



LIHEAP Program Operations Manual 2019-2020: Summary of Updates

A. Appendices Modified

- B – Local Service Providers (LSPs)
- C – IHCD Department of Community Programs Contact 2019-2020
- D – Federal LIHEAP Statute **(added)**
- F – Statewide Application
- H – Income Verification Affidavit
- N – Request for Earnings Statement **(added)**
- N – Request for Earnings Information **(added)**
- P – Disability Medical Statement **(added)**
- R – ACH Direct Deposit form **(added)**
- T – Energy Benefit Transfer Form
- V – EAP Benefit Matrix
- W – Applicant Notification Letters **(pending)**
- X – Energy Assistance Program Budget
- Y – Energy Assistance Program Closeout Form
- Z – Income Quick Reference Chart **(added)**

B. Sections Modified:

1. Manual reorganized and streamlined for ease of use.
2. Manual structure now split into two distinct parts: Intake operations and Management Operations.
3. Added list of commonly-used acronyms to front of manual.
4. Dates updated throughout.
5. Added review of 16 Assurances from federal LIHEAP statute to clarify legal obligations connected to administration of program.
6. Added section for Additional Emergency Benefits and broke out ERR and ES into their own subsections.
7. Added section concerning routine IHCD trainings, meetings, and written guidance.
8. Added guidance on inventory tracking.
9. Expanded Weatherization section.

C. Income Documentation Changes:

1. For income calculation, LSPs no longer need to capture income amounts less than \$1.00.
2. Changed income calculation method for self-employment.
3. Allowable business expenses and adjustments are no longer considered as part of EAP eligibility for applicant households with self-employment.

4. Wage Inquiries no longer used except for clients with unemployment benefits income.
5. Added Drastic Loss of Income policy.

D. EAP Benefit Changes:

1. Made multiple changes and adjustments to the EAP benefit matrix.
 - Award 0 points for dwelling type for applicant households in which the primary heating utility is included in the rent (to address decreased energy burden).
 - Bulk fuel receives 11 points, down from 19.
 - Wood receives 11 points, up from 3.
 - At-risk households receive 4 points, up from 3.
 - Regional differential eliminated.
 - On-time payment incentive eliminated.
 - Summer Cool line eliminated
2. Made multiple changes and adjustments to crisis benefit policy.
 - All utilities are now eligible for crisis benefit.
 - Each utility is eligible for \$200 crisis, for a total of \$400.
 - Total electric households are eligible for a maximum of \$400 crisis funding to the electric utility; however, LSPs must ensure that the funding classification is split between heating and electric.
 - Unused crisis benefit from one utility may not be waived to the other utility; each utility has a \$200 crisis cap.
 - Entire crisis benefit to be awarded up front with all bulk and biofuels in order to address costs associated with delivery and potential tank safety checks.
 - When applicant presents a regulated utility in crisis, the LSP is to use the crisis benefit first in order to attempt to mitigate the disconnection amount before applying regular benefit.
3. Benefits for clients who heat with wood or pellets will now be treated as direct pay rather than issuing a voucher.

E. Elimination of Paperwork

1. Eliminated collection of DWD Wage Inquiries except as needed for unemployment.
2. Eliminated need for wood vendors to file MOA with IHCD.
3. Eliminated need for proof of homeownership except as needed for ERR.

F. Other

1. Clarified definition of dwelling requirements.
2. Foster children are no longer considered part of the household unless they are adopted.

3. Clarified policies on roommates and boarders.
4. Clarified language on simplified recertification policy.
5. Threshold for credit balance on bulk fuels to receive benefit increased to \$750.

G. LSP Operations

1. Application processing timeline for mail-in applications shortened to 55 calendar days, down from 60.
2. IHCDCA will print and mail all checks and initiate all ACH deposits.
3. LSPs are strongly recommended to have a generic email where they can accept documents and applications.
4. Transmittals must be sent every two weeks at a minimum; weekly submission is strongly recommended.
5. All file scans must be uploaded to the statewide database within 45 days of eligibility determination. LSPs are strongly recommended to complete this within a shorter timeframe if possible.
6. LSPs must report all subcontractors to IHCDCA, including addresses of intake sites, phone numbers, and times of operation. This information is to be included in the Grantee Plan Packet and IHCDCA must be informed of any and all changes.
7. Clarified requirements regarding LSP Employee, Sub-Contractor, and relative applications.
8. Clarified that LSPs must include all identified at-risk populations in their at-risk application mailings.
9. LSPs are to create a referral form for all other assistance programs they directly administer. This referral form is to be a standard part of the application packet and uploaded as part of the applicant household file.
10. LSPs must either administer ERR program or partner with another LSP or organization in community to subcontract it.
11. Adjusted timeframes for first and second client appeals.
12. Included language requiring that LSPs notify IHCDCA of denied client appeals.
13. Clarified LSP QA requirements.
14. Clarified transmittal correction, negative transmittal, and Energy Benefit Transfer Request procedures.
15. Adjusted grant obligation benchmarks.

H. Monitoring

1. Clarified language and policies throughout.
2. All LSPs will be subject to IHCDCA monitoring annually.
3. Adjusted methodology of error rate calculation.
4. Clarified improvement plans.