

TITLE 476  
NEBRASKA LOW-INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CHAPTER 1-000 INTRODUCTION

1-001 Legal Basis: The Nebraska Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is authorized by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, 42 U.S.C. §§ 8621-8630 and 45 C.F.R. § 96. The program is funded through annual federal appropriations.

1-002 Purpose: LIHEAP helps low-income households stay safe and healthy by providing financial assistance to offset the costs of heating and cooling. LIHEAP particularly helps households that pay a high portion of household income for home energy to meet immediate home energy needs.

1-003 Administering Agency: The administering agency is the Nebraska Department of Health and Human-Services (the Department).

1-004 Definitions:

Agency-Caused Overpayment means an overpayment caused by the Department's error or failure to take action.

Application Date means the date the Department receives a signed application or request to add LIHEAP to a household's current Economic Assistance case.

Available Funds means the amount of funding appropriated to the Department for LIHEAP for each federal fiscal year.

Cooling Season means June 1 through August 31 of each federal fiscal year.

Crisis Assistance means assistance intended to alleviate a crisis situation.

Crisis Situation means a household that is under immediate threat of loss of home energy because it has received a shut off notice, had utilities discontinued, lacks energy service delivery, or anticipates removal from a provider's budget plan.

Economically-Vulnerable Household means a household that is unprotected from increases in energy costs and therefore must use its own resources to meet energy cost increases.

Heating Season means October 1 through March 31 of each federal fiscal year.

Home Energy means a source of residential heating or cooling.

Household means a person or group of people living together as one economic unit for whom residential energy is customarily purchased in common or paid through rent.

Intentional Program Violation (IPV) means an action by a person to receive or attempt to receive benefits to which the person is not entitled by (1) making a false statement, either verbally or in writing; (2) concealing information; or (3) altering one or more documents.

Multi-Family Arrangement means a living situation where more than one household occupies a single structure or building and includes both communal living arrangements where residential energy is billed in common and apartments where residential energy is billed separately to each unit.

Overpayment means a payment of more than the amount a household is eligible to receive.

Overpayment Status means a household has received an Overpayment of more than \$100 and the Overpayment has not yet been fully repaid to the Department.

Program Year means October 1 through September 30.

Provider means utility or other household energy supplier.

Single-Family Arrangement means a living situation where one household occupies a single structure or building.

Underpayment means a payment of less than the amount a household is eligible to receive.

1-005 Outreach Services: The Department provides outreach services to potential clients, particularly those who are elderly, disabled, under age six, and migrant farm workers.

1-006 Program Funding: For each Program Year, the Department accepts and processes applications and crisis assistance requests according to the earliest Application Date until the Department determines that pending payments will exhaust the Available Funds for that Program Year. Upon making this determination, the Department will accept no more applications or crisis requests for that Program Year.

1-006.01 Excess Funding: If the Department determines that Available Funds for a Program Year will exceed pending payments, the Department will allocate to eligible households supplemental payments as determined by the Department.