

CT WAP State Plan Public Hearing Transcript

Original Date: April 15th, 2026, from 4:00PM to 5:30PM

Location: Virtually hosted on Zoom

Olivia Colon (DEEP):

Alright, everybody, we're going to go ahead and get started.

Good afternoon, my name is Olivia Colon. I'm a Research Analyst at DEEP who works on the Weatherization Assistance Program. I'm joined today by Seema Malani, the Office Director for the Office of Affordable Housing Energy Retrofits, Brian Biernat, who's another Research Analyst on the team, and Kate Sokol, who's our team's Grants and Contracts Specialist.

Thank you so much for joining us today. During this meeting, 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.

So, really quickly, before we dive into the meeting, I just want to go over some engagement guidelines that we have. So please mute your microphone upon joining this meeting. Throughout the meeting, if you have a question or a comment that pops up in your mind, please use the Q&A function for questions and comments. And also, please note that this meeting is being recorded and will be made available afterwards.

Towards the end of this meeting, we're going to have our public input period. So during this time, please raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged by one of us. Upon being called on, please state your name and affiliation or organization that you're with. Once you start speaking, you'll have 3 minutes for your comments or your question. And if at any point you use a fact statistic or anything like that, please just state the source that that comes from.

Alright, so quick introduction. The State Plan that we're discussing today is for the 1-4-unit Weatherization Assistance Program, which is known as WAP for short. This is also referred to as our single-family program, which is funded by formula funds from the Department of Energy.

The purpose of WAP is to increase energy efficiency in dwellings owned or occupied by income-eligible persons to improve their health and safety, especially for those individuals and households that DOE identifies as vulnerable.

DOE considers households with members who are elderly, disabled, or young children to be vulnerable. Additionally, households with high energy use or high energy burden are also considered vulnerable.

Our State Plan for Program Year 2026 is developed in accordance with the federal regulations related to WAP. So those are 10 CFR 440, which are the programmatic regulations, and 2 CFR 200, which are those financial regulations.

One really important note before we continue and start talking about the content of the State Plan, is that as of today, April 15th, 2026, DOE has not issued application instructions or a budget allocation for Program Year 2026, for the WAP program. On January 23rd of this year, President Trump did sign the Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for 2026. This act provided funding to DOE and a few other federal

agencies. This act also allocated \$369 million to WAP, which is an increase of \$3 million above the Fiscal Year 2025 levels.

The CT WAP team has started working on the key components of our Program Year 2026 plan. However, please note that, Program Year 2026 for WAP will not be officially confirmed until DOE releases guidance on how to submit an application, the elements of that application, and, of course, the funding amounts that we can expect.

So, with that being said, this is our estimated budget for Program Year 2026, which we've based on our Program Year 2025 numbers. In total, as a State, we're expecting to receive \$4,065,724 in total.

The Grantee, which is Connecticut DEEP, will be retaining \$667,992, with the majority of that, so \$567,284 going towards Training and Technical Assistance. The T&TA, or Training and Technical Assistance Budget, is used to pay our technical consultants, who help us with desk and field monitoring.

The remaining \$3,397,732 will be split amongst our Subgrantees. The largest portion of this funding goes towards Program Support, so those are the actual energy conservation measures themselves that are installed into homes. This makes up \$1,824,864 of the budget.

And then the second largest portion of the budget that the Subgrantees will get is Health and Safety, which, like the name implies, is used to remediate health and safety issues related to weatherization in the home. And that is \$545,090 of the total budget.

So, back over on the left-hand side of the screen, you can see those Weatherization Readiness Funds. This is a pool of funding that can be used to address barriers to weatherization before the weatherization process actually begins in a home. So all \$383,625 worth of that funding is going to go over to the Subgrantees, so that way they can better serve homes in Connecticut.

And then back on the right there, you can see the remaining budget allocations for Administration, Training and Technical Assistance, Financial Audits, and Insurance.

Again, just a disclaimer that this budget is an estimate, and all of these numbers are subject to change based on DOE's guidance for Program Year 2026.

So, moving on, this is our regions map for the state of Connecticut. Each region in the state 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 blue, is served by Community Renewal Team, or CRT for short. CRT is a community action agency, which is based out of Hartford, Connecticut, and they are responsible for serving Hartford, Litchfield, Middlesex, New London, Tolland, and Windham counties.

And then Region 2, which is highlighted in red, is served by the Center for Ecotechnology. CET is a non-profit that's based out of Northampton, Massachusetts, but all of their contractors, inspectors, and other folks that really do boots-on-the-ground labor are all based here in Connecticut. And CET is responsible for serving Fairfield and New Haven counties.

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

First up, we have the establishment of advance accounts. So, 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 receive reimbursement from DEEP. The initial amount in these accounts is \$200,000 and that will be replenished by DEEP once we receive proof that the subcontractors have been paid each month.

