

Section 1

Program Components, 2605(a), 2605(b)(1) – Assurance 1, 2605(c)(1)(C)

1.1 Check which components you will operate under the LIHEAP program. (Note: You must provide information for each component designated here as requested elsewhere in this plan.)

		<u>Dates of Operation</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Heating assistance	Start date: 10/01/2016	End date: 05/15/2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cooling assistance	Start date:	End date:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Crisis assistance	Start date: 10/01/2016	End date: 09/30/2017
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Weatherization assistance	Start date: 07/01/2016	End date: 06/30/2017

Estimated Funding Allocation, 2604(c), 2605(k)(1), 2605(b)(9), 2605(b)(16) – Assurances 9 and 16

1.2 Estimate what amount of available LIHEAP funds will be used for each component that you will operate: **The total of all percentages must add up to 100%.**

66 % heating assistance

0 % cooling assistance

9 % crisis assistance

15 % weatherization assistance

0 % carryover to the following Federal fiscal year

10 % administrative and planning costs

0 % services to reduce home energy needs including needs assessment (Assurance 16)

0 % used to develop and implement leveraging activities

100 % **TOTAL**

Alternate Use of Crisis Assistance Funds, 2605(c)(1)(C)

1.3 The funds reserved for winter crisis assistance that have not been expended by March 15 will be reprogrammed to:

- Heating assistance
- Weatherization assistance
- Cooling assistance
- Other (specify): Continue to use for Crisis Assistance

Categorical Eligibility, 2605(b)(2)(A) – Assurance 2, 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(8A) – Assurance 8

1.4 Do you consider households categorically eligible if one household member receives one of the following categories of benefits in the left column below? Yes No

	Heating	Cooling	Crisis	Weatherization
SNAP				
TANF				
SSI				
Means-tested veteran’s program				
Other (Specify): Households entirely composed of persons receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), TANF, or Food Stamps in each of preceding three months from the date of application will be deemed a categorically eligible household.	X		X	X

1.5 Do you automatically enroll households without a direct annual application?

- Yes No -- If yes, explain:

1.6 How do you ensure there is no difference in the treatment of categorically eligible households from those not receiving other public assistance when determining eligibility and benefit amounts?

All households at or below 60% of the state median income will be eligible for benefits calculated in the same manner, regardless of whether there is a household member who receives categorical assistance or not. Households entirely composed of persons receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), TANF, or Food Stamps (SNAP) in each of preceding three months from the date of application will be deemed to be income eligible, i.e. the benefit for a categorically eligible household whose income exceeds the guidelines will be calculated using the maximum eligible income level. This is not an ongoing entitlement

program; payments are made subject to the availability of federal funds. Payments may be suspended, reduced or terminated if federal funds are insufficient to maintain payments through the scheduled termination date of the program.

SNAP Nominal Payments

1.7 a. Do you allocate LIHEAP funds toward a nominal payment for SNAP clients?

- Yes No

If you answered “Yes” to question 1.7s, you must provide a response to questions 1.7b, 1.7c, and 1.7d.

1.7.b Amount of Minimal Assistance: \$ _____

1.7.c Frequency of Assistance:

- Once per year
 Once every five years
 Other (describe): _____

1.7d How do you confirm that the household receiving a nominal payment has an energy cost or need?

1.8 Determination of Eligibility – Countable Income

In determining a household’s income eligibility for LIHEAP, do you use gross income or net income?

- Gross Income
 Net Income

1.9 Select all of the applicable forms of countable income used to determine a household’s income eligibility for LIHEAP.

- Wages
 Self-employment income
 Contract income
 Payments from mortgage or sales contracts
 Unemployment Insurance
 Strike pay
 Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits
 Including MediCare deduction Excluding MediCare deduction
 Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 Retirement / pension benefits
 General Assistance benefits
 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits
 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
 Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC) benefits
 Loans that need to be repaid
 Cash gifts
 Savings account balance
 One-time lump-sum payments, such as rebates/credits, winnings from lotteries, refund deposits, etc.
 Jury duty compensation
 Rental income

- Income from employment through Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Income from work study programs
- Alimony
- Child support
- Interest, dividends, or royalties
- Commissions
- Legal settlements
- Insurance payments made directly to the insured
- Insurance payments made specifically for the repayment of a bill, debt, or estimate
- Veterans Administration (VA) benefits
- Earned income of a child under the age of 18
- Balance of retirement, pension, or annuity accounts where funds cannot be withdrawn without a penalty.
- Income tax refunds
- Stipends from senior companion programs, such as VISTA
- Funds received by household for the care of a foster child
- Ameri-Corp Program payments for living allowances, earnings, and in-kind aid.
- Reimbursements (for mileage, gas, lodging, meals, etc.)
- Other

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 2 - HEATING ASSISTANCE

Eligibility, 2605(b)(2) – Assurance 2

2.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the heating component:

2016 HHS poverty income level _____%

OR

FY 2017 state’s median income 60 %

2.2 Do you have additional eligibility requirements for **HEATING ASSISTANCE?**

Yes No

2.3 Check the appropriate boxes below and describe the policies for each.

- | | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ● Do you require an assets test? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for: | | |
| ● Renters? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Renters living in subsidized housing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Renters with utilities included in the rent? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Do you give priority in eligibility to: | | |
| ● Elderly? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Disabled? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Young children? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Households with high energy burdens? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Other? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Explanations of policies for each "yes" checked above:

For all of the items requiring policy references, please access the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) Operations Manual at: <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/category.asp?linkcatid=256&linkid=122&locid=25> and access the following sections:

1. Renters with Utilities Included in the Rent, please see section 3.4.18
2. Priority in eligibility to elderly, disabled and households with young children, please see sections: 4.2.4, 8.2.3

The benefit formula for the State of Wisconsin provides a 4:1 ratio for household with high energy burdens. Households with the highest energy burden and the lowest income receive the highest benefit. The State of Wisconsin rounds down the median income guidelines for determining income eligibility. The benefit matrix is attached to this plan for further information.

