

CT WAP Program Year 2026 Public Hearing Transcript
July 28, 2026

Olivia Colon (DEEP): Alright, good morning, everyone. We're going to go ahead and get started with today's public hearing.

My name is Olivia Colon. I'm a research analyst who works at DEEP on the Weatherization Assistance Program.

Today, I'm joined by Seema Malani, who is the Office Director for the Office of Affordable Housing Energy Retrofits, Ana Hoepfner, an Associate Research Analyst, Kate Sokol, our Grants and Contracts Specialist, and Nancy Weinberg, our staff attorney.

Thank you so much for joining us today. My team and I are here to talk to you all about the Program Year 2026 State Plan for the 1-4 unit Weatherization Assistance Program.

Very quickly, before we jump into today's content, we will go over our engagement guidelines for this public hearing. You should have automatically been muted upon joining, but if you are not, please just go ahead and mute your microphone. If you have a question or comment during the presentation, please use the Q&A function that Zoom has, and there's a little tutorial on the screen here of how to access that Q&A panel.

Towards the end of this meeting, we will have a public input period where folks will have the opportunity for verbal input. During this time, please raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged by a member of the Connecticut WAP team. Start your comment by stating your name and affiliation or organization, and if you're using any facts or statistics during your comment or question, please note the source.

And last but not least, please note that this meeting is being recorded, and that recording and transcript will be made available after this meeting.

All right, so the state plan that we are discussing today is for the 1-to-4 unit Weatherization Assistance Program, or WAP for short. This is also referred to as our single-family program, which is funded with formula funds by the Department of Energy.

The purpose of WAP is to increase the energy efficiency of dwellings that are owned or occupied by income-eligible persons to help improve their health and safety. Especially for individuals and households that DOE has identified as vulnerable. DOE considers households with members who are elderly, disabled, or young children to be vulnerable. And additionally, households with high energy use or high energy burden are considered vulnerable.

Our state plan for Program Year 2026 has been developed in accordance with all federal regulations, so this includes 10 CFR 440, which are those programmatic regulations, and 2 CFR 200, which are the financial regulations.

All right, so next up, we are going to discuss our budget for Program Year 2026. Just very quick note that this budget is an estimate. It is subject to change based on further guidance from DOE or any feedback that they give us on our submitted State Plan.

So, in total, we are planning on receiving \$4,507,692 as our federal allocation. \$3,389,992 was allocated for program costs. \$734,012 was allocated for training and technical assistance, which you'll also hear us say T&TA for short. And \$383,625 was allocated for those Weatherization Readiness Funds. So this is funding that can be used to address barriers to weatherization before weatherization in the unit begins.

For our Grantee distribution, DEEP will be keeping \$101,696 for our administrative-related costs. And we will be using \$622,812 for our training and technical assistance. So this includes paying our technical consultants, who assist us with desk and field monitoring. So in total, as the Grantee, we are going to be keeping \$724,508 worth of the allocation.

The remaining \$3,783,121 is going to be allocated to the Subgrantees and split between them. So you can see on the right-hand side here all the different cost categories and the allocations that we're estimating on giving them. The main ones that I want to call attention to are program operations, so this is going to be the funding that's actually used to install those weatherization measures in homes. That's the largest portion of the budget, so that's going to be \$1,794,686 worth of the WAP budget.

And again, we are going to be giving them \$498,668 for health and safety, which, like the name implies, is used to address any health and safety issues that might be present in a unit.

And I do just want to call out that the Subgrantees are going to be receiving the full \$383,625 worth of the Weatherization Readiness Funds, or WRF funding which can be used to address any barriers that may be present in the home that might prevent weatherization from taking place.

The other 3 budget categories that I do want to call attention to are new this year. So those are going to be Intake and Eligibility, Energy Audit, and Final Inspection. So for all 3 of those budgets, we are going to be allocating \$125,000 for all 3 of those.

All right. Next up, these are our two service regions that we have in the state. Each region has about the same number of income-eligible households, so those are going to be households that meet that 60% state median income definition of low income.

Region 1, which you can see in the blue, is serviced by Community Renewal Team, or CRT for short. CRT is a community action agency, which is based out of Hartford, Connecticut, and CRT will serve Hartford, Litchfield, Middlesex, New London, Tolland, and Windham counties.

Region 2, which you can see in the red, is served by Center for Ecotechnology, or CET for short. CET is a non-profit organization that's based out of Northampton, Massachusetts, but all of their contractors, inspectors, and other folks doing that boots-on-the-ground labor are based here in Connecticut. CET will be serving Fairfield and New Haven counties.

So, next up, we want to spend some time talking about the program changes that we've made recently, so this would be over the course of Program Year 2025.

So, the first major change that we have to the program is the establishment of advance accounts. With the amendments for Program Year 2025, DEEP added this advance account as an option for our Subgrantees. This is a segregated account that the Subgrantees can use to pay their subcontractors before they've received reimbursement from DEEP.

In the initial amount... the initial amount in these accounts was \$200,000, and that will be replenished by DEEP as the Subgrantees pay their contractors. They submit proof of payment to DEEP that their contractors have been paid, and they request reimbursement from us.

Next up, we have the development of our monitoring processes. So, over the course of Program Year 2025, DEEP worked with our Subgrantees and our technical assistance team to update the WAP monitoring processes. This helped to streamline and coordinate the processes between the Subgrantees and our technical team.

