

Department: County Human Services **Program Contact:** Peggy Samolinski
Program Offer Type: Existing Operating Program **Program Offer Stage:** As Proposed
Related Programs:
Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

Ensuring that there is sufficient heat in a home, the lights are on and water is hot is critical for people to have quality of life, especially members of the BIPOC community. Functional utilities help ensure that a young person can learn at home, an older adult is living safely, and families remain stable. This becomes all the more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, when people have been directed to stay at home in order to save lives. The Energy Assistance Program supports housing stability by providing people who live on a fixed or low income with financial assistance to help meet their energy costs with an emphasis on providing equitable access for all people.

Program Summary

ISSUE: The average energy burden for low-income households is 8.2% - 3 times higher than higher-income households. Additionally, Black, Indigenous, and Communities of Color bear a further disproportionate energy burden. A 2016 study by the American Council for Energy Efficient Economy found that Black households account for nearly half of energy-poor households in the US. Many low-income households use expensive heating fuels in old, inefficient homes and face barriers to accessing technologies that could help make their energy costs more affordable. Moreover, initial research from the start of the pandemic is showing that not only were communities of color disproportionately more likely to experience economic hardship that prevented them from meeting their basic energy needs, they were also less likely to receive a stimulus check, which could have helped.

PROGRAM GOAL: The goal of the energy assistance program is to provide one-time annual energy bill payments to pay utilities for households who live on a fixed or low income and who are struggling with energy costs, so they can remain stably housed.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY: The Energy Assistance Program helps people keep their homes warm in the winter. Direct utility payments to income-eligible households, along with energy education, case management, and other services help households manage and pay for their energy costs while providing education about other services. Energy bill payment assistance is delivered through seven community nonprofit agencies to make these utility payments for fixed and low income households. On average, program participants receive \$413 in utility assistance each year. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Energy Assistance Program has shifted to 100% virtual supports to clients, and has become a model for best practices in how to engage clients virtually.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budgeted	FY21 Estimate	FY22 Offer
Output	Number of households served.	15,193	15,000	15,000	15,000
Outcome	Percentage of households served after receiving shutoff notice who avoid disconnection.	100%	100%	100%	100%

Performance Measures Descriptions

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2021	2021	2022	2022
Personnel	\$0	\$847,602	\$0	\$904,690
Contractual Services	\$0	\$9,070,592	\$0	\$11,220,562
Materials & Supplies	\$0	\$31,798	\$0	\$79,530
Internal Services	\$0	\$249,147	\$0	\$324,045
Total GF/non-GF	\$0	\$10,199,139	\$0	\$12,528,827
Program Total:	\$10,199,139		\$12,528,827	
Program FTE	0.00	8.13	0.00	8.40

Program Revenues				
Intergovernmental	\$0	\$10,199,139	\$0	\$12,528,827
Total Revenue	\$0	\$10,199,139	\$0	\$12,528,827

Explanation of Revenues

This program generates \$131,991 in indirect revenues.
 \$6,856,937 - OHCSO Oregon Energy Assistance Program (OEAP)
 \$5,591,890 - OHCSO Low Income Energy Assistance Program - Energy (LIEAP)
 \$80,000 - PDX Water/Sewer D/A

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2021: 25119 YFS - Energy Assistance

The \$2.3 million increase in contracted services is due to rollover of FY 2021 OEAP and LIEAP energy funds to FY 2022 (OEAP by \$1.5 million; LIEAP by \$0.8 million).