

RESOLUTION NO. R21-128

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOW INCOME HOME WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (“LIHWAP”) AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO SIGN ALL CONTRACTS AND/OR AGREEMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM ON THE CITY’S BEHALF.**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana,

Section 1: Approval. The City Council authorizes and approves the City’s participation in the State of Montana’s Low Income Home Water Assistance Program (“LIHWAP”) and all documents are attached hereto and incorporated herein.

Section 2: Execution. The Mayor and the City Clerk of the City of Laurel are hereby given authority to execute the requisite contract/agreement on behalf of the City.

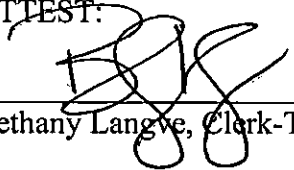
Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on December 14, 2021, by Council Member Stokes.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel this 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 2021.

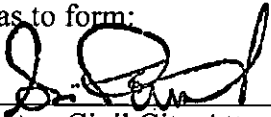
APPROVED by the Mayor this 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 2021.

CITY OF LAUREL  
  
Emelie Eaton, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Bethany Langve, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved as to form:

  
Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney



# Department of Public Health and Human Services

Human and Community Services Division Intergovernmental Human Services Bureau  
PO Box 202956 Helena, MT 59620-2956

Greg Gianforte, Governor

Adam Meier, Director

**DATE:** July 19, 2021

**TO:** Public Water System Providers

**FROM:** Sara Loewen, DPHHS Intergovernmental Human Services Bureau Chief

**SUBJECT:** Low-Income Home Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) Contractor Application and Contract

A temporary emergency Low-Income Home Water Assistance Program<sup>1</sup> (LIHWAP) is being developed to provide low-income households assistance in paying their water and wastewater bills. Funds will be sent directly to Public Water System (PWS) operators to be credited to income eligible household accounts to reduce arrearages, prevent shutoffs and reduce monthly rates. This program is slated to operate from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023. Households will apply for assistance through a process coordinated with the Low-Income Energy Assistance (LIEAP) program.

The MT Department of Public Health and Human Services is providing the opportunity to PWS providers to participate in this program through a contract with the Department in order to receive and provide this assistance to income eligible households. The Department is beginning the process of securing contracts with PWS providers interested in participating in the LIHWAP.

The following documents are enclosed:

1. A copy of the (DPHHS-HWAP-001) Low Income Home Water Assistance Program Contractor Application and Contract for the time period October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023.  
Complete the Contractor Information sections, including the Contractor Taxpayer ID number field. Sign the bottom of page three. The contract will be signed by a Department representative and a copy will be returned for your records.
2. A Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) Verification (W-9) form. The completed W-9 form is required to receive payments from the Department. The W-9 form will be used to verify the TIN and the address where the 1099 form will be sent.

<sup>1</sup> The LIHWAP program is authorized under Section 533 Title V of Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations act of 2021, Public Law No: 116-260 and as provided for under The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Additional information can be found at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/lihwap>.

3. A Payment Address Form to complete and return if the mailing address for the LIHWAP payment is to be made to an address other than the one entered on the W-9 form.
4. A Direct Deposit Sign-up Form to complete if your company would prefer to have payments made directly to your financial institution. A written Statement of Remittance (SOR) will be mailed as usual but LIHWAP funds will be available at least one day earlier.

In order to participate and receive funds under this program, items #1 and #2 (above) must be completed and returned, along with items #3 and #4 if applicable.

These documents should be mailed to:

DPHHS LIHWAP, PO Box 202925, Helena, MT 59620

We encourage all Public Water System providers to complete the above information in order to participate in the program and allow their customers to receive this assistance.

Look for additional information (coming soon) at [www.lieap.mt.gov](http://www.lieap.mt.gov). A list of frequently asked questions will be available. You can also email Program Specialist Sheri Shepherd at [sshepherd2@mt.gov](mailto:sshepherd2@mt.gov).

Thank you for considering participating in the Low Income Home Water Assistance Program aimed at reducing arrearages and rates of low-income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes, that pay a high proportion of household income for drinking water and wastewater services.



Sara Loewen  
Intergovernmental Human Services Bureau Chief  
Human and Community Services Division, MT DPHHS

## Public Water System Suppliers FAQ'S

The LIHWAP program is authorized under Section 533 Title V of Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations act of 2021, Public Law No: 116-260 and as provided for under The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Additional information can be found at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/lihwap>.