Determination of Benefits, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

2.4 Describe how you prioritize the provision of heating assistance to vulnerable households, e.g., benefit amounts, application period, etc.

There is no differentiation in the formula for calculating benefits however, funds are allocated specifically to allow for outreach to vulnerable households including those with elderly, disabled or young children as residents. These households are encouraged and assisted to apply for LIHEAP benefits.

In addition, there is an early application period targeted to households with fixed income (Social Security Benefits, Pensions, dividends/interest income and/or Veteran's Benefits) which allows them to apply in the summer months for the following Federal Fiscal Year.

2.5 Check the variables you use to determine your benefit levels. (Check all that apply):

- Income
- Family (household) size
- Home energy cost or need:
- Fuel type
- Climate/region
- Individual bill
- Dwelling type
- Energy burden (% of income spent on home energy)
- Energy need
- Other (Describe)

Benefit Levels, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

2.6 Describe benefit levels:

\$ 30.00 Minimum benefit \$ 1,643 Maximum benefit

2.7 Do you provide in-kind (e.g., blankets, space heaters) and/or other forms of benefits?

Yes No -- If yes, describe.

Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) agencies (sub-grantees) can provide additional services such as blankets, space heaters, weatherization stripping, light bulbs, etc.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 3: COOLING ASSISTANCE

Eligibility, 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(2) – Assurance 2

**The State of Wisconsin does not administer a Cooling Assistance Program*

3.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the cooling component:

2016 HHS poverty income level _____%

OR

FY 2017 median income _____%

3.2 Do you have additional eligibility requirements for **COOLING ASSISTANCE**

Yes No

3.3 Check the appropriate boxes below and describe the policies for each.

- | | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ● Do you require an assets test? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for: | | |
| ● Renters? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Renters living in subsidized housing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Renters with utilities included in the rent? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Do you give priority in eligibility to: | | |
| ● Elderly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Disabled? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Young children? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Households with high energy burdens? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Other? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3.4 Describe how you prioritize the provision of cooling assistance to vulnerable households, e.g., benefit amounts, application period, etc.

Determination of Benefits, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

3.5 Check the variables you use to determine your benefit levels. (Check all that apply):

- Income
- Family (household) size
- Home energy cost or need
- Fuel type
- Climate/region
- Individual bill
- Dwelling type
- Energy burden (% of income spent on home energy)
- Energy need
- Other (describe)

Benefit Levels, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5, 2605(c)(1)(B)

3.6 Describe benefit levels:

\$_____ Minimum benefit \$_____ Maximum benefit

3.7 Do you provide in-kind (e.g. fans, air conditioners) and/or other forms of benefits?

Yes No -- If yes, describe.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 4: CRISIS ASSISTANCE,

Eligibility - 2604(c), 2605(c)(1)(A)

4.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the crisis component:

2016 HHS poverty income level _____%

OR

FY 2017 state median income 60 %

4.2 Provide your LIHEAP program’s definition for determining a crisis.

Household must have existing/imminent lack of adequate heat/cooling in dwelling (emergency), or a risk of a heating emergency (proactive). While there is not a formal asset test, consideration may be given to resources available to the household before assistance is provided. No household will be eligible for crisis cooling assistance without a declaration by a local or state public health agency of a heat emergency and authorization is given by the Department of Administration.

A household may receive more than one crisis assistance payment.

Determination of eligibility for regular heating assistance benefits will determine a household eligible for crisis assistance for the remainder of the program period if the household has contributed \$25 or more towards their heating costs in the three months prior to application for crisis assistance.

4.3 What constitutes a life-threatening crisis?

Household must have existing/imminent lack of adequate heating in dwelling. Determination of a threat to health or safety of an eligible household is based on four factors: expected low temperature, condition of the dwelling unit (habitable, operable furnace, etc.), presence of vulnerable persons (persons with medical need for heat -- elderly, handicapped, children under six, etc.), and alternatives available to the household (place for temporary relocation, etc.). Medical need for heat and/or cooling may be considered in determining the presence of an emergency for vulnerable persons, including households with young children, handicapped and/or elderly persons. The presence of vulnerable persons may affect the amount and type of benefit provided to the household.

Crisis Requirements, 2604(c)

4.4 Within how many hours do you provide crisis assistance that will resolve the energy crisis for eligible households? 48 Hours

4.5 Within how many hours do you provide crisis assistance that will resolve the energy crisis for eligible households in life-threatening situations? 18 Hours

Crisis Eligibility, 2605(c)(1)(A)

4.6 Do you have additional eligibility requirements for **CRISIS ASSISTANCE?**

Yes No

4.7 Check the appropriate boxes below and describe the policies for each.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
● Do you require an assets test?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Do you give priority in eligibility to:		
● Elderly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Disabled?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Young children?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Households with high energy burdens?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● In order to receive crisis assistance:		
● Must the household have received a shut-off notice or have a near empty tank?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Must the household have been shut off or have an empty tank?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Must the household have exhausted their regular heating benefit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Must renters with heating costs included in their rent have received an eviction notice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Must heating/cooling be medically necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Must the household have non-working heating or cooling equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
● Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for:		
● Renters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Renters living in subsidized housing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
● Renters with utilities included in the rent?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explanations of policies for each "yes" checked above:

For all of the items requiring policy references, please access the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) Operations Manual at: <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/category.asp?linkcatid=256&linkid=122&locid=25> and access the following sections:

1. Priority in eligibility to elderly, disabled, young children, and households with high energy burdens, please see sections: 4.2.4, 8.2.3
2. Renters with Utilities Included in the Rent, please see section 3.4.18

