

Low Income Utility Assistance Workgroup

June 7, 2023

9AM-10:30AM

Virtual

Low Income Utility Assistance Workgroup

Agenda

- I. Introductions
- II. OHEP Updates
 - A. Communications sub-workgroup recap
 - B. Policy changes for OHEP for FY24
 - C. Categorical Eligibility Implementation
- III. Member Discussion
- IV. Next Meeting

Customer Communications sub-workgroup Updates

- Meetings began meeting in December 2022 and continued on a bi-weekly then monthly basis.
- Group was tasked with improving OHEP customer communications in order to expand access to OHEP programs and soften the language utilized in these communications
- The sub-Work Group also performed a thorough review of all OHEP forms and notices and provided feedback.
 - Many of these changes have been implemented, while others are still in the process of development

Customer Communications Sub-workgroup Updates (cont)

- Areas of feedback that have been provided to State OHEP and DHS leadership:
 - DHS Call Center Scripts and Script changes for OHEP
 - Updating requirements for future RFPs for Outreach Activities to include specific guidance for triaging different application types
 - Public Posting of OHEP performance data on DHS website
 - Document Verification Matrix for Local Administering Agencies
 - DHS public website revisions/ improvements

Improved Customer Communications

- [Revised Redetermination Notice](#)
- [Revised Eligibility Determination Notice](#)
- [Revised Landlord Agreement](#)
- [Revised Request for Additional Information](#)
- [Revised Application](#)

OHEP Publicly Reported Data

- Total number of applications received by intake channel segmented by:
 - Paper Applications
 - MDTHINK Online Applications
 - Telephonic Applications
 - Home-Visit Applications
- Monthly Redetermination participation and eligibility reporting
 - Total number of customers participating in redetermination
 - Total number of Redetermination Notices issued by DHS
 - Total number of customers eligible for redetermination

OHEP Publicly Reported Data

- Monthly reporting for application and denial statistics
 - Data will be broken down by jurisdiction and intake channel for each OHEP program (MEAP, EUSP, EARA, and GARA)
 - Total number of applications to date
 - Total number of accepted applications to date
 - Total dollar amount of benefits issued to date
 - Average benefit amount
 - Denial Rate
 - Denial rate by intake channel
- Monthly USPP enrollment reporting
- Monthly Energy Efficiency Programs (DHCD Weatherization) application volume and intake reporting
- Monthly Denial reporting for all programs by the number of denials and the current denial rate

Policy changes for OHEP for FY24

- July 1, 2023- Income Eligibility limits raised to 200% for all OHEP programs
 - New OHEP application
 - First full year without Budget Billing Requirement for EUSP
 - First full year where the bill does not have to be in customer's name for EUSP
 - First full year with Uniform Redetermination Process
- January 1, 2024- Categorical Eligibility for all OHEP programs
- July 2024- Transitioning OHEP administration to local DSS offices

Implementing Categorical Eligibility

OHEP is preparing for the implementation of Categorical Eligibility for its programs. As part of this process, OHEP is engaging key stakeholders to ensure all stakeholder needs and concerns are addressed.

Stakeholder engagement:

- Local OHEP Directors and Local DSS Directors (regular meetings)
- FIA, DHS, and MDTHINK leadership
- Advocates, Non-Profits, and Utility Partners
- LIHEAP awardees who have implemented Categorical Eligibility