**1. How do I know if I am a qualified public water system?**

Contact DPHHS/IHSB by emailing [sshepherd2@mt.gov](mailto:sshepherd2@mt.gov) to determine if you are a qualified water vendor.

**2. What do I need to track on payments that come in?**

When you have contracted with DPHHS, payments for income eligible customers will be sent directly to the water vendor. Payments must be applied to the customer account for past-due amounts, disconnect or reconnect fees (if applicable) and water bills and sewer bills. The water vendor must be able to show DPHHS how those payments were applied to the eligible customer's account upon request.

Suppliers will be expected to submit reports/data indicating the financial accountability for these funds to eligible customer accounts were credited with LIHWAP benefits.

**3. What if a client moves or passes away?**

When a customer moves or passes away any unused LIHWAP funds will need to be returned to: DPHHS/HCSD; P.O. Box 202956, Helena, MT 59620. Include customer's name, LIHWAP benefit issuance date, and LIHWAP account number with remittance.

**4. Do we have to return funds at a certain time if not used?**

LIHWAP funds only need to be returned when the account is closed due to a move or a client passes away or when the program closes on June 30, 2023. In these cases, any LIHWAP attributable credit remaining on the customer account will need to be returned to DPHHS.

**5. How will payments be issued via check or direct deposit?**

All payments will be issued directly to the water/sewer provider who has entered into a contract with DPHHS on behalf of the customer. The LIHWAP vendor application allows the vendor to choose to receive funds (via check or direct deposit (EFT)).

**6. How does the program work for vendors?**

The LIHWAP benefits will be sent directly to the water/sewer provider who has an approved contract with DPHHS. Documentation will be sent with the payment indicating the customer's account number, benefit amounts (Water, sewer and arrearages). The vendor needs to apply the benefit to the correct customer's account. A Public Water System (PWS) provider application can be obtained by emailing [sshepherd2@mt.gov](mailto:sshepherd2@mt.gov).

**7. Are we allowed to let our clients know about the program?**

Water vendors are encouraged to refer customers to the local eligibility office. Eligibility offices are located on the LIHEAP, LIHWAP and Weatherization Assistance (mt.gov) website.

**8. Will there be some type of brochure we can give our clients?**

Information is available on the LIHEAP, LIHWAP and Weatherization Assistance (mt.gov) website.

**9. If we have a question as a vendor, is there a number to call for questions?**

Call Sheri at 406-447-4269 or email any questions to sshepherd2@mt.gov.

**10. Can we request applications to provide our customers?**

To obtain a supply of applications please email sshepherd2@mt.gov. Or contact your local HRDC office which can be found at LIHEAP, LIHWAP and Weatherization Assistance (mt.gov)

**11. What is the application process, and what is our role in that?**

Applicants will apply through the local eligibility offices. If deemed eligible, a payment will be sent to the water/sewer provider to apply to the applicant's water and/or sewer account as directed in the payment. The water/sewer providers do not process applications.

**12. Is the Direct Deposit for each household or the vendor?**

The Direct Deposit may include payments to the public water system supplier for more than one customer. The deposit will provide documentation indicating the account the payment is for and the amount to apply to each customer's account.

If additional information is needed regarding a payment please call Sheri at 406-447-4269.

## Low Income Home Water Assistance Program

LIHWAP helps pay:

- a. Water Bills
- b. Wastewater/Sewer Bills
- b. Water and Wastewater (sewer) Past Due Bills
- c. Water and Wastewater (sewer) Late Fees and Reconnect Fees

Funds will be sent directly to Public Water System (PWS) operators to be credited to income eligible household accounts. The Water Program is slated to start October 1, 2021 and continue through September 30, 2023.

### Do I Qualify for LIHWAP Assistance?

To qualify for LIHWAP assistance, you must meet these requirements:

- Be responsible for paying water and/or wastewater (sewer) bill.
- Have an active water and/or wastewater(sewer) account or have an obligation to pay through a rental agreement.
- Be a United States citizen or legally admitted for permanent residency.
- Meet the following Income and resource guidelines

Household Members	Income Limits	Resource Limits
1	\$27,282	\$12,043
2	\$35,676	\$18,071
3	\$44,071	\$19,277
4	\$52,465	\$20,483
5	\$60,859	\$21,689
6	\$69,254	\$22,895

### How do I Apply?

You can apply for assistance by submitting the combined LIHWAP and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) application. An application can be found at [lieap.mt.gov](http://lieap.mt.gov) or by contacting your local LIEAP eligibility office. The local LIEAP offices