

2023 WAP DOE Health & Safety Plan Proposal to Increase Limit to 25%

As part of the Health & Safety Plan, IHCDCA is requesting to increase the expenditure limit to 25% of Base Operations from DOE funding. Currently, sub-grantees are allowed to expend 20% of Base Operations on Health & Safety (H&S) measures. Within the 2021 Program Year (April 1 2021 – March 31, 2022), 21 sub-grantees participated in the 2021 WAP DOE Regular Grant Award. 3 sub-grantees participated in the 2020 WAP DOE Carryover Award within the same Program Year.

There are multiple reasons for this desired increase:

1. In Program Year 2021, 16 sub-grantees utilized all 20% of their allowable H&S expenses. This includes the 3 sub-grantees that participated in Carryover and maxed out the Health & Safety categories. 2 other sub-grantees nearly spent the allowable 20% (between 17.76-18.99%). In preparation for BIL, IHCDCA held several meetings with members of the network to gauge their capacity and concerns. One of the themes that developed over the course of these conversations was that the 20% carve out for H&S measures was limiting the amount of work that could be done because it was not high enough. One Weatherization Manager spoke in detail on this topic during the Public Hearing held on September 7, 2022.
2. All 21 sub-grantees participated in Utility and Rebate programs, as well as pairing jobs with LIHEAP and ARPA funds, in conjunction with the regular DOE Grant Award. Sub-grantees braid these other funds and utilize LIHEAP Mechanical to cover Health & Safety costs that go above the 20% limit as allowed by DOE. With the expansive BIL Award, the same amount of LIHEAP money, and no ARPA funds beginning on October 1, 2022, it leaves a deficit in Health & Safety dollars to be paired with BIL jobs. Without an increase in LIHEAP money, it is crucial to increase the Health & Safety limit from 20% to 25% on BIL funding in order to cover the Health & Safety costs. The increase of Health & Safety to 25% is necessary in this case to reach DOE spending goals and job completion projections.
3. The general rising costs of supplies, accelerated by inflation, means that each dollar spent is not going as far as it has in previous years. An increase in allowable H&S expenditures will better allow each sub-grantee to perform the necessary Health and Safety work to every home they weatherize. IHCDCA and its subgrantees take great pride in performing quality work throughout the state. The necessary increase in the dollars that can be spent on Health & Safety measures means that the type and quality of expected work can continue to occur.

IHCDCA requests permission from the Department of Energy to increase the Health & Safety expenditure limit from 20% to 25% of Base Operations.