Determination of Benefits

4.8 How do you handle crisis situations?

Separate component

Fast Track

Other

4.9 If you have a separate component, how do you determine crisis assistance benefits?

Amount to resolve crisis, up to a maximum of \$ _____

Other

Crisis emergency benefits will be determined based on the minimum required to meet the immediate threat to health and safety. Benefits will generally not exceed \$1,200, but may be increased for special targeted populations on a case by case basis. Other resources available to the household are considered in determining benefit levels. Crisis heating emergency services may include emergency fuel delivery, furnace repair/replacement, education on energy conservation measures, and budget counseling. Crisis cooling emergency services may include room air conditioner repair/purchase, fans, education on energy conservation measures, or budget counseling. No household will be eligible for crisis cooling assistance without a declaration by a local or state public health agency of a heat emergency and authorization is given by the Department of Administration. Determination of a threat to health or safety of an eligible household is based on four factors: expected low temperature, condition of the dwelling unit (habitable, operable furnace, etc.), presence of vulnerable persons (persons with medical need for heat -- elderly, disabled, children under six, etc.), and alternatives available to the household (place for temporary relocation, etc.). Medical need for heat and/or cooling may be considered in determining the presence of an emergency for vulnerable persons, including households with young children, disabled and/or elderly persons. The presence of vulnerable persons may affect the amount and type of benefit provided to the household. Proactive services and payments will be provided to prevent the occurrence of emergencies. Examples of proactive crisis heating and cooling assistance services provided to clients are budget counseling, copayment plans, due to an energy crisis situation a first month's rent or security deposit and energy conservation counseling. Counties and tribes and their subcontractors will be required to provide some form of assistance to resolve home heating energy emergency situations within 48 hours of application and within 18 hours in a life threatening situation in eligible households. This is not to be construed as requiring the issuance of a benefit payment within the above specified time period.

Funds may be provided to the Keep Wisconsin Warm Fuel Fund and/or the Heat for Heroes campaign. Funds provided to these organizations will generally leverage matching donations.

Crisis Requirements, 2604(c)

4.10 Do you accept applications for energy crisis assistance at sites that are geographically accessible to all households in the area to be served?

Yes No

For all of the items requiring policy references, please access the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) Operations Manual at: <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/category.asp?linkcatid=256&linkid=122&locid=25> and access the following sections:

The State of Wisconsin allows for crisis applications to be taken via the phone, in office, or at alternate outreach locations. Outreach locations are both categorically and geographically diverse. For more information please see section 8.2.3 of the WHEAP Operations Manual.

4.11 Do you provide individuals who are physically disabled the means to:

■ Submit applications for crisis benefits without leaving their homes?

Yes No If yes, explain.

Applications can be taken over the phone or in person through a home visit.

■ Travel to the sites at which applications for crisis assistance are accepted?

Yes No If yes, explain.

Applications are accepted at all outreach locations. Senior centers, libraries, and community centers are common outreach locations.

Benefit Levels, 2605(c)(1)(B)

4.12 Indicate the maximum benefit for each type of crisis assistance offered.

Winter Crisis \$ 1,200 total per season maximum benefit

Summer Crisis \$ n/a maximum benefit

Year-round Crisis \$ \$1,200 total per season maximum benefit

4.13 Do you provide in-kind (e.g. blankets, space heaters, fans) and/or other forms of benefits?

Yes No If yes, describe.

WHEAP agencies in-kind provisions include blankets, space heaters, and temporary lodging.

4.14 Do you provide for equipment repair or replacement using crisis funds?

Yes No

The State of Wisconsin runs a year round furnace program using 15% of the LIHEAP funds transferred to Weatherization and if necessary may allocate crisis funds to address emergency furnace repair or replacements. The State of Wisconsin also uses state Public Benefit funds that can assist in repairing or replacing heating units.

4.15 Check appropriate boxes below to indicate type(s) of assistance provided:

	Winter Crisis	Summer Crisis	Year-round Crisis
Heating system repair			x
Heating system replacement			x
Cooling system repair			
Cooling system replacement			
Wood stove purchase			
Pellet stove purchase			
Solar panel(s)			
Windmill(s)			
Utility poles / Gas line hook-ups			x
Other (Specify): temporary lodging			x

4.16 Do any of the utility vendors you work with enforce a winter moratorium on shut offs?

Yes No _____

4.17 Describe the terms of the moratorium and any special dispensation received by LIHEAP clients during or after the moratorium period.

The State of Wisconsin institutes a moratorium on disconnections for regulated utilities from November 1st to April 15th.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 5: WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE

Eligibility, 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(2) – Assurance 2

5.1 Designate the income eligibility threshold used for the weatherization component:

2016 HHS poverty income level _____%

OR

FY 2017 state median income 60 %

5.2 Do you enter into an interagency agreement to have another government agency administer a **WEATHERIZATION component**? Yes No

5.3 Name the agency. _____

5.4 Is there a separate monitoring protocol for weatherization? Yes No

WEATHERIZATION - Types of Rules

5.5 Under what rules do you administer LIHEAP weatherization? (Check only one.)

- Entirely under LIHEAP (not DOE) rules
- Entirely under DOE WAP (not LIHEAP) rules
- Mostly under LIHEAP rules with the following DOE WAP rule(s) where LIHEAP and WAP rules differ: (Check all that apply.)
 - Income Threshold
 - Weatherization of entire multi-family housing structure is permitted if at least 66% of units (50% in 2- & 4-unit buildings) are eligible units or will become eligible within 180 days.
 - Weatherization of shelters temporarily housing primarily low income persons (excluding nursing homes, prisons, and similar institutional care facilities) is permitted.
 - Other (describe)
- Mostly under DOE WAP rules, with the following LIHEAP rule(s) where LIHEAP and WAP rules differ: (Check all that apply.)
 - Income Threshold
 - Weatherization not subject to DOE WAP maximum statewide average cost per dwelling unit.
 - Weatherization measures are not subject to DOE Savings to Investment Ratio (SIR) standards.
 - Other (describe)
50% eligibility qualifications for multi-unit buildings.

