

Iowa LIHEAP Program Notice 26-01

September 09, 2025

Iowa LIHEAP Program Notice (PN) 26-01

To: Executive Directors and LIHEAP Coordinators
From: Bill Marquess, LIHEAP Program Manager
Date: September 09, 2025
Re: Changes to Iowa LIHEAP Policy and Procedures Manual

Effective Date: October 1, 2025

Iowa LIHEAP FY26 Policy and Procedures Manual

Listed below are notable changes to the *Iowa LIHEAP Policy and Procedures Manual* for the FY26 program year.

Website Address for State LIHEAP Data Management System: <https://liheap-apply.hhs.iowa.gov/s/>
**active Nov 01, 2025 for general public*

- 2.30 Appeal and Hearing Procedure
 - Clarifies that the LIHEAP Appeal & Hearing Procedure must be provided to the LIHEAP customer regardless of eligibility and also must be provided if the eligibility has changed or the benefit amount has been redetermined.
 - Added: Any documentation or correspondence related to a customer's appeal must be uploaded in LEWIS.

- 3.30 Data Management
 - Added: At a minimum, this includes:
 - All application documents per household
 - Signed vendor agreements & payment receipts
 - Weatherization documents
 - Release of information (ROI)

- 4.10 Application Dates
 - Clarifies that the date of application is the date the application was signed by the customer if completed at the local CAA or online via LEWIS. If the application is received by the local CAA by mail, the date the application is received is the application date.

- 4.11 LIHEAP Regular Assistance Season (Heating Season) Oct 01 – Apr 30
 - Clarifies an application is considered complete when all documents have been received by the local CAA to determine eligibility.
 - Clarifies incomplete applications - Any application materials received should be entered into LEWIS and the application should be created at that time. If the application is not complete, the application status should be set to incomplete intake, and the customer has 30 days to submit additional documentation to complete the application.
 - Added: An application that is incomplete after 30 calendar days of receipt date will be denied, with an incomplete denial reason. The local CAA is required to notify the customer in writing of the denial.

- 4.12 ECIP/Crisis Assistance Applications/Requests
 - Added information for ECIP requests during the LIHEAP heating season: If the ECIP request is during the LIHEAP heating season and the customer has not already completed a LIHEAP application, a full LIHEAP application should be completed to determine if the LIHEAP regular assistance is sufficient to meet the emergency need.

September 09, 2025

- 4.40 Automatically Eligible (AE) Households
 - Clarifies change of household status: If there is a change in the household status and it does not impact eligibility or the benefit amount, the household is still eligible for automatically eligible status.

- 4.70 Application Review
 - Revised section to reflect the updated state requirements of application review: The state requires only that a minimum of 10% of an agency's completed applications are reviewed since base LIHEAP eligibility is determined by LEWIS. Agencies are encouraged to work towards 10% as a target goal to ensure the best use of program funds and agency staff time.

- 4.80 Separation of Duties
 - Revised to remove confusion regarding "personal connections". Updated to "shares a personal connection that could influence their actions."

- 4.90 Determination Letter
 - Revised to remove the requirement of "screenshot of text maintained in file."

- 5.00 Program Eligibility Requirements
 - Added clarification that LEWIS determines LIHEAP eligibility based on entered data and family information by agency.

- 5.10 Eligibility Criteria
 - Clarifies that eligibility is determined within LEWIS.

- 6.10 Eligibility Period to Qualify for Assistance
 - Clarifies the use of "paid by check or direct deposit" when proving proof of SSA income

- 7.00 U.S. Citizen/Social Security Number (SSN) Documentation Requirements
 - Clarifies that the name on the Social Security Number documentation provided must match the name of the application.

- 7.10 Acceptable Documentation
 - Added that a signed State of Iowa 1040 tax return is now an acceptable document to prove household member's SSN

- 7.20 Unacceptable Documentation
 - Removed "State of Iowa Tax Return"

- 10.0 Moratorium Period on Winter Disconnections
 - Clarifies when vendors are required to be notified

- 11.30 Household
 - Clarifies designating accurate fuel type in LEWIS to ensure accurate award, regardless of the payment choice.

- 12.22.5 Unspent Funds
 - Remove the requirement to reconcile Prepaid LIHEAP Accounts.

- 15.00 ECIP Crisis Assistance
 - Clarifies that when a member of a household who was approved for a LIHEAP Regular Assistance benefit move, and another household member remains in the home, the household does **not** need to be reverified for income.
 - Clarifies any member who moves out of a household that has already been approved for LIHEAP and who wants to apply for ECIP must be treated as a new household and income must be reverified.
 - Added implementation of the 18-hour processing provision when a life-threatening situation exists.
- 15.32 Heating Unit Repair/Replacement - NOT with Weatherization
 - Removed “seeking reimbursement” for heating system repair or replacement already completed.
 - Added gas line has an allowable cost under furnace repair/replacement.
- 16.00 Assurance 16
 - Clarifies that indirect costs are not an allowed A16 activity
- 17.00 Program Support
 - Clarifies that indirect costs are not an allowed Program Support activity
- 18.00 Monthly Expenditure Report
 - Clarifies that indirect costs are not an allowed A16 activity.
- 19.20 Fraudulent Applications
 - Added statement: “Any potential grievances or instances of fraud will be handled in accordance with Iowa HHS policies.”
- Appendix A – Sample Press Release
 - Updated dates and Annual Gross Income for FY26.
- Appendix B – Poverty Guidelines
 - Updated Annual Gross Income for FY26.
- Appendix C – Income Source Guide
 - Updated countable income sources / types for FY26
- Appendix D – Energy Burden Table
 - Added situation if customer pays landlord for heat cost and has an electric account in their name.