



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Community Services | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Information Memorandum

IM#: LIHEAP-IM-2021-03

DATE: July 6, 2021

TO: LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP) GRANTEEES
AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: State Median Income Estimates for Optional Use in Federal Fiscal Year
(FY) 2021 LIHEAP and Mandatory Use in FY 2022 LIHEAP

ATTACHMENT(S): (1) State Median Income (SMI) by Household Size for Mandatory Use
in FY 2022

RELATED REFERENCES

- (1) The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act, Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Public Law 97-35, as amended; and
- (2) 45 CFR 96.85 (b), Income Eligibility — Final Rule, published in the **Federal Register** on March 3, 1988 (53 FR 6827) and amended October 15, 1999 (64 FR 55858).

PURPOSE

To provide LIHEAP grantees the State Median Income (SMI) estimates for optional use in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 and mandatory use in FY 2022.

BACKGROUND

Section 2605(b)(2)(B) of the LIHEAP statute at 42 USC 8624(b)(2)(B), sets the maximum allowed in determining income eligibility for LIHEAP at 60 percent of SMI or 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), whichever is higher. LIHEAP grantees may set their programs' income eligibility criteria anywhere between 110 percent of FPG and this maximum.

CONTENT

This memorandum updates the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) LIHEAP income-eligibility limits based upon SMI for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. These limits make up part of the maximum that LIHEAP grantees may use in setting their programs' income eligibility criteria. Grantees must limit LIHEAP eligibility to 150 percent of the FPG or 60 percent of SMI—meaning at or below the greater of these two levels. Grantee must not set LIHEAP income-eligibility below 110 percent of the FPG.

HHS calculated these limits from the SMI estimates for a 4-person family developed by the United States Census Bureau (Census Bureau). HHS calculated 60 percent of the Census Bureau's estimates from the American Community Survey to determine the maximum SMI for LIHEAP eligibility.

HHS calculated the limits specified at 45 CFR 96.85. This methodology outlines that HHS shall multiply the limit for a four-person household by the following: (1) 52 percent for one person; (2) 68 percent for two persons; (3) 84 percent for three persons; (4) 100 percent for four persons; (5) 116 percent for five persons; and (6) 132 percent for six persons. HHS did not calculate the limits for households of sizes greater than six persons; however, those limits are based on that for a four-person family times 132 percent, plus 3 percentage points for each household member above six. See Attachment 1 for (1) the 60 percent of SMI figures for households of sizes one through six; and (2) the instructions for calculating 60 percent of SMI for households of sizes greater than six.

When making income-eligibility determinations on applications for LIHEAP assistance, grantees must determine the SMI-based limits on household size, not family size, as defined by the federal LIHEAP statute at 42 USC 8622(5): "any individual or group of individuals who are living together as one economic unit for whom residential energy is customarily purchased in common or who make undesignated payments for energy in the form of rent". Although the figures presented here show limits by family size, grantees should use the applicable limit for a family presented here as the limit for a household in their programs.

Optional Use

Grantees may adopt these estimates at any time between the date of the publication of this document and October 1, 2020 (the beginning of FFY 2021) or the beginning of the grantee's fiscal year, whichever is later.

Mandatory Use

Grantees must adopt these estimates by no later than October 1, 2021 (the beginning of FFY 2022), or the beginning of the grantee's fiscal year, whichever is later.

INQUIRIES TO

Please send all inquiries to the following individual:

Peter Edelman
Program Analyst, Division of Energy Assistance
Office of Community Services
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 C Street, SW, 5th Floor
Mail Room 5425
Washington, DC 20201
(202) 401-5292
peter.edelman@acf.hhs.gov

Thank you for your attention to these matters. OCS looks forward to continuing to provide high-quality services to OCS grantees.

/s/
Lauren Christopher
Director, Division of Energy Assistance
Office of Community Services