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# AMENDMENT TO THE LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT ALLOCATION PLAN

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October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023

As Approved on August 29, 2022

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Submitted by:

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH, Commissioner  
Connecticut Department of Social Services

## Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

In May 2021, the State of Connecticut through its grantee, the Department of Social Services (DSS), received an award of \$9,756,536 to administer the new Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). The funding came from two sources: \$4,286,703 through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and \$5,469,833 through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. Funding rules required that LIHWAP funds be used to make payments to owners or operators of public water systems or treatment works on behalf of low-income households with: disconnected services; pending disconnections or arrearages; or current bills (no arrearages). Up to 15% of the grant funds can be used for the costs of planning and administering the program. The budget period for the use of the funds is May 28, 2021 through September 30, 2023.

On August 20, 2021, the legislative committees of cognizance approved the LIHWAP grant allocation plan (“the Plan”). Although the Plan submitted to and approved by the legislative committees stated that it was for FFY 2022, the plan that was approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services covered the full budget period through FFY 2023. As such, DSS is proposing to amend the previously approved Plan to extend it to the full grant budget period, with minor updates. DSS is projecting that approximately 50% of the funds will be available for use in FFY 2023, and therefore DSS is proposing to submit an amendment to the Plan for the following:

1. Allow households to apply for LIHWAP benefits using the same schedule as the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) for FFY 2023;
2. Adjust the LIHWAP Basic Benefit eligibility levels to match the CEAP Basic Benefit eligibility levels;
3. Allow households that are not directly billed for water/wastewater services to apply for benefits; and
4. Adjust the budget for funds remaining in the grant.

Using the single application (online and paper), households will be able to apply for both LIHWAP and CEAP starting in September 2022.

For FFY 2023, program dates are as follows:

November 1, 2022	First day that the program will make water assistance payments.
May 31, 2023	The last day that a household can apply to establish its eligibility for benefits.
June 16, 2023	Last day to submit water utility bills.

Basic Benefits, which are available for households who are income-eligible for the program with no arrearages or disconnection notices, are revised as shown in the table below. (There are no changes in the Plan to Crisis Assistance Benefits, which are available to eligible households with disconnections, pending disconnections, or arrearages.)

### BASIC BENEFITS

Level	Income Eligibility	Vulnerable * Households	Non-Vulnerable Households
1	At or below 125% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG)	\$300	\$150
2	126% FPG – 200% FPG	\$200	\$100
3	201% FPG – 60% State Median Income (SMI)	\$100	\$ 50

\* *Vulnerable households are those households in which one or more members is elderly (defined as 60 years of age or older), has a disability or is under the age of six.*

Continuing the approach authorized in FFY 2022, the Basic Benefit will be available only after income-eligible households with disconnection notices (priority 1) and arrearages (priority 2) are addressed. Households with water and wastewater costs included in their rent will be eligible for the Basic Benefits.

If federal funding is increased or reduced compared to the estimated funding level used to develop this Plan, DSS may adjust the Basic Benefits and/or income eligibility criteria to reflect the difference.