's LIHEAP standards, in accordance with the LIHEAP statute and regulations and consistent with the grantee's LIHEAP plan and program policies that were in effect during the base period, as if they were provided from the grantee's Federal LIHEAP allotment.

(iii) The grantee appropriated or mandated the resource/benefits for distribution to low-income households as described in its LIHEAP plan (referred to in section 2605(c)(1)(A) of Public Law 97-35) ([42 U.S.C. 8624\(c\)\(1\)\(A\)](#)). The resource/benefits are provided to low-income households as a supplement and/or alternative to the grantee's LIHEAP program, outside (that is, not through, within, or as a part of) the LIHEAP

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program. The resource/benefits are integrated and coordinated with the grantee's LIHEAP program. Before the end of the base period, the plan identifies and describes the resource/benefits, their source(s), and their integration/coordination with the LIHEAP program. The Department will determine resources/benefits to be integrated and coordinated with the LIHEAP program if they meet at least one of the following eight conditions. If a resource meets at least one of conditions A through F when the grantee's LIHEAP program is operating (and meets all other applicable requirements), the resource also is countable when the LIHEAP program is not operating.

14.3 For each type of resource and/or benefit to be leveraged in the upcoming year that will meet the requirements of 45 C.F.R. § 96.87(d)(2)(iii), describe the following:

Resource	What is the type of resource or benefit?	What is the source(s) of the resource?	How will the resource be integrated and coordinated with the LIHEAP program?
1	Weatherization	NYS HCR	Part of NYS LIHEAP appropriation is utilized by HCR to provide weatherization services to HEAP eligible household through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).
2	Weatherization/ EmPower New York	NYSERDA EMPOWER	The NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) administers low income weatherization assistance programs funded through utility system benefit charges. These charges are collected via utility bills.
3	Utility Allowance	NYS OTDA	NYS, as part of its fully State and locally funded Safety Net Assistance (SNA) program, directly provides households responsible for paying heating costs with a basic fuel allowance each month. In addition, all SNA recipient households are given a home energy allowance and a supplement home energy allowance which, by definition, are provided to eligible households to cover increases in the cost of energy. These same benefits are also provided to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients.

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4	Non-public fuel funds to assist with utility bills	All Public Service Commission (PSC) regulated utilities in NYS	All PSC-regulated utilities in NYS operate non-public funded fuel funds to assist their service territory population with payments of energy bills. These resources are targeted to HEAP-eligibility households that have exhausted their HEAP eligibility or are ineligible because of the unavailability of LIHEAP funding.
5	Tax exemption for Temporary Assistance recipients	NYS OTDA	NYS has exempted the collection of sales taxes from Temporary Assistance (TA) recipients whose ongoing utility/fuel bills are restricted and paid by the local department of social services.
6	Low Income Customer Assistance Plans	NYS Utility Companies	Several NYS utility companies have recently implemented low-income customer assistance plans. The plans consist of two components: rate moderation and uncollectable initiatives, including a negotiated percentage of income plan, coupled with an arrearage forgiveness arrangement
7	Reduce energy costs through aggregation	NYS OTDA & NYS PSC	In conjunction with various local social services districts and the national fuel gas distribution corporation, NYS has established the Temporary Assistance Cooperative for Energy (PACE) program. PACE is a natural gas aggregation program for certain TA recipients in Erie, Chautauqua and Niagara counties in NY. The program's objective is to provide the benefits of competition to low-income payment troubled customers by offering the opportunity to reduce energy costs through aggregation.
8	Fuel Buying component	NYS OTDA	OTDA has established a HEAP fuel buying component in NYS. The purpose of this component is to expand the buying power of LIHEAP dollars by obtaining a lower than

Detailed Model Plan (LIHEAP)

			retail price for HEAP purchased oil, kerosene and propane. This discounted price materially enhances the purchasing power of LIHEAP eligible households.
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If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 15 - Training

15.1 Describe the training you provide for each of the following groups:

a. Grantee Staff:

Formal training on grantee policies and procedures

How often?

