



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

LIHEAP Program
Information Memorandum

IM-19-01

PROGRAM(S):	Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
SUBJECT:	Policy on LIHEAP Funds Allowable toward Client Utility Bills (CUB)
EFFECTIVE:	April 10, 2019

1. **Purpose and Objective**

To establish a clear and workable policy for LIHEAP funds payment made by LIHEAP agencies to their utility providers from the effective date of this document as it relates to Client Utility Bills (CUB).

2. **Summary and Background**

During a recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services onsite monitoring, a sampling of utility bills indicated that the LIHEAP funds are paying the entire utility bill including unallowable services such as Water and Sewage etc.

On April 10, 2019 Florida LIHEAP office advised the LIHEAP agencies to cease and desist with this practice.

3. **Updates to Florida LIHEAP Policy Procedure Manual**

DEO has made the following changes to Florida LIHEAP Policy and Procedure Manual as follows:

As per policy manual;

.05 Allowable Categories for Financial Assistance

LIHEAP funding may be utilized to provide the following services:

- A. Utility Payments for heating/cooling bill assistance for electric, gas, propane, wood, coal, or refillable fuels;

- B. Temporary Emergency Shelter (if needed due to energy related crisis);
- C. Payment to landlords (when utility costs are included in rent);
- D. Repairs or replacements to heating/cooling units (as long as the amount is within the benefit limits and work is done by a licensed contractor);
- E. Deposits to connect or restore energy;
- F. Late fees, disconnect and reconnect fees;
- G. Charges from a previous account held by the Applicant that is now closed; and
- H. Blankets and fans.
- I. Taxes and fees associated with the Client Utility Bill towards the energy portion. In some cases, where the utility vendor combines all the other fees and taxes which also includes non-home energy services, such taxes and fees can be paid through LIHEAP funds.

Example: In a case where taxes for services are commingled for other services, proceed with paying the taxes portion of the bill.
- J. Other allowable payments are those incidental to the start-up of service including reasonable connection or re-connection fees, delivery fees, deposits, and other fees related to the start-up of service.

.06 Unallowable Categories for Financial Assistance

LIHEAP funding may not be utilized to provide the following services:

- A. Water, Sewer and Garbage charges are not covered as part of the utility bill of the household;

However, the LIHEAP policy does allow exception when water is used for air conditioning, i.e. an evaporated cooler.
- B. Charges resulting from meter-tampering;
- C. Charges resulting from returned checks; and

D. Other charges that are not energy-related and are not required as part of the energy portion of the bill to keep power to the household.

5. References and Documents

- A. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-disaster-relief-and-outreach-in-the-wake-of-recent-storms-and-power>
- B. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/consumer-frequently-asked-questions#Q3>

6. Inquiries

Azhar Mahboob, Community Program Manager
Bureau of Economic Self-Sufficiency
Division of Community Development
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building, MSC-400
Tallahassee, FL 32399
O: 850.717.8456
F: 850.488.2488
azhar.mahboob@deo.myflorida.com