



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Community Services
Division of Energy Assistance

LIHEAP Eligibility and Benefit Level Determinations

June 7, 2013

LIHEAP Grantee Training



Why Determine Eligibility and Benefit Payment Levels?

- Section 2605(b)(5) of the LIHEAP Statute (42 U.S.C. § 8624(b)(5)) requires that the highest level of assistance go to:
 - Households which have the lowest incomes;
AND
 - Households with the highest energy costs or needs;
AND
 - Taking into account family size.



Eligibility versus Benefit Levels

Step one: **Eligibility**—whether a household meets the minimum requirements to receive LIHEAP assistance, such as household income cap.

Step two: **Benefit levels**—the amount of assistance given to households that are determined eligible for LIHEAP.



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Eligibility: Determining Minimum and Maximum Income

First, decide whether to use Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) or State Median Income (SMI)

- If using SMI, grantees may set households income eligibility up to 60% SMI; or
- If using FPG , grantees may set households income eligibility be up to 150%.
- Whether using SMI or FPG, household income eligibility may be set no lower than 110% FPG.

Note: HHS publishes the FPG's each year through an IM on the LIHEAP web site. Grantees must use the most currently available FPG's by October 1 each year (45 C.F.R. § 96.85).



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Eligibility:

What is Household Income

- The LIHEAP statute does not define “income.”
- Grantees must define what they consider “income” to ensure that all households are treated the same when determining whether a household is income eligible for LIHEAP benefits.
- Categorical eligibility option: grantees can choose to make certain households eligible based on receiving benefits from other needs-tested Federal programs.



Benefit Determination: Payment Matrix

- Develop a payment matrix to set different payment levels.
- A payment matrix is a chart on which all of the required factors (income, energy costs or needs, and family size) are considered to vary the benefit amounts for each household.



Benefit Determination: Three Required Variables to Consider when Building Your Payment Matrix

1. Household Income;
2. Household Size; and
3. Energy Cost or Need



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Benefit Determination: Household Income

- Look at the total household income.



Benefit Determination: Household Size

- Prorate the benefit amount based on household composition number;
- Count only persons residing in the dwelling unit sharing a primary heating or cooling system;
- Do not count non-qualified aliens. They are ineligible to receive Federal benefits. (Do count their income though!)



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Benefit Determination : Determining Energy Cost or Need

Choose one or more of the following:

- Fuel Type
- Individual Bill Amount
- Energy Burden
- Other
- Climate or Region
- Dwelling Type
- Household Need (specific to situation)



Benefit Determination Variable Example:

Varying Benefits Based on Energy Burden

- **Energy Burden =**

dollar amount of current energy bill

total household monthly income

=

% of income
spent on
home energy
each month

- **Decision Point:**

include or exclude any low-income rate discounts
in total cost of energy bill?



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Sample Benefits Matrix Based on Fuel Type

Household Size:								Poverty Level	FO, Kero		Natural	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		Propane	Electric	Gas	Others
\$2,707.50	\$3,642.50	\$4,577.50	\$5,512.50	\$6,447.50	\$7,382.50	\$8,317.50	\$9,252.50	Up to 25%	\$750	\$600	\$550	\$510
\$5,415.00	\$7,285.00	\$9,155.00	\$11,025.00	\$12,895.00	\$14,765.00	\$16,635.00	\$18,505.00	Over 25% to 50%	\$725	\$570	\$525	\$480
\$8,122.50	\$10,927.50	\$13,732.50	\$16,537.50	\$19,342.50	\$22,147.50	\$24,952.50	\$27,757.50	Over 50% to 75%	\$700	\$550	\$500	\$450
\$10,830.00	\$14,570.00	\$18,310.00	\$22,050.00	\$25,790.00	\$29,530.00	\$33,270.00	\$37,010.00	Over 75% to 100%	\$680	\$520	\$480	\$420
\$13,537.50	\$18,212.50	\$22,887.50	\$27,562.50	\$32,237.50	\$36,912.50	\$41,587.50	\$46,262.50	Over 100% to 125%	\$650	\$500	\$430	\$390
\$16,245.00	\$21,855.00	\$27,465.00	\$33,075.00	\$38,685.00	\$44,295.00	\$49,905.00	\$55,515.00	Over 125% to 150%	\$630	\$480	\$400	\$360
\$18,952.50	\$25,497.50	\$32,042.50	\$38,587.50	\$45,132.50	\$51,677.50	\$58,222.50	\$64,767.50	Over 150% to 175%	\$620	\$450	\$370	\$330
\$21,660.00	\$29,140.00	\$36,620.00	\$44,100.00	\$51,580.00	\$59,060.00	\$66,540.00	\$74,020.00	Over 175% to 200%	\$610	\$425	\$330	\$300



FY 2013 Nevada Example of Eligibility Determination

1. Determine the # of eligible household members:
 - a. exclude anyone who:
 - i. is an ineligible non-citizen;
 - ii. refuses to provide their SSN;
 - iii. Is a roomer/boarder and lacks a separate heating source, entrance or who cohabitate;
 - iv. a person with an active Intentional Program Violation ruling; or
 - v. a student who lives outside the household;
2. Determine the total household's annualized gross income which cannot exceed 125% FPG.



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FY 2013 Nevada Example of Benefit Determination

1. Multiple the household's annual gross income by the Nevada median household energy burden for the current year (2.30%);
2. Calculate the household's total dollars spent on home energy usage for the prior 12 months for the primary source;
3. Calculate the household's total home energy usage (such as Kwh) for the prior 12 months for primary source;
4. Subtract the amount from step 1 from the amount from step 2:
 - a. If the difference is \$180 or more, that amount is the benefit (up to the cap)
 - b. If the difference is \$179 or less, the household receives \$180
5. The benefit is subject to caps as described on the next slide.



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FY 2013 Nevada Example of Benefit Determination

Benefit Cap Table – All Other Energy Sources

HH Size	<75%	75-125%
1	\$557	\$446
2	\$587	\$469
3	\$618	\$494
4	\$650	\$520
5	\$683	\$546
6	\$717	\$573
7	\$752	\$602
8+	\$790	\$632

Add \$50 to households with an elderly, disabled, or a child under age six.



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FY 2013 Nevada Example of Benefit Determination

Benefit Cap Table – Propane and Oil

HH Size	<75%	75-125%
1	\$757	\$646
2	\$787	\$669
3	\$818	\$694
4	\$850	\$720
5	\$883	\$746
6	\$917	\$773
7	\$952	\$802
8+	\$990	\$832

Add \$50 to households with an elderly, disabled, or a child under age six



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Payment Matrix Questions

Consult Section D of the LIHEAP Tribal Manual, at:
<http://www.liheap.ncat.org/Tribes/manual.htm>

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