

Administration for Children & Families

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM assistance with heating and cooling costs

Fact Sheet

Type of Grant: Mandatory Block Grant

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 93.568

2009 Appropriation: *Block Grant:* \$4.5 billion *Contingency:* \$590 million

Legislative Authority:

Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-35), as amended.

Purpose:

The mission of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is to assist low income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, primarily in meeting their immediate home energy needs.

Block Grant: States, territories, and Indian tribes and tribal organizations that wish to assist low income households in meeting the costs of home energy may apply for a LIHEAP block grant. Congress established the formula for distributing funds to States based on each State's weather and low income population. Home energy is defined by statute as a source of heating or cooling in residential dwellings.

Leveraging Incentive Program: The law authorizes supplemental LIHEAP funding for grantees that acquired non-federal leveraged resources for their LIHEAP programs in the preceding fiscal year.

Residential Energy Assistance Challenge Program (REACH): The law authorizes supplemental LIHEAP funding for grantees to receive competitive grants for implementation through local community-based agencies of innovative plans to help LIHEAP eligible households reduce their energy vulnerability.

Contingency Funds: The President may release these funds to assist with the home energy needs arising from an emergency situation. They may be allocated to one or more grantees, or to all grantees, based on criteria appropriate to the nature of the emergency. In the past, the President generally has released these funds in response to emergency situations arising from extreme weather conditions or energy price increases. Generally, funds have been distributed based on the degree to which specific States are affected by the weather or energy price situation that led to the release of contingency funds.

Target Population:

The authorization provides that an eligible household's income must not exceed the greater of 150 percent of the poverty level or 60 percent of the State median income (In FY 2009, 75 percent of the State median income). Grantees may not set income eligibility standards below 110 percent of the poverty level, but they may give priority to those households with the highest home energy costs or needs in relation to income.

Eligible Applicants:

All fifty States , the District of Columbia , five territories, and about 140 Tribes and Tribal organizations receive LIHEAP grants each year. State and federally recognized Tribes (including Alaska native villages) may apply for direct LIHEAP funding.

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