

**Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)**  
**Water and Wastewater Service Vendors**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

March 31, 2022

*1. What is the process for vendors to provide written reconciliation and confirmation for LIHWAP benefits received and services restored?*

The local community action agency will coordinate with each vendor in their service area to review the reconciliation process and identify points of contact. The following is a brief overview of the process:

- a. The agency will email an excel spreadsheet listing the LIHWAP benefits that were paid the previous month to the vendor. The spreadsheet will include the LIHWAP applicant's name, account holder's name, account number, benefit amount, and date the LIHWAP applicant received assistance.
- b. The vendor will review the spreadsheet to verify that the benefits were applied to the appropriate account within 3-5 business days of receipt and, if applicable, that services were restored in a timely manner or disconnection status was removed.
- c. The vendor will type an "X" next to each of the account(s) that were credited appropriately and type their name above the following statement that will be on each spreadsheet:  
*By typing my name above, I certify that the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) payments marked with an "X" on this report were applied to the appropriate account within 3-5 business days of receipt and, if applicable, services were restored in a timely manner or disconnection status was removed.*
- d. If an amount was not credited appropriately or the vendor credited an amount different from what is shown on the spreadsheet, the vendor must provide clarification to the local community action agency either on the spreadsheet or in an email.
- e. The vendor should return the completed spreadsheet to the agency in a timely manner.

*2. Are vendors provided a list of approved community action agencies that might provide assistance to customers in their service territories?*

Yes, the LIHWAP webpage will be updated soon with a map and contact information for all of the community action agencies.

*3. What should be the process for vendors to educate customers on the program? Should we point them to the website or some other method?*

Yes, vendors can share the ADECA LIHWAP webpage with customers or share the contact information of the local community action agency in their service area.

*4. Once an applicant has been approved for funding, will the vendor be provided a copy of the applicant's consent form along with the pledge documentation?*

No, the applicant's consent form will be maintained at the local community action agency.

5. *Are the vendor reporting requirements set by the program administrator or by the local community action agency who will obtain the data from the vendor?*

All customer data that is necessary for federal reporting requirements will be obtained by the community action agencies during the application process. The only report needed from vendors is the payment reconciliation report(s) to be submitted to the local community action agency on a regular basis. The reconciliation report will be generated from the state-wide intake database used by all of the community action agencies.

6. *What percentage of a bill will LIHWAP pay for an eligible customer? If it is more than 100%, should a credit be posted to the customer's account?*

The percentage awarded to an eligible household depends on whether they receive Crisis Assistance or Regular Assistance. For Crisis Assistance applications, the local community action agency will contact the vendor regarding the customer's outstanding balance to determine the benefit amount. Crisis Assistance funds can be used to cover all arrearages as well as standard reconnection fees, deposits, late fees, charges, and penalties related to water and wastewater services, including stormwater, up to a maximum of \$2,000.

For Regular Assistance, a benefit matrix has been developed based on the size of the household, household income, water/wastewater burden, and the number of household members over 60, disabled, or under 18. Regular Assistance benefit amounts vary from \$80 to \$320. If the Regular Assistance benefit exceeds the amount the customer owes, the remainder may be credited to the customer's account.

7. *If a customer fails to pay their portion of the bill, should the vendor contact ADECA and refund the LIHWAP award to ADECA? And then cut off the water due to an unpaid account?*

No, all refunds should be returned to the local community action agency. The vendor should follow their standard business practices regarding customer non-payment.

8. *If the customer fails to pay their portion and the service is cut off, does the vendor need to terminate our LIHWAP agreement in its entirety or just as to that particular customer?*

No, the vendor agreement does not need to be terminated if a customer fails to pay.

9. *If a LIHWAP payment does not cover arrearages and fees required by the vendor to restore or maintain service to the client, can the vendor refuse payment?*

Yes, the vendor has the right to refuse payment.

10. *If a customer receives assistance from another agency, can they still receive LIHWAP assistance?*

Yes, if the customer meets all eligibility requirements and funding is available, they can receive a Crisis Assistance benefit for their arrearages or a Regular Assistance benefit for their current bill. The vendor can contact the local community action agency if there are any questions regarding a specific payment.