Annually

Biannually

As needed

Other – Describe:

Employees are provided with policy manual

Other – Describe: TA/SNAP Institutes

b. Local Agencies:

Formal training conference

How often?

Annually

Biannually

As needed – Conference calls for each component

Other – Describe: LCM/GIS/INF

On-site training

How often?

Annually

Biannually

As needed

Other – Describe:

Employees are provided with policy manual

Other – Describe:

c. Vendors

Formal training conference

How often?

Annually

Biannually

As needed

Other – Describe: Vendor Conference Calls

Policies communicated through vendor agreements

Policies are outlined in a vendor manual

Other – Describe: Vendor Update Newsletter

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15.2 Does your training program address fraud reporting and prevention?

Yes No

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

**LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)
MODEL PLAN**

**Section 16 - Performance Goals and Measures, 2605(b) –Required for
States Only**

16.1 Describe your progress toward meeting the data collection and reporting requirements for the four required LIHEAP performance measures. Include timeframes and plans for meeting these requirements and what you believe will be accomplished in the coming federal fiscal year.

- Add consent language to various applications
- Vendor Agreement Addendums to facilitate performance measurement reporting.

16.2 Describe any other performance goals and measures planned for the fiscal year.

None

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) MODEL PLAN

Section 17: Program Integrity, 2605(b)(10)

17.1 Fraud Reporting Mechanisms

- a. Describe all mechanisms available to the public for reporting cases of suspected waste, fraud, and abuse. Select all that apply.

- Online Fraud Reporting
- Dedicated Fraud Reporting Hotline
- Report directly to local agency/district office or Grantee office
- Report to State Inspector General or Attorney General
- Forms and procedures in place for local agencies/district offices and vendors to report fraud, waste, and abuse.
- Other – describe:

- b. Describe strategies in place for advertising the above-referenced resources. Select all that apply.

- Printed outreach materials
- Addressed on LIHEAP application
- Website
- Other – describe: The New York State What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities (When Applying for and Receiving Benefits) – LDSS-4148A provides this information as well.

17.2 Identification Documentation Requirements

- c. Indicate which of the following forms of identification are required or requested to be collected from LIHEAP applicants or their household members.

REQUIRED Type of Identification Collected	Collected from Whom?		
	Applicant Only	All Adults in HH	HH Members
Social Security Card is photocopied and retained	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>
	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security Number (without actual card)	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>

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Government-issued identification card (i.e.: driver's license, state ID, Tribal ID, passport, etc.)	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>

d. Describe any exceptions to the above policies.

17.3 Identification Verification

Describe what methods are used to verify the authenticity of identification documents provided by clients or household members.

- Verify SSNs with Social Security Administration
- Match SSNs with death records from Social Security Administration or state agency
- Match SSNs with state eligibility/management system (e.g., SNAP, TANF)
- Match with state Department of Labor system
- Match with state and/or federal corrections system
- Match with state child support system
- Verification using private software (e.g., The Work Number)
- In-person certification by staff
- Match SSN/Tribal ID number with tribal database [
- Other – describe:

An electronic clearance process through WMS is used to verify identity with the documentation provided by the applicant.

17.4 Citizenship/Legal Residency Verification

What are your procedures for ensuring that household members are U.S. citizens or aliens who are qualified to receive LIHEAP benefits? Select all that apply.

- Clients sign an attestation of citizenship or legal residency
- Clients' submission of Social Security cards is accepted as proof of legal residency
- Noncitizens must provide documentation of immigration status
- Citizens must provide a copy of their birth certificate, naturalization papers, or passport
- Noncitizens are verified through the SAVE system
- Tribal members are verified through Tribal database/Tribal ID card
- Other – The HEAP Application allows applicants to attest to their citizenship status. The application is signed by the applicant.

17.5 Income Verification

What methods does your agency utilize to verify household income? Select all that apply.

