

MEMORANDUM

TO: Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Directors NOTICE #: 092017-1-I-SWCBS
EHEAP Program Directors

FROM: Jeffrey S. Bragg
Secretary

DATE: September 20, 2017

SUBJECT: Notice of Instruction: Release of Weather-Related/Supply Shortage Crisis Funds

This Notice of Instruction is in response to recent weather-related events in Florida and provides the guidance and authority to release Emergency Home Energy Assistance to the Elderly (EHEAP) Weather-Related/Supply Shortage Crisis (WR) funds. The attachments to this notice will provide the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) with the requirements for compliance.

The Department of Economic Opportunity's (DEO) Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Program Information Memorandum, IM-17-01, establishes the policy for the release of EHEAP WR funds. WR funds may only be used during state or federal emergencies declared by the President, the Governor, or the Executive Director of DEO. When funds are released for a WR emergency, DEO provides binding directives as to the allowable expenditures of the funds.

In response to the Governor's Declaration/Executive Order 17-235, the release of EHEAP WR funds will be used to assist low-income elder Floridians to maintain or re-establish electric service, provide utility deposits at new places of residence for those permanently displaced, and provide repairs or replacements of air-conditioning equipment to households with health-related conditions exacerbated by flooding, wind, and other storm damage.

IM-17-01 provides the directives for the expenditure of EHEAP WR funds, that include:

1. Purpose and Objective,
2. Requirements for Assistance,
3. Applicant Responsibilities,
4. Benefit Limits, and
5. Benefits Available.

Utility assistance requests outside the parameters of the provided directives are not eligible for WR assistance. All WR assistance client files shall contain proof that the assistance was both energy and storm event related, and occurred during the period from September 4, 2017, through December 2, 2017.

WR emergency assistance is a benefit for elder Floridians, that is in addition to other EHEAP benefits. The maximum WR benefit is \$1,000.00 per household for expenses incurred as a result of Hurricane Irma, from September 4, 2017, through December 2, 2017. The use of WR funds does not include paying past due bills or supplementing a crisis benefit.

Prior Department approval of each AAA's written policy for determining the conditions under which an applicant is eligible for assistance, is required. Preference should be given to households containing elders, young children, and persons with disabilities. AAAs shall submit their written policies within ten working days of the issuance of this notice; and receive written approval from the Department, to be eligible to provide this type of benefit to elder Floridians.

Should a service area's WR assistance needs exceed WR allocations currently in contract, Crisis Assistance funds may be transferred to the WR category. The Department's prior approval of a transfer to the WR category is required and must occur prior to exceeding the AAA's current WR allocation.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Florida's elders. Should you require additional information, please contact Judy Bowers at 850-414-2057.

Attachments:

Department of Economic Opportunity, LIHEAP Program Information Memorandum, IM-17-01
Governor's Declaration/Executive Order 17-235