We've also developed and implemented a project review process that's been added to Hancock Software, which is our data management software.

And speaking of software, we have a couple software transitions that we would like to talk about. So, during Program Year 2025, DEEP did receive approval from DOE to continue using the Waweb, so Weatherization Assistant web-based version suite of software, which includes NEAT and MHEA.

NEAT stands for the National Energy Audit Tool and is used to create energy models in 1-4 unit homes, and MHEA is short for the Manufactured Home Energy Auditing Tool, and is used for manufactured homes.

Throughout the Program Year, we also worked to make upgrades to Hancock software, which is our data management tool. These updates include better client file organization and project process tracking.

And last, but certainly not least, we have worked really hard to update our programmatic guidelines. So during the course of Program Year 2025, we developed new Health and Safety and Weatherization Readiness Funds guidelines. The purpose of these new guidelines was to provide clarity about the processes when utilizing these two streams of funding.

Additionally, we made substantial and comprehensive updates to the Connecticut WAP Operations Manual, which is now available on our website. And we've also worked with Saturn to get our Field Guide updated.

All right, so next we're going to talk a bit about some proposed changes that we have to WAP that the team and I have developed.

So the first is going to be the leveraging of additional funding sources. So, moving forward, WAP will have more cost-shared units with the Home Energy Solutions-Income Eligible Program, or HES-IE for short, now that a scope of work for cost sharing has been completed. And additionally, DEEP will be utilizing funds from the Revolving Loan Grant Fund, or RLGF, and SEP-BIL, which is State Energy Program Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. We'll be using those two sources of funding to help improve WAP services and offer more energy savings to our customers.

We have also issued an RFP, so request for proposal, for WAP-IIJA, which is our multifamily WAP program which is funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Earlier this year, we issued an RFP for the service provider. The response period has now closed and DEEP is currently evaluating responses to select a service provider for the WAP-IIJA program.

Next up, we have the WAP self-intake application. So DEEP has been working with the Hancock developers pretty closely to launch a self-intake application. This self-intake application will allow interested parties to apply for WAP directly and also apply outside of heating season when the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program application is closed. So, it'll just help, get folks directly into the Program and keep a steady stream of folks coming into WAP.

And then, lastly, we have those additional funding categories. So, as previously discussed in the budget slide, DEEP has decided to add on three additional budget categories for the WAP program.

DOE has issued guidance which allows Grantees to utilize additional budget categories for weatherization activities. So DEEP will utilize these categories and set aside funding specifically for client intake and eligibility, energy auditing, and final inspections.

Here, you can see our production goals for Program Year 2026. So both in Region 1 and Region 2, we have the goal of weatherizing 102 units, so that's going to be a grand total of 204 across the state.

Currently, DEEP works with two technical consultants to help us with technical tasks and monitoring of completed units. Throughout Program Year 2026, the Connecticut WAP team will continue to contract with the Association for Energy Affordability, or AEA for short. AEA is the organization that helps us out with our desk reviews. They help with the desk review portion of state-level quality control inspections, waiver reviews, technical writing, and trainings.

And we will also continue to contract with True View Consultants, or TVC for short. TVC is the agency that completes the on-site reviews for state-level quality control inspections, and they also help us complete observations of initial energy audits and any in-progress work.

So, for our public hearing. Our public hearing is today, Tuesday, July 28th, 2026, and it will be held from 10:00AM until 11:30AM. This public hearing will be held remotely via Zoom.

Any written comments on the state plan are due back to us by August 5th, 2026, at 11:59PM. If you have any written comments, those may be addressed to DEEP.energybureau@ct.gov.

Our public hearing notice with the Zoom link for this public hearing was posted on July 17th, 2026, and is now available on our website, which is www.ct.gov/deep/weatherization.

And once complete, the WAP State Plan, a draft of our WAP state plan will be posted on our website, and again, you can see the link right there.

All right, so that is what we have by way of updates to the WAP Program Year 2026 State Plan. So we are now going to move into our public input period.

So, again, just to go over those guidelines. During this time, please raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged by a member of the CT WAP team, state your name and affiliation or organization. You will have 3 minutes for your comment or question once you begin speaking. And again, if you use any facts or statistics, just during your question or your comment, please, state the source for those.

So, we welcome any type of input that folks may have on the program, just any aspect of it, but specifically, DEEP is seeking public input on how we may serve more clients and we're also seeking input on how we can strengthen or improve the program.

So, with that being said, I will now open the floor for public comment. But if anything else comes up either after this presentation has wrapped up or between now and August 5th, when written comments are due back, you may send written comments to DEEP.energybureau@ct.gov.

And again, that full notice is available on our website, which is www.ct.gov/deep/weatherization.

So with that, I will open the floor for our public comment opportunity.

[No public comments received during the opportunity.]

Olivia Colon (DEEP): All right, the time is now 11:30AM, so we are going to move to adjourn today's public hearing.

Again, if you have any questions or comments or anything that came up during today's public hearing, again, written comments are open until August 5th, 2026, at 11:59PM. You may send your written comments to DEEP.energybureau@ct.gov.

And again, that full notice and a draft of our State Plan will be made available on our website which is www.ct.gov/deep/weatherization. Thank you so much to everyone who joined us today.