

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

NAVAJO NATION LIHWAP PROFILE SUMMARY



The Navajo Division of Social Services' Navajo Family Assistance Services (NFAS) Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is funded at \$5.9 million in FY21. The Navajo Nation extends into three states and 13 counties, is geographically remote, and about 9,000 households lack running water and sewage according to the Indian Health Service (IHS) Sanitation Deficiency System Report of 2019.

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA), the primary utility provider on Navajo Nation, estimates that the actual number of households without running water is closer to 16,000 homes and households that are not connected to the wastewater collection system is closer to 37,000 homes. As a result, many households haul drinking water in hauling containers and utilize remote cistern systems, septic tanks, and outside toilet shelters.

Program Operation

The Navajo Nation's LIHWAP, which began in January 2022, is managed and operated by the Division of Social Services' Navajo Family Assistance Services (NFAS). The NFAS has coordinated with other Tribal divisions, departments, programs, and offices serving the Navajo Nation service delivery area to assess conditions, identify operational priorities, and implement emergency flexibilities to meet the needs within the service delivery area.

The Navajo Nation LIHWAP provides relief assistance to **three priority groups**:

- Households whose water and wastewater services have been disconnected
- Households facing the threat of disconnection of their water and wastewater services
- Households with existing arrearages

FY21 LIHWAP FUNDING ALLOCATION



AMOUNT

TOTAL: \$5,928,178

- ARP: \$2,354,305
- CAA: \$3,573,873



OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

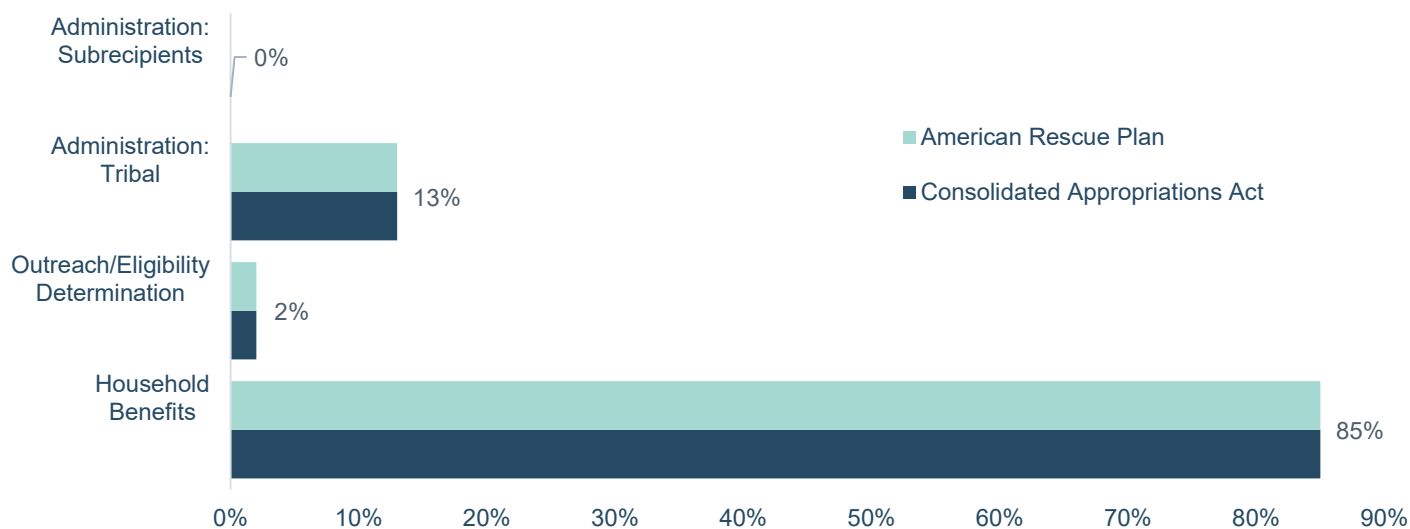
- Restoration of services
- Payment of arrearages
- Rate reductions



PROGRAM COORDINATION

- Joint application for multiple programs
- Intake referrals to/from other programs

Use of Funding by Funding Source



Benefits on Behalf of Households

Under the Navajo Nation's administration of the program, eligible households may receive up to \$1,500 in financial assistance. Phase I will include making payments to restore services for currently disconnected households. Phase II will include making payments for those households at risk for disconnection due to arrearages. According to NTUA, a total of 7,221 households are at risk for disconnect for lack of payment.

Agency staff use applicants' income, household size, and water and wastewater burdens to determine the benefit amount. They also take into consideration households that haul drinking water, utilize remote cistern systems and septic tanks, and endure outside toilet shelters.

Priority Populations

Households that meet eligibility criteria **and** fall in one of the following categories are prioritized and provided a fast track application process:

- ✓ People with disabilities
- ✓ Families with young children
- ✓ Older Adult/Seniors (60+)
- ✓ Households with high water burden
- ✓ Households that haul drinking water, utilize cistern system and septic tank, and endure outside toilet shelter

Program Outreach Activities

- Place posters/flyers in local and county social service offices, offices of aging, Social Security offices, Veterans Affairs, etc.
- Publication of articles or public service announcements in local newspapers or broadcast media announcements.
- Work directly with water utilities to identify potential recipients.
- Inclusion of inserts in water vendor billings to inform individuals of the availability of LIHWAP assistance.
- Mass mailing(s) to prior-year LIHEAP recipients or recipients of other government benefits.
- Automated phone campaigns and/or social media outreach.
- Multi-lingual announcements in languages spoken by low-income households within utility service area and/or notification in ethnic language news and broadcast media outlets.
- Inform low-income applicants of the availability of all types of LIHWAP assistance at application intake for other low-income programs.
- Interagency agreements executed with other low-income program offices and/or public health pathways created for Covid-19 outreach to perform outreach to target groups.
- Outreach to faith-based institutions, including those serving low-income people and people of color.
- Coordination with non-emergency ground transportation providers and health care facilities' benefit coordinators to provide flyers to their clients and patients, education systems, and hold outreach clinics at grocery stores and post offices.

Eligibility and Benefit Determination Criteria

Title	Item
Income Threshold	
	150% Federal Poverty Guideline
✓	60% State Median Income
	Hybrid Federal and State (based on household size)
Categorical Eligibility	
✓	LIHEAP
	Means-tested Veterans Programs
✓	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
✓	Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
✓	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Eligible Households	
✓	Homeowners
✓	Renters
Benefit Level Determination*	
✓	Income
✓	Household size
✓	Household drinking water burden
✓	Household wastewater burden
Benefit Amount	
\$500	Minimum
\$1500	Maximum
Benefit Period	
✓	One Time
	Multiple

*Grant recipients are required to determine a benefit level for households seeking assistance with their current water and wastewater bills. Benefit level determination is based on household income, size, and drinking water and wastewater burden.

For more information about the Navajo Nation LIHWAP, contact:

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