



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Community Services | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
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Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

Dear Colleague Letter

DCL#: LIHWAP-DCL-2022-15

DATE: June 21, 2022

TO: Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) Grant Recipients

SUBJECT: LIHWAP Flexibilities for Bottled Water Delivery Services in Cases of Emergency and Disaster

ATTACHMENT(S): N/A

Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) is to notify Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) grant recipients about an allowable LIHWAP flexibility for emergency and disaster situations and the process for exercising that flexibility.

The Office of Community Services (OCS) previously issued guidance in [LIHWAP IM-2021-03 Use of Funds Q and A FY2021](#), indicating that “grantees may propose to reimburse vendors for household water delivery (e.g. truck delivery services) in very limited circumstances in which this is the only method for receiving safe drinking water (e.g. circumstances with lead contamination in existing water systems) in communities within their jurisdictions.”

In an emergency or disaster situation, including natural disasters, OCS will allow for the immediate use of LIHWAP funds to provide bottled water delivery services to affected households which meet other LIHWAP eligibility criteria. For any grant recipient utilizing this emergency flexibility, the LIHWAP Implementation Plan (OMB 0970-0571) should be updated to reflect the use of bottled water delivery or similar services within 60 calendar days. This letter is not intended as a change in policy, but rather communicates the process by which grant recipients may exercise their flexibility for providing household water delivery in an emergency.

Updating the LIHWAP Implementation Plan

Information to describe the need for water delivery/bottled water services should be described in Section 1: Program Needs, Goals and Allocations of the LIHWAP Plan. The justification should include a description of circumstances that result in the requirement for water delivery/bottled water service in order to provide safe drinking water for your service area (e.g., details about current drinking water sources and why they are unsafe, or unavailable i.e., contamination, drought, etc.) Information to describe the approach to implementing water delivery services must be described in Section 2: Benefits, under the section for additional explanation or clarification. The approach should describe details related to the agreement with the water delivery/bottled water service provider and how payments will reduce drinking water costs for eligible households or otherwise provide safe drinking water options where there otherwise are none.

OCS requests that open communication with the grant recipient's assigned program specialist and/or other program staff be established to assist in this effort. Program staff may reach out to grant recipients following a state of emergency declaration to offer support in such situations.

/s/

Dr. Lanikque Howard

Director

Office of Community Services