Next up, we have the development of monitoring processes. So during the course of Program Year 2025, DEEP worked with our Subgrantees and our technical team to update this monitoring process. This really streamlined and coordinated the process between our Subgrantees and our technical team and we also developed a project review process that will be added into the Hancock software. Hancock is our data management software that we use for WAP.

Speaking of software, we also had a software transition in Program Year 2025. We did receive DOE's approval to continue using the Weatherization Assistant, or WAweb, 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 Audit and is used to create energy models for manufactured homes.

Last but not least, we also have the updated program guidelines. So, over the course of this most recent Program Year DEEP developed new Health and Safety and WRF guidelines. So again, that's Health and Safety and Weatherization Readiness Funds. The purpose of these new guidelines is to provide clarity about the processes when utilizing these two funding sources, and additionally, we also worked with the company Saturn to get our field guide updated for this Program Year.

Next up, I'm going to talk a little bit about some proposed upcoming changes to WAP that the team has developed and we may implement.

First up, we have the leveraging of additional funding sources. So, moving forward, WAP is going to have more cost-share jobs between WAP and the Home Energy Solutions Income Eligible, or HES-IE program, now that a scope of work for cost sharing between the two programs has been completed. Additionally, DEEP may also utilize other funding sources to improve WAP services and offer additional energy conservation measures to customers.

We are also currently working on a request for proposals for a WAP IIJA service provider, or WAP IIJA. WAP IIJA is our multifamily program, which is funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This RFP will be made available on our website once it is complete.

Next up, we have the WAP self-intake application. So, DEEP has been working with the Hancock developers to launch a self-intake application. Again, Hancock is WAP's data management software. The self-intake application is going to allow interested people to apply for WAP directly and not have to go through the CEAP application. And this will be really helpful because it's going to allow folks to apply for WAP even during non-heating season when that CEAP application is closed.

And finally, we're also working on some updated program guidelines. So the team is working on an updated Operations Manual. And again, this will be made available on our website once it has been completed.

So next up, we have our estimated production goals for Program Year 2026. So, in both Regions 1 and 2, we're looking to weatherize a total of 107 units for a grand total of 214 across the state. And again, disclaimer that this number for now is just an estimate and will be finalized once DOE announces Connecticut's budget for Program Year 2026. But for right now, this is what we are estimating to complete next year.

So as I mentioned, Connecticut currently works with two technical consultants to help out with our technical tasks and monitoring. Throughout Program Year 2026, Connecticut WAP will continue to contract with the Association for Energy Affordability, or AEA for short. AEA helps us mostly with desk review portions of the state-level quality control inspections. They also help out with waiver reviews, technical writing, and any training that the Subgrantees may need.

Additionally, we will also continue to contract with True View Consultants, or TVC for short. TVC completes the on-site reviews for state-level quality control inspections, and they also complete observations of initial energy audits and WAP work while it is in progress.

On April 1st, DEEP issued a request for written comments on our draft Program Year 2026 State Plan. These written comments on the State Plan are due back to us by April 22nd, 2026, at 11:59 PM.

We do welcome comments on any and all aspects of the program, but specifically, this year DEEP is seeking input on how we can serve more clients and how we can strengthen or improve the program.

You may send in your written comments to our email address, which is DEEP, EnergyBureau@ct.gov, and that full notice is now available on our website, www.ct.gov/deep/weatherization.

So today, we are holding two public hearings to discuss these changes to the State Plan. Hearing One was this morning from 10:30AM to 12PM. And Hearing Two, which is this current hearing, is being held from 4PM and will go until 5:30PM. Both of these hearings are being held remotely on Zoom. We will accept verbal comments during these public hearings. And again, those written comments can be sent over to that email address.

We are still working on.

Oh, the State Plan was posted on our website earlier today, and is now available, for review. That is a draft format.

So, I will go ahead and back up to this slide now. So this is the end of the content that we have for today. This is our presentation, so I'll back up to this slide, and I will now open the floor for any public comments or questions.

[Break for public comments. None received during this time.]

Alright, everybody, the time is now 5:30, so we are going to move to adjourn today's public hearing.

Just before we end today's meeting, I do want to make a quick correction about something that I said earlier. I believe I misspoke when I said that the WAP State Plan had been posted on the website. What I meant to say was that the notice of public hearings and our request for public comments were posted to the website, earlier this month. Those were posted on April 1st.

Once it is completed, we will post the WAP State Plan to our website.

And again, I will just back up to this slide. Again, that opportunity for written public comments will remain open until April 22nd, 2026, at 11:59PM. And if you have any questions or comments that popped into your head, either during this meeting or after it's wrapped up, please send in your written comments to DEEP. EnergyBureau@ct.gov.

So with that, we will wrap up here. Thank you so much for joining us today.