



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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Low Income Household Water Assistance Program Dear Colleague Letter

DCL#: LIHWAP-DCL-2022-01

DATE: October 22, 2021

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

SUBJECT: Preparation for LIHWAP Data Collection and Reporting

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. [LIHWAP Quarterly Report Instructions](#)
2. [LIHWAP Quarterly Report Form \(Revised 1/5/2022\)](#)
3. [LIHWAP Annual Report Instructions](#)
4. [LIHWAP Annual Report Form](#)

Dear Colleagues,

Today, the Office of Community Services (OCS) is releasing a preview of the reporting materials and instructions for the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). This letter provides information for grant recipients on what reporting entails and how to prepare for initial reporting requirements.

Background

OCS published a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\), 2021-05 LIHWAP Funding Release](#), that notified LIHWAP recipients that they must track, account for, and report on, the LIHWAP Consolidated Appropriations Act funding separate from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funding. Additional reporting requirements specific to LIHWAP funding are included in the [Terms and Conditions](#). OCS will release a Federal Register Notice early next week that will include links to proposed reporting materials, required information, and instructions.

Purpose of LIHWAP Reporting

OCS is implementing a LIHWAP reporting process designed to provide critical information for this emergency effort. The reports submitted by grant recipients will help to:

- 1) Ensure that LIHWAP, an emergency and temporary program, is implemented effectively and efficiently;
- 2) Provide reliable and complete fiscal and household data for OCS analysis and reporting to Congress and the public; and
- 3) Respond to questions from Congress, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of Management and Budget, the White House, and other interested parties in a timely and accurate manner.

LIHWAP Reporting Strategy and Forms

In order to ensure that all critical stakeholders have timely information on the status of LIHWAP efforts, OCS will implement a two-stage process, beginning with brief Quarterly Reports through at least the first reporting year, followed by annual reports at the end of the first, second, and third reporting years. If Quarterly Reports continue into the second and third year of the program, they will focus on households served each quarter. However, for the initial Quarterly Reports, it is necessary to provide information on the status of program implementation during the first year of this new effort.

What to Expect in the Quarterly Report Forms

During the first year of reporting, grant recipients will submit brief Quarterly Reports with critical information on the status of program implementation. The Quarterly Report forms include information on:

- Total households assisted,
- Assistance provided by service type (i.e., restoration of services households, prevention of disconnection of services households, and reducing rates charged households), and
- LIHWAP implementation information (i.e., number of water vendors recipient has entered into an agreement with, barriers to vendor agreement execution).

Recipients are also asked to provide any notable accomplishments achieved during the reporting period and discuss additional unmet water and wastewater needs in their service areas. Finally, recipients will also have an opportunity to highlight additional training/technical assistance needs/suggestions.

What to Expect in the Annual Report Forms

The LIHWAP Annual Report is modeled after the LIHEAP Annual Report but has been streamlined significantly to reduce recipient burden. Data will be collected in three distinct Modules:

Module 1 (Use of Funds)

OCS will use Module 1 to collect and report on the recipients' grant award amounts, annual estimates of their sources and uses of LIHWAP household benefit funding (both

obligated and expended), and their annual estimates of their uses of LIHWAP outreach/eligibility determination and administration funds.

Module 2 (Household Report)

OCS will use Module 2 to collect and report data by household types in nine sections:

1. *Number of Households.* This section will include the total household applicants, households assisted, and waitlisted households due to non-availability of funds.
2. *Number of Assisted Households by Assistance Type.* Recipients will report the number of households served in the following priority areas:
 - a. Restoration of services to households that have had drinking water and/or wastewater services disconnected due to arrearages,
 - b. Prevention of disconnection for households at risk of disconnection due to arrearages, and
 - c. Reduction of rates charged to low-income households where possible, to help ensure affordable household water services.
3. *Number of Assisted Households by Poverty Interval.* Recipients will report the number of assisted households by poverty interval and by assistance type.
4. *Number of Assisted Households by Vulnerable Population.* Recipients will report the number of assisted households with a vulnerable member (i.e., elderly, disabled, child age 5 years or under) by assistance type.
5. *Number of Assisted Household Applicants by Race and Ethnicity.* Recipients will report on assisted household applicants by race and ethnicity according to standard census categories.
6. *Number of Assisted Household Applicants by Gender.* Recipients will report on LIHWAP assisted household applicants by gender.
7. *Assisted Household Members by Race and Ethnicity.* This measure will quantify LIHWAP assisted household members by race and ethnicity. This measure is strongly encouraged, but optional for FY 21. It will be required for FY 22 and FY 23.
8. *Number of Assisted Household Members by Gender.* This measure will quantify LIHWAP assisted household members by gender. This measure is strongly encouraged, but optional for FY 21. It will be required for FY 22 and FY 23.
9. *Use of Funds to Non-Public Water Systems for Emergency Home Water Services.* This section will only be applicable to recipients that were approved to use 'non-public water systems for emergency home water services. It will examine the use of funds and the type(s) of emergency home water service(s) provided.

Preview Version of the LIHWAP Reporting Forms

A preview version of the LIHWAP reporting forms and instructions is now available.

The Federal Register Notice will also include a weblink to these reporting forms, along with instructions for public comment.

Timetable for Quarterly Reports

The time periods and anticipated due dates for Quarterly Reports in the first reporting year are provided below.

Report	Time Period Covered	Anticipated Due Date
Quarter 1 Report	October 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021	January 31, 2022
Quarter 2 Report	January 1, 2022 – March 31, 2022	April 29, 2022
Quarter 3 Report	April 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022	July 29, 2022
Quarter 4 Report	July 1, 2022 – September 30, 2022	October 31, 2022

Key LIHWAP Reporting Questions

Q. Will grant recipients be able to use the LIHWAP Quarterly Reporting Forms immediately?

Answer: *Yes, the Quarterly Report forms will be available for immediate use upon release.*

Q. How will Quarterly Reports be submitted?

Answer: *Reports will be submitted via an Excel spreadsheet. Before the first report is due, OCS will issue instructions for submission via an Action Transmittal.*

Q. Why will household demographic information be included in the LIHWAP Annual Report?

Answer: *Household demographic information, along with information on income levels, is critical for identifying who we are serving as well as assessing the success of the LIHWAP effort, including our collective ability to conduct outreach and distribute resources equitably to those most in need. It will also provide information needed to potentially plan future investments and services, and assess ongoing needs. OCS acknowledges that this data collection element might be new to some recipients and has made some of these elements optional for the first reporting year to allow recipients time to make changes to their reporting systems.*

Q. Will any changes be made to the forms after they are released?

Answer: *Because the Quarterly Report forms will be available for immediate preparation and use for program status updates, grant recipients should plan to work with the Quarterly Report form as currently presented. However, OCS will be assessing and considering public comments on the annual report forms. The Federal Register Notice will provide instructions for input.*

Q. Will training and technical assistance be available?

Answer: *Yes, OCS will announce training and technical assistance opportunities in the Fall of 2021.*

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

/s/

Lauren Christopher
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Office of Community Services