LIHEAP LIHWAP OPENING PRESS RELEASE

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News Release —Office of [insert office]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [insert date]

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**Indianapolis** ([insert date], 2021) –

[Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch](https://www.in.gov/lg/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and the [Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority](https://www.in.gov/ihcda/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) opened applications for Indiana’s Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program(LIHWAP) this week. These programs are designed to help low-income households across the state pay their bills and avoid shutoffs, especially during the winter.

In March, Congress announced that it would provide millions in funding for utilities through the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](https://www.naco.org/resources/naco-analysis-american-rescue-plan-act). This funding, along with the annual Federal Appropriations Bills, has been allocated to the State of Indiana to help low-income households pay their energy and water/wastewater utility bills.

Starting **Oct. 1, 2021**, qualified Indiana households can apply for federal funding to help pay their utility bills. Applications will be accepted until **May 16, 2022**.

**Energy Assistance Program**

IHCDA has been managing the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) since 2006. Community organizations designated by the state, called local service providers, are responsible for client intake and eligibility determination. These community organizations ensure that the program covers all 92 counties in Indiana. EAP can help cover utility costs associated with electricity and a home’s primary heating source.

**Water Assistance Program**

New this year, households can apply for water/wastewater utility assistance in the same application as energy assistance. The water assistance program is a **temporary** emergency program to help low-income households catch up on their water and wastewater bills during the COVID-19 pandemic, though the program does not require proof of COVID-19 hardship to apply.

[insert quote from someone from IHCDA]

[insert quote from someone from an LSP]

**Eligibility Requirements**

Households that make 60% of the state median income (60 SMI) or less are encouraged to apply for the program. See the chart below for a more detailed breakdown of income eligibility requirements.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| HH size | 1 month | 3 months | 12 months |
| **1** | $ 2,251 | $ 6,753 | $ 27,012 |
| **2** | $ 2,944 | $ 8,831 | $ 35,324 |
| **3** | $ 3,636 | $ 10,909 | $ 43,635 |
| **4** | $ 4,329 | $ 12,987 | $ 51,947 |
| **5** | $ 5,022 | $ 15,065 | $ 60,259 |
| **6** | $ 5,714 | $ 17,143 | $ 68,570 |
| **7** | $ 5,844 | $ 17,532 | $ 70,128 |
| **8** | $ 5,974 | $ 17,922 | $ 71,686 |
| **9** | $ 6,104 | $ 18,311 | $ 73,245 |

**How to Apply**

Indiana residents can apply online by visiting EAP.ihcda.in.gov. There residents will also find a list of local service providers. If a household does not have internet access, they can call 2-1-1 and ask to be connected to the EAP local service provider in their area.

If residents have a disconnected utility, have received a notice for disconnection, or are almost out of bulk fuel, they should call their local service provider immediately, as they may be eligible for a crisis benefit.

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The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), chaired by [Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMTA5MDMuNDU0NDI2NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5pbi5nb3YvbGcvP3V0bV9jb250ZW50PSZ1dG1fbWVkaXVtPWVtYWlsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9Z292ZGVsaXZlcnkifQ.oIU_5m_6QF7lUcRUmRiDyIVRbqNL0Pz_x68-BqRtZiY/s/1547870461/br/111845991960-l?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery), provides housing opportunities, promotes self-sufficiency and strengthens communities in order to build an Indiana with a sustainable quality of life for all Hoosiers in the community of their choice. For more information, visit our [website](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDUsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMTA5MDMuNDU0NDI2NzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5pbi5nb3YvaWhjZGEvP3V0bV9jb250ZW50PSZ1dG1fbWVkaXVtPWVtYWlsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9Z292ZGVsaXZlcnkifQ.W0N7qAvmaz_AQMWNzpFW56h5u7BWxwnUjYGugHnw8Eg/s/1547870461/br/111845991960-l?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).

**[insert LSP boilerplate]**