Eligibility, 2605(b)(5) – Assurance 5

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
5.6 Do you require an assets test?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.7 Do you have additional/differing eligibility policies for:		
• Renters?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Renters living in subsidized housing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.8 Do you give priority in eligibility to:		
• Elderly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Disabled?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Young children?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Households with high energy burdens?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Other? <u>Tribal Referrals</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you selected “Yes” for any of the options in 5.6, 5.7, or 5.8, you must provide further explanation of these policies in the text field below:

Tribal Referrals are given priority by Weatherization grantees

Benefit Levels

5.9 Do you have a maximum LIHEAP weatherization benefit/expenditure per household?
 Yes No

5.10 What is the maximum amount? \$ _____

Types of Assistance, 2605(c)(1), (B) & (D)

5.11 What LIHEAP weatherization measures do you provide? (Check all categories that apply.)

- Weatherization needs assessments/audits
- Caulking and insulation
- Install storm windows
- Heating system repairs
- Heating system replacement
- Cooling system repairs
- Cooling system replacement
- Energy related roof repair
- Major appliance repairs

- Major appliance replacement
- Install windows/sliding glass doors
- Install doors (interior/exterior)
- Install water heater
- Water conservation measures
- Compact florescent light bulbs
- Other (describe)

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 6: Outreach, 2605(b)(3) – Assurance 3, 2605(c)(3)(A)

6.1 Select all outreach activities that you conduct that are designed to assure that eligible households are made aware of all LIHEAP assistance available:

- Place posters/flyers in local and county social service offices, offices of aging, Social Security offices, VA, etc.
- Publish articles in local newspapers or broadcast media announcements.
- Include inserts in energy vendor billings to inform individuals of the availability of all types of LIHEAP assistance.
- Mass mailing(s) to prior-year LIHEAP recipients.
- Inform low income applicants of the availability of all types of LIHEAP assistance at application intake for other low-income programs.
- Execute interagency agreements with other low-income program offices to perform outreach to target groups.
- Other (specify):

Allocate funds specifically for the purpose of outreach to households with elderly, disabled, rural poor, and/or young children residents.

An early application period will be utilized prior to the heating season. This process includes accepting applications during the summer for the following Federal Fiscal Year from targeted households.

Accept applications for energy assistance at sites geographically accessible to all households in the area to be served. This includes setting up LIHEAP application sites for targeted households (contacting targeted persons or their representatives to ascertain convenient times and places, contacting community leaders to locate and serve application sites, providing information on alternate sites to organizations/programs likely to reach targeted persons, contacting targeted persons to arrange application appointments, transportation, etc.).

Provide information directly or by selective mailing to targeted applicants, e.g., assistance to understand the application form, translation of material, interpretation services for deaf, reading for blind.

Assist targeted applicants to gather needed documentation e.g., sorting documents, explaining what is needed.

Facilitate access to state weatherization programs targeted to LIHEAP eligible households and other energy-related services e.g., utility early identification and emergency intervention.

Counties and tribal agencies are required to provide outreach services to maximize participation of eligible persons in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. It is the responsibility of each county/tribe to provide application sites accessible to the eligible population in the

county/tribe, with particular attention to overcoming barriers for targeted households. Outreach client benefits include: taking applications, certifying application information, and processing applications at an alternate site.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 7: Coordination, 2605(b)(4) – Assurance 4

7.1 Describe how you will ensure that the LIHEAP program is coordinated with other programs available to low-income households (TANF, SSI, WAP, etc.)

- Joint application for multiple programs
- Intake referrals to/from other programs
- One-stop intake centers
- Other – describe:

Wisconsin administers LIHEAP, DOE, and Public Benefit weatherization programs through the same state office, the Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR). LIHEAP is coordinated at the state level with income maintenance programs through agreements and data collection/sharing with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Department of Health Services (DHS). DCF operates the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), W-2, including the jobs and welfare to work program as well as other assistance programs. DHS operates Medicaid and FoodShare (SNAP).

Beginning in FY2001, State of Wisconsin Public Benefits funds were used to make non-heating payments to eligible recipients. Public Benefit funds are fully integrated into the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program, WHEAP.

Coordination between the state and local level is achieved by including representation from a variety of private and government agencies interested in energy services and/or services for low-income persons on the Low Income Energy Advisory Committee (LIEAC).

Local service providers are encouraged to coordinate their programs with each other, with utility-operated programs and with other government and nonprofit programs operated within their service area. Local service providers are required to develop a local coordination plan annually to show what is being done to coordinate with weatherization agencies, fuel providers (utility and bulk fuels), and other local groups.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 8: Agency Designation, 2605(b)(6) – Assurance 6

8.1 How would you categorize the primary responsibility of your State agency?

- Administration Agency
- Commerce Agency
- Community Services Agency
- Energy/Environment Agency
- Housing Agency
- Welfare Agency
- Other – describe:

Alternate Outreach and Intake, 2605(b)(15) – Assurance 15

8.2 How do you provide alternate outreach and intake for **HEATING ASSISTANCE**?

Sub-grantees are required to provide alternate outreach and intake sites other than the local county/tribe office.

8.3 How do you provide alternate outreach and intake for **COOLING ASSISTANCE**?

N/A

8.4 How do you provide alternate outreach and intake for **CRISIS ASSISTANCE**?

Sub-grantees are required to provide alternate outreach and intake sites other than the local county/tribe office.

8.5 LIHEAP Component	<u>Heating</u>	<u>Cooling</u>	<u>Crisis</u>	<u>Weatherization</u>
Administration				
8.5a Who determines client eligibility?	Local County Government	N/A	Local County Government	Local County Government
8.5b Who processes benefit payments to gas and electric vendors?	State Administration Agency	N/A	State Administration Agency	
8.5c Who processes benefit payments to bulk fuel vendors?	State Administration Agency	N/A	State Administration Agency	
8.5d Who performs installation of weatherization measures?				Non-Profits

If any of your LIHEAP components are not centrally-administered by a state agency, you must complete questions 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, and if application, 8.9.

