

**Analysis and Summary of Governor's  
FFY 14 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program  
(LIHEAP) Block Grant Allocation Plan**

Joint Hearing of Committees on Appropriations, Energy and Technology,  
Human Services

September 25, 2013

**OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS**

Room 5200, Legislative Office Building

Hartford, CT 06106 • (860) 240-0200

E-Mail: [ofa@cga.ct.gov](mailto:ofa@cga.ct.gov)

[www.cga.ct.gov/ofa](http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa)

## INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to CGS Section 4-28b, the Governor has submitted for consideration the proposed block grant allocation plan for the 2014 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Block Grant.

Connecticut utilizes LIHEAP funding to support the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP). This program serves households whose incomes fall at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines (\$35,325 for a family of four) as well as households with elderly, disabled, and or children under the age of six with incomes between 150% and 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (\$47,100 for a family of four). The Contingency Heating Assistance Program (CHAP) serves low income households with incomes below 60% of the state median income (\$61,904 for a family of four) who are not otherwise eligible for CEAP. The Department of Social Services (DSS) administers CEAP with the assistance of the Community Action Agencies.

The proposed plan assumes FFY 14 available block grant funding of \$76.0 million. Additional funding results in total available funds of \$84.4 million, which is 0.7% below the FFY 13 available amount of \$85.0 million (as of 9/3/13). Funding is anticipated to provide benefits to approximately 108,000 households. The table below outlines the proposed FFY 14 budget:

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>FFY 14 Proposed Expenditures</b>
Rental Assistance	146,370
Basic Benefits	47,578,803
Crisis Assistance	13,040,602
Safety Net Assistance	14,854,253
SNAP Benefit	100,000
Assurance 16	1,000,000
Administration	7,601,395
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>84,321,423</b>
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	
Block Grant	76,013,951
Balance Forward from FFY 13	7,498,398
Leveraging Funds	375,000
Other- FFY 13 Vendor Refunds	500,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>84,387,349</b>

A table displaying the FFY 14 benefits as compared to the FFY 13 original and revised plans appears on page 3 and is followed by a summary of additional CEAP/CHAP program information.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

The allocation plan maintains eligibility and asset limits and uses a standard benefits structure. There is a slight increase (\$10) in several benefit levels in comparison to FFY 13 levels. In addition, the risk assessment disposable income is increased from \$800 to \$1,000, enabling eligibility for approximately 100-200 additional households.

### **FEDERAL BUDGET ACTION**

Final Congressional action has yet to be taken on FFY 14 appropriations for this grant. The FFY 14 estimated block grant amount is based on the post-sequestration FFY 13 funding level. This allocation plan includes a contingency plan in the event that funding is more or less than the amount assumed in the proposal.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE BLOCK GRANT  
FFY 13 COMPARED TO FFY 14 LIHEAP PROPOSED BENEFITS

Benefit	Income Level	FFY 13 Approved	FFY 14 Gov Proposed
Renter Benefits	1	\$120	\$120
	2	110	110
	3	100	100
	Vulnerable		
Basic Benefits	1	\$575	\$585
	2	500	500
	3	425	425
	4	350	350
	Non-Vulnerable		
	1	\$525	\$535
	2	450	450
	3	375	375
	CHAP	\$300	\$300
Utility Supplemental*	CEAP and CHAP	\$15	\$0
Crisis Assistance	CEAP	\$400	\$410
	CHAP	100	110
Safety Net Assistance	1st Benefit	\$400	\$410
		<i>vulnerable and non vulnerable</i>	<i>vulnerable and non vulnerable</i>
	2nd Benefit	400	410
		<i>vulnerable and non vulnerable</i>	<i>vulnerable and non vulnerable</i>
	3rd Benefit	400	410
	<i>vulnerable</i>	<i>vulnerable</i>	

\* A supplemental benefit was provided to CEAP and CHAP utility heated households in FFY 13 using carry forward funding that would have otherwise been returned to the federal program.

<b>Benefit Category</b>	<b>Eligibility Requirements</b>	<b>Receipt of Benefits</b>
Rental Assistance	Includes households who 1) do not make direct vendor payments for their primary source of heat, 2) have annual gross income up to 150% of federal poverty guidelines, and 3) pay more than 30% of their gross income towards rent.	The FFY 14 proposed benefit is \$100, \$110, or \$120 depending on income level. Eligible households receive a check to defray heating costs. Not more than one Rental Assistance Benefit is issued per dwelling unit.
Basic Benefit	Includes households with incomes up to 200% federal poverty guidelines under CEAP and those from 151% federal poverty guidelines to 60% state median income under CHAP.	The FFY 14 proposed benefit ranges from \$300 to \$585, and is based on income, household size, vulnerability and liquid assets.
Crisis Assistance	Includes deliverable fuel heated households who have exhausted their Basic Benefits and are still in need of assistance.	The FFY 14 proposed benefit is \$410 for CEAP households and \$110 for CHAP households. If determined eligible, a fuel delivery will be authorized within 18 hours of the household's request.
Safety Net Assistance	Includes CEAP eligible deliverable fuel heated households who have exhausted their Basic Benefits and Crisis Assistance benefits and are in a life-threatening situation.	The FFY 14 proposed benefit is \$410. CEAP eligible, vulnerable households may be eligible for up to three Safety Net Assistance benefits, while CEAP eligible, non-vulnerable households may be eligible for up to two benefits in the program year.

Note: Any household in which all members are participating in the Temporary Family Assistance program, State Supplement to the Aged, Blind and Disabled, and/or the Refugee Cash Assistance Program, will automatically be considered income eligible for CEAP.

Income Level	Poverty Guidelines
1	Up to 100%
2	101% - 125%
3	126% - 150%
4	151% - 200%

**Assurance 16**

Funding is provided to Community Action Agencies (CAAs) for enhanced case management services to assist low-income households address their energy needs. Services include risk assessment, counseling, education, and assistance with energy suppliers and vendors.

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefit**

LIHEAP benefits are available to SNAP recipient households who 1) do not make direct vendor payments for their primary source of heat, 2) have a shelter and/or utility obligation, and 3) pay less than 30% of their gross income toward rent. A \$1 LIHEAP SNAP benefit will be paid to these households, which qualifies them for greater benefits.

**Program Dates**

The program begins on November 15, 2012 and continues through May 31, 2013 as follows:

November 15	First day for authorization of fuel deliveries (and payment for deliveries can be made by the program)
March 17	Deadline for fuel authorization or deliveries
May 1	Last day a household can apply to establish eligibility for benefits
May 15	Last day that qualified utility heated households can apply to establish eligibility for benefits
May 30	Last day to submit deliverable fuel bills