



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

Dear Colleague Letter

DCL#: LIHEAP-DCL-2020-06

DATE: March 31, 2020

TO: LIHEAP Grantees

SUBJECT: Grant Flexibilities in Conducting Human Service Activities Related to or Affected by COVID-19

ATTACHMENT(S): IM-ACF-OA-2020-01 - ACF COVID Flexibilities

Dear Colleagues,

With this letter, the Administration for Children and Families is transmitting Information Memorandum IM-ACF-OA-2020-01 dealing with grant flexibilities in conducting human service activities related to or affected by COVID-19.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is deeply concerned for the health and safety of people involved in ACF programs and about the effects on the human service enterprise in the areas affected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)-declared public health emergency for COVID-19.

To the extent permitted by law, and in accordance with 45 CFR §75.102(a), this memorandum provides short-term relief for administrative, financial management, and audit requirements under 45 CFR Part 75 (the HHS implementation of 2 CFR Part 200), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, without compromising Federal financial assistance accountability requirements. These exceptions are time-limited and will be reassessed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) within 90 days of the M-20-17 memo, dated March 19, 2020. If OMB extends the flexibilities contained in their M-20-17 memo, HHS and ACF will also re-evaluate the extension of the exceptions.

These flexibilities are applicable to ACF applicants and grantees/recipients where the entity is conducting human service activities related to or affected by COVID-19. Affected entities are those that have been closed or that have business activities that are hindered due to COVID-19

precautionary measures and/or illnesses. If the recipient/grantee intends to use any of flexibilities identified in IM-ACF-OA-2020-01 (ACFs version of M-20-17) due to the public health emergency, the recipient/grantee must notify the ACF Program Office describing the impact the emergency is having on their program and any ACF-related work. Documentation may be requested; however, ACF is still in process of determining the details as it may be program-specific oriented.

While the requirements detail general flexibilities that ACF is offering during this public health emergency, please review program-specific COVID-19 guidance and flexibilities as some citations listed do not apply directly. For example, as it relates to block grants, States may apply these flexibilities to block grants consistent with their own authorities.

Questions should be directed to the Grants Management Specialist and Project Officer assigned to your grant. We will follow-up soon with further information about how these OMB flexibilities apply in the context of the federal LIHEAP law.

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

/s/

Lauren Christopher

Director

Division of Energy Assistance