8.6 What is your process for selecting local administering agencies?

State of Wisconsin Statute requires the contracts for administering the program be with Wisconsin counties. State of Wisconsin contracts with seven tribes: Bad River Tribe, Lac Courte Oreilles Band, Lac Du Flambeau Tribe, Mole Lake/Sokaogan Tribe, Oneida Tribe, Red Cliff Tribe and Stockbridge-Munsee Tribe. Counties and tribes may elect to subcontract any or all program functions.

8.7 How many local administering agencies do you use?

79

8.8 Have you changed any local administering agencies from last year?

Yes No

8.9 If so, why?

- Agency was in noncompliance with grantee requirements for LIHEAP
- Agency is under criminal investigation
- Added agency
- Agency closed
- Other - describe

The State of Wisconsin did not change any local administering agencies, as we are statutorily required to contract with counties; however, local agencies have elected to subcontract and recapture the program operations due to additional requirements of other programs they administer, performance concerns, and fiscal reasons.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 9: Energy Suppliers, 2605(b)(7) – Assurance 7

9.1 Do you make payments directly to home energy suppliers?

Heating Yes No

Cooling Yes No

Crisis Yes No

Are there exceptions? Yes No

If yes, Describe.

For all of the items requiring policy references, please access the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) Operations Manual at: <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/category.asp?linkcatid=256&linkid=122&locid=25> and access the following sections:

1. Heating, please see sections 1.3.1, 7.1, 7.2, and 7.8.1
2. Crisis, please see sections 1.1.2, 4.2.1, 7.2, and 8.3.5.5
3. Exceptions, please see sections 7.1, 7.3, and 7.4

9.2 How do you notify the client of the amount of assistance paid?

At the time the LIHEAP payment is sent to the vendor, a payment notification is generated and sent to the client, indicating the amount of the payment and the vendor to whom the payment was made.

Households receiving weatherization and/or energy related repairs receive a written work agreement of work to be performed.

9.3 How do you assure that the home energy supplier will charge the eligible household, in the normal billing process, the difference between the actual cost of the home energy and the amount of the payment?

The Department of Administration requires vendors to register for participation in the heating assistance program and complete and sign a Vendor Agreement. To register, fuel suppliers agree that clients will be: treated equally with non-LIHEAP households, not be adversely affected, e.g., the eligible household will be charged in the supplier's normal billing process, the price charged will be the price normally charged non-LIHEAP eligible households, invoices will clearly indicate the amount and cost of home energy provided, and no discrimination will occur against eligible households with respect to terms, deferred payment plans, credit, conditions of sales or discounts offered other home energy customers.

In addition, a Vendor Desktop Monitoring process is in place to conduct a review of LIHEAP payments and fuel provided, in comparison with non-LIHEAP customers.

Crisis assistance fuel payments are made to vendors registered for heating assistance. In addition to signing assurances guaranteeing that LIHEAP clients will be treated equally with non-LIHEAP

households and will not be adversely affected, registered vendors are required to provide information on costs and procedures for emergency fuel delivery.

Energy related home repair and weatherization purchases made by LIHEAP weatherization providers follow appropriate state or federal procurement guidelines and applicable material standards.

9.4 How do you assure that no household receiving assistance under this title will be treated adversely because of their receipt of LIHEAP assistance?

The Department of Administration requires vendors to register for participation in the heating assistance program and to sign a completed Vendor Agreement. To register, fuel suppliers agree that clients will be: treated equally with non-LIHEAP households, not be adversely affected, e.g., the eligible household will be charged in the supplier's normal billing process, the price charged will be the price normally charged non- LIHEAP eligible households, invoices will clearly indicate the amount and cost of home energy provided, and no discrimination will occur against eligible households with respect to terms, deferred payment plans, credit, conditions of sales or discounts offered other home energy customers.

In addition, a Vendor Desktop Monitoring process is in place to conduct a review of LIHEAP payments and fuel provided, in comparison with non-LIHEAP customers.

Crisis assistance fuel payments are made to vendors registered for heating assistance. In addition to signing assurances guaranteeing that LIHEAP clients will be treated equally with non-LIHEAP households and will not be adversely affected, registered vendors are required to provide information on costs and procedures for emergency fuel delivery.

Energy related home repair and weatherization purchases made by LIHEAP weatherization providers follow appropriate state or federal procurement guidelines and applicable material standards.

9.5 Do you make payments contingent on unregulated vendors taking appropriate measures to alleviate the energy burdens of eligible households? Yes No. If so, how?

Unregulated vendors are subject to the same program operation policies as regulated vendors. All vendors must register with the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) by submitting a complete and signed vendor agreement before any payments will be made to the vendor. The vendor access to the Home Energy Plus system is limited and does not allow vendors to enter information into the system. Vendor payments are Home Energy Plus system generated and based on approved applications. All WHEAP vendors must sign the standard vendor agreement after which they are placed on a registered vendor list.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 10: Program, Fiscal Monitoring, and Audit, 2605(b)(10) – Assurance 10

10.1 How do you ensure good fiscal accounting and tracking of LIHEAP funds?

The State maintains a modified accrual accounting system with security functions such as multiple approval levels, separation of duty and controlling budgets. LIHEAP funds are assigned accounting codes that track expenses by budget area and roll up for over-all grant review.

Audit Process

10.2 Is your LIHEAP program audited annually under the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133?

Yes

10.3 Describe any audit findings rising to the level of material weakness or reportable condition cited in the A-133 audits, Grantee monitoring assessments, inspector general reviews, or other government agency reviews of the LIHEAP agency from the most recently audited federal fiscal year.

Finding	Type	Brief Summary	Resolved?	Action Taken

10.4 Audits of Local Administering Agencies

- o What types of annual audit requirements do you have in place for local administering agencies/district offices?