- Require documentation of income for all adult household members

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- Pay stubs
- Social Security award letters
- Bank statements
- Tax statements
- Zero-income statements
- Unemployment Insurance letters
- Other – describe:

- Computer data matches:
 - Income information matched against state computer system (e.g., SNAP, TANF)
 - Proof of unemployment benefits verified with state Department of Labor
 - Social Security income verified with SSA
 - Utilize state directory of new hires
- Other – describe:

17.6 Protection of Privacy and Confidentiality

Describe the financial and operating controls in place to protect client information against improper use or disclosure. Select all that apply.

- Policy in place prohibiting release of information without written consent
- Grantee LIHEAP database includes privacy/confidentiality safeguards
- Employee training on confidentiality for:
 - Grantee employees
 - Local agencies/district offices
- Employees must sign confidentiality agreement
 - Grantee employees
 - Local agencies/district offices
- Physical files are stored in a secure location
- Other – describe:

All personally identifying information about a HEAP applicant or recipient is confidential and may be disclosed only for purposes of investigating or prosecuting suspected fraud or abuse, in cooperation with Federal or State authorities regarding LIHEAP audits or investigations, or with the written consent of the applicant or recipient.

17.7 Verifying the Authenticity of Energy Vendors

What policies are in place for verifying vendor authenticity, State/Tribe? Select all that apply.

- All vendors must register with the State
- All vendors must supply a valid SSN or TIN/W-9 form
- Vendors are verified through energy bills provided by the household
- Grantee and/or local agencies/district offices perform physical monitoring of vendors
- Other – describe, and note any exceptions to policies above:

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17.8 Benefits Policy – Gas and Electric Utilities

What policies are in place to protect against fraud when making benefit payments to gas and electric utilities on behalf of clients? Select all that apply

- Applicants are required to submit proof of physical residency
- Applicants must submit current utility bill
- Data exchange with utilities that verifies:
 - Account ownership
 - Consumption
 - Balances
 - Payment history
 - Account is properly credited with benefit
 - Other – describe:
- Centralized computer system/database tracks payments to all utilities
- Centralized computer system automatically generates benefit level
- Separation of duties between intake and payment approval
- Payments coordinated among other heating assistance programs to avoid duplication of payments
- Payments to utilities and invoices from utilities are reviewed for accuracy
- Computer databases are periodically reviewed to verify accuracy and timeliness of payments made to utilities
- Direct payment to households are made in limited cases only
- Procedures are in place to require prompt refunds from utilities in cases of account closure
- Vendor agreements specify requirements selected above, and provide enforcement mechanism
- Other – describe: Conduct monitoring of Gas and Electric Utilities.

17.9 Benefits Policy — Bulk Fuel Vendors

What procedures are in place for averting fraud and improper payments when dealing with bulk fuel suppliers of heating oil, propane, wood, and other bulk fuel vendors? Select all that apply .

- Vendors are checked against an approved vendors list
- Centralized computer system/database is used to track payments to all vendors
- Clients are relied on for reports of non-delivery or partial delivery
- Two-party checks are issued naming client and vendor
- Direct payment to households are made in limited cases only
- Vendors are only paid once they provide a delivery receipt signed by the client
- Conduct monitoring of bulk fuel vendors
- Bulk fuel vendors are required to submit reports to the Grantee
- Vendor agreements specify requirements selected above, and provide enforcement mechanism
- Other – Describe:

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17.10 Investigations and Prosecutions

Describe the Grantee's procedures for investigating and prosecuting reports of fraud, and any sanctions placed on clients/staff/vendors found to have committed fraud. Select all that apply.

- Refer to state Inspector General
- Refer to local prosecutor or state Attorney General
- Refer to US DHHS Inspector General (including referral to OIG hotline)
- Local agencies/district offices or Grantee conduct investigation of fraud complaints from public
- Grantee attempts collection of improper payments. If so, describe the recoupment process.
- Clients found to have committed fraud are banned from LIHEAP assistance. For how long is a household banned?
- Contracts with local agencies require that employees found to have committed fraud are reprimanded and/or terminated
- Vendors found to have committed fraud may no longer participate in LIHEAP
- Other — Describe:

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.