- Local agencies/district offices are required to have an annual audit in compliance with the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133.
- Local agencies/district offices are required to have an annual audit (other than A-133).
- Local agencies/district offices' A-133 or other independent audits are reviewed by Grantee as part of compliance process.
- Grantee conducts fiscal and program monitoring of local agencies/district offices.

Compliance Monitoring

10.5 Describe the Grantee's strategies for monitoring compliance with the Grantee's and Federal LIHEAP policies and procedures by:

Grantee employees:

- Internal program review
- Departmental oversight
- Secondary review of invoices and payments
- Other program review mechanisms are in place. Describe

- The State of Wisconsin, Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) conducts regular monitoring of its grantees via onsite Administrative Reviews as well as Desktop Monitoring.
- The DEHCR Administrative Review process covers areas related to contract compliance, program operations, program integrity, staff, planning, protection of applicants' personal and identifiable information, quality assurance, reporting and claims and fraud.

Local Administering Agencies/District Offices:

- On-site evaluation
- Annual program review
- Monitoring through Central Database
- Desk reviews
- Client File Testing/Sampling
- Other program review mechanisms are in place. Describe:

- DEHCR Contracts with 72 local county and seven tribal agencies to administer WHEAP. The seven tribal agencies are: Bad River Tribe, Lac Courte Oreilles Band, Lac Du Flambeau Tribe, Mole Lake/Sokaogan Tribe, Oneida Tribe, Red Cliff Tribe and Stockbridge-Munsee Tribe. Agencies are on a 3-4 year on-site review schedule.
- Agencies not scheduled for an on-site review will be reviewed via Desktop Monitoring.
- Ongoing Desktop Monitoring includes, but is not limited to, the following areas: production activity, outreach activity, accuracy of eligibility determination, client complaint trends, current system access and user security, and overall worker documentation. When discrepancies are discovered, the local agencies are contacted to review and, when warranted, correct the problems. Many of these inquiries are conducted before benefits are issued to applicants, and questioned cases are set aside from payment until the problem is corrected.
- As of FFY 2016 local county and tribal agencies are required to conduct internal quality assurance reviews to ensure that agencies are correctly interpreting and applying WHEAP program requirements, policies and eligibility determination.

10.6 Explain, or attach a copy of, your local agency monitoring schedule and protocol.

Agencies receive an on-site review every 3-4 years. Prior to each program year, DEHCR will develop a provisional list of agencies identified for an on-site review. Desk compliance monitoring results along with other agency performance indicators are considered when developing the list. Agencies not identified for an on-site review will receive a Desk Top Monitoring. This results in each agency's annual participation in either a full or abbreviated compliance review.

10.7 Describe how you select local agencies for monitoring reviews?

Site Visits: Prior to each program year, DEHCR will develop a provisional list of agencies identified for an On-Site Review. When developing this list, DEHCR will consider Desktop Review results along with other agency performance indicators. While DEHCR maintains a cyclical schedule for all agencies, the factors described above may affect the frequency of agency reviews. Agencies are put on a 3-4 year review schedule unless the results of a Desktop Monitoring review or other associated factors warrant an earlier onsite review.

Desk Reviews: All agencies not scheduled for an on-site review are scheduled for a Desktop Monitoring review.

10.8 How often is each local agency monitored?

DEHCR contracts with 72 county and seven tribal agencies to administer WHEAP. The seven tribal agencies are: Bad River Tribe, Lac Courte Oreilles Band, Lac Du Flambeau Tribe, Mole Lake/Sokaogan Tribe, Oneida Tribe, Red Cliff Tribe and Stockbridge-Munsee Tribe. Agencies are scheduled on a 3-4 year cycle for Administrative Reviews and those not scheduled in a year are monitored via Desktop Monitoring.

10.9 What is the combined error rate for eligibility determinations? (Optional)

All case files reviewed in the FFY 2016 Administrative Reviews and Desktop Monitorings identified a cumulative error rate of 2% where the error resulted in a household being wrongly determined as eligible or being wrongly determined as ineligible.

10.10 What is the combined error rate for benefit determinations? (Optional)

All case files reviewed in the FFY 2016 Administrative Reviews and Desktop Monitoring Reviews identified a cumulative error rate of 3%.

10.11 How many local agencies are currently on corrective action plans for eligibility and/or benefit determination issues?

None

10.12 How many local agencies are currently on corrective action plans for financial accounting or administrative issues?

None

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 11: Timely and Meaningful Public Participation, 2605(b)(12) – Assurance 12, 2605(c)(2)

11.1 How did you obtain input from the public in the development of your LIHEAP plan?

Check all that apply:

- Tribal Council meeting(s)
- Public Hearing(s)
- Draft Plan posted to website and available for comment
- Hard copy of plan is available for public view and comment
- Comments from applicants are recorded
- Request for comments on draft Plan is advertised
- Stakeholder consultation meeting(s)
- Comments are solicited during outreach activities
- Other, describe:

11.2 What changes did you make to your LIHEAP plan as a result of this participation?

N/A

Public Hearings, 2605(a)(2)

11.3 List the date(s) and location(s) that you held public hearing(s) on the proposed use and distribution of your LIHEAP funds?

Date	Event Description
August 9, 2016	Public Hearing held at Department of Administration, 101 E Wilson Street, Madison, WI

11.4 How many parties commented on your plan at the hearing(s)?

Zero

11.5 Summarize the comments you received at the hearing(s).

N/A

11.6 What changes did you make to your LIHEAP plan as a result of the public hearing(s)?

N/A

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 12: Fair Hearings, 2605(b)(13) – Assurance 13

12.1 How many fair hearings did the grantee have in the prior Federal fiscal year?

84

12.2 How many of those fair hearings resulted in the initial decision being reversed?

Two

12.3 Describe any policy and/or procedural changes made in the last Federal fiscal year as a result of fair hearings?

N/A

12.4 Describe your fair hearing procedures for **households whose applications are denied**.

When the Division of Hearings and Appeals (DHA) receives an appeal request, an email with a copy of that request, along with a Summary of Action Leading to Appeal form and a Request Withdrawal form is sent to the county/tribe agency contact. (This is sent to one source at the local agency who is responsible for forwarding this to the appropriate subgrantee). The local county/tribe agency submits the electronically completed form to DHA by e-mail within 10 days.

If the local county/tribe agency is able to resolve the issue with the petitioner, the agency will indicate that the issue was resolved and explain the action taken in the Explanation of Action section of the Summary form and advise the applicant to withdraw the appeal.

If the matter has not been resolved between the agency and petitioner, DHA will use the information provided in the summary to schedule the hearing.

DHA sends letter to the applicant notifying them of receipt of the appeal, a letter when the hearing date is sent, and a letter with outcome results.

12.5 When and how are applicants informed of these rights?

Applicants are provided these rights upon application through signing a Certification Page (<http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/category.asp?linkcatid=566&linkid=122&locid=25>). They are also provided the information on their Benefit Notice.

12.6 Describe your fair hearing procedures for **households whose applications are not acted on in a timely manner**.

All appeal requests are handled in the same manner regardless of the reason.

12.7 When and how are applicants informed of these rights?

Applicants are provided these rights upon application through signing a Certification Page. They are also provided the information on their Benefit Notice.

DHA sends a letter to the applicant notifying them of receipt of the appeal, a letter when the hearing date is sent, and a letter with outcome results.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 13: Reduction of home energy needs, 2605(b)(16) – Assurance 16

13.1 Describe how you use LIHEAP funds to provide services that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance?

The State of Wisconsin may, through contract with local LIHEAP providers and/or under contract with the Wisconsin Community Action Program and/or through arrangements with other service providers, engage in the following activities:

1. Budget counseling, energy conservation training, co-payment agreements, advocacy with fuel suppliers, household energy assessments and referrals.
2. Support for services provided by leveraged funds. These services will include those provided under regular crisis assistance, but only when non-federal funds are used toward co-payments, etc.
3. Intensive case management targeted to households selected from those as "high heating costs compared to household income" and "high heating costs for dwelling type".
4. Educational classes may be offered through third party contract agencies, utilities, state staff, or other qualified individuals.

13.2 How do you ensure that you don't use more than 5% of your LIHEAP funds for these activities?

Wisconsin does not utilize funds under assurance 16.

13.3 Describe the impact of such activities on the number of households served in the previous Federal fiscal year.

N/A

13.4 Describe the level of direct benefits provided to those households in the previous Federal fiscal year.

N/A

13.5 How many households applied for these services?

N/A

13.6 How many households received these services?

N/A

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 14: Leveraging Incentive Program, 2607A

14.1 Do you plan to submit an application for the leveraging incentive program?

Yes No

14.2 Describe instructions to the third parties and/or local agencies for submitting LIHEAP leveraging resource information and retaining records.

If leveraging funds become available, Wisconsin would apply for them.

14.3 For each type of resource and/or benefit to be leveraged in the upcoming year that will meet the requirements of 45 C.F.R. § 96.87(d)(2)(iii), describe the following:

What is the type of resource or benefit?	What is the source(s) of the resource?	How will the resource be integrated and coordinated with the LIHEAP program?

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 15: Training

15.1 Describe the training you provide for each of the following groups:

a. Grantee Staff:

- Formal training on grantee policies and procedures
How often?
 - Annually
 - Biannually
 - As needed
 - Other – Describe:
- Employees are provided with policy manual
- Other – Describe:

New employees are provided with an orientation that includes policy and program related information

b. Local Agencies:

- Formal training conference
How often?
 - Annually
 - Biannually
 - As needed
 - Other – Describe:
- On-site training
How often?
 - Annually
 - Biannually
 - As needed
 - Other – Describe:

Training is provided via ongoing help desk and monitoring activities.

- Employees are provided with policy manual
- Other – Describe:

Online training modules are available for viewing throughout the course of the program year.

c. Vendors

- Formal training conference
How often?
 - Annually
 - Biannually
 - As needed
 - Other – Describe:
- Policies communicated through vendor agreements
- Policies are outlined in a vendor manual
- Other – Describe:

Training is provided via help desk activities and informational transmittals emailed to our vendors.

15.2 Does your training program address fraud reporting and prevention?

- Yes
- No

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 16: Performance Goals and Measures, 2605(b)

16.1 Describe your progress toward meeting the data collection and reporting requirements of the four required LIHEAP performance measures. Include timeframe and plans for meeting these requirements and what you believe will be accomplished in the coming federal fiscal year.

The State of Wisconsin has implemented the required LIHEAP Performance Measures into our web based application intake system, as well as the paper application process. Every applicant will provide a response to the performance measures questions and that information will be retained and made available for reporting purposes.

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.

Section 17: Program Integrity, 2605(b)(10)

17.1 Fraud Reporting Mechanisms

a. Describe all mechanisms available to the public for reporting cases of suspected waste, fraud, and abuse.

- Online Fraud Reporting
- Dedicated Fraud Reporting Hotline
- Report directly to local agency/district office or Grantee office
- Report to State Inspector General or Attorney General
- Forms and procedures in place for local agencies/district offices and vendors to report fraud, waste, and abuse.
- Other – describe:
WHEAP approved vendors provide referrals for cases to review as well.

b. Describe strategies in place for advertising the above-referenced resources.

- Printed outreach materials
- Addressed on LIHEAP application
- Website
- Other – describe:

17.2 Identification Documentation Requirements

a. Indicate which of the following forms of identification are required or requested to be collected from LIHEAP applicants or their household members.

REQUIRED Type of Identification Collected	Collected from Whom?		
	Applicant Only	All Adults in HH	HH Members Seeking Assistance*
Social Security Card is photocopied and retained	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>
	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>
Social Security Number (without actual card)	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>
Government-issued identification card (i.e.: driver's license, state ID, Tribal ID, passport, etc.)	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Of first time applicants to the county/tribe	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>
	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>	Requested <input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>

b. Describe any exceptions to the above policies.

The following are Social Security Number exceptions:

- Infants under 60 days old
- Religiously exempt from Social Security

- Ineligible non-citizens
- Household members over 60 days old with Division approval

17.3 Identification Verification

Describe what methods are used to verify the authenticity of identification documents provided by clients or household members.

- Verify SSNs with Social Security Administration
- Match SSNs with death records from Social Security Administration or state agency
- Match SSNs with state eligibility/management system (e.g., SNAP, TANF)
- Match with state Department of Labor system
- Match with state and/or federal corrections system
- Match with state child support system
- Verification using private software (e.g., The Work Number)
- In-person certification by staff (for tribal grantee's only)
- Match SSN/Tribal ID number with tribal database [
- Other – describe:

17.4 Citizenship/Legal Residency Verification

What are your procedures for ensuring that household members are U.S. citizens or aliens who are qualified to receive LIHEAP benefits?

- Clients sign an attestation of citizenship or legal residency
- Clients' submission of Social Security cards is accepted as proof of legal residency
- Noncitizens must provide documentation of immigration status
- Citizens must provide a copy of their birth certificate, naturalization papers, or passport
- Noncitizens are verified through the SAVE system
- Tribal members are verified through Tribal database/Tribal ID card
- Other – describe:

17.5 Income Verification

What methods does your agency utilize to verify household income?

- Require documentation of income for all adult household members
 - Pay stubs
 - Social Security award letters
 - Bank statements
 - Tax statements
 - Zero-income statements
 - Unemployment Insurance letters
 - Other – describe:

County agencies and tribes have access to verify through Department of Health Services eligibility/management system (CARES).

- Computer data matches:
 - Income information matched against state computer system (e.g., SNAP, TANF)
 - Proof of unemployment benefits verified with state Department of Labor
 - Social Security income verified with SSA
 - Utilize state directory of new hires

Other – describe:

County agencies and tribes have access to verify through other State Departments eligibility/management system, unemployment benefits, social security income, and utilize state directory of new hires.

17.6 Protection of Privacy and Confidentiality

Describe the financial and operating controls in place to protect client information against improper use or disclosure.

Policy in place prohibiting release of information without written consent

Grantee LIHEAP database includes privacy/confidentiality safeguards

Employee training on confidentiality for:

Grantee employees

local agencies/district offices

Employees must sign confidentiality agreement

Grantee employees

local agencies/district offices

Physical files are stored in a secure location

Other – describe:

Grantees are required to agree to an online confidentiality agreement within the State's Home Energy Plus system. Grantees that don't have access to the State's Home Energy Plus database are required to fill out written confidentiality agreements and retain them in a secure location.

17.7 Verifying the Authenticity of Energy Vendors

What policies are in place for verifying vendor authenticity?

All vendors must register with the State

All vendors must supply a valid SSN or TIN/W-9 form

Vendors are verified through energy bills provided by the household

Grantee and/or local agencies/district offices perform physical monitoring of vendors

Other – describe, and note any exceptions to policies above:

State of Wisconsin performs desktop monitoring of approved program vendors

17.8 Benefits Policy – Gas and Electric Utilities

What policies are in place to protect against fraud when making benefit payments to gas and electric utilities on behalf of clients?

Applicants required to submit proof of physical residency

Applicants must submit current utility bill

Data exchange with utilities that verifies:

Account ownership

Consumption

Balances

Payment history

Account is properly credited with benefit

Other – describe:

If account is active

Centralized computer system/database tracks payments to all utilities

Centralized computer system automatically generates benefit level

Separation of duties between intake and payment approval

- Payments coordinated among other heating assistance programs to avoid duplication of payments
- Payments to utilities and invoices from utilities are reviewed for accuracy
- Computer databases are periodically reviewed to verify accuracy and timeliness of payments made to utilities
- Direct payment to households are made in limited cases only
- Procedures are in place to require prompt refunds from utilities in cases of account closure
- Vendor agreements specify requirements selected above, and provide enforcement mechanism
- Other – describe:
The State of Wisconsin is in the process of conducting program vendor monitoring in which a review of payments is conducted.

17.9 Benefits Policy — Bulk Fuel Vendors

What procedures are in place for averting fraud and improper payments when dealing with bulk fuel suppliers of heating oil, propane, wood, and other bulk fuel vendors?

- Vendors are checked against an approved vendors list
- Centralized computer system/database is used to track payments to all vendors
- Clients are relied on for reports of non-delivery or partial delivery
- Two-party checks are issued naming client and vendor
- Direct payment to households are made in limited cases only
- Conduct monitoring of bulk fuel vendors
- Bulk fuel vendors are required to submit reports to the Grantee
- Vendor agreements specify requirements selected above, and provide enforcement mechanism
- Other – describe:

17.10 Investigations and Prosecutions

Describe the Grantee’s procedures for investigating and prosecuting reports of fraud, and any sanctions placed on clients/staff/vendors found to have committed fraud.

- Refer to state Inspector General
- Refer to local prosecutor or state Attorney General
- Refer to US DHHS Inspector General (including referral to OIG hotline)
- Local agencies/district offices or Grantee conduct investigation of fraud complaints from public
- Grantee attempts collection of improper payments. If so, describe the recoupment process.

The Home Energy Plus System (Intake System) contains mechanisms for recording and collecting, and issuing communication of improper payments.

- Clients found to have committed fraud are banned from LIHEAP assistance. For how long is a household banned?
- Contracts with local agencies require that employees found to have committed fraud are reprimanded and/or terminated
- Vendors found to have committed fraud may no longer participate in LIHEAP
- Other — describe:

If any of the above questions require further explanation or clarification that could not be made in the fields provided, attach a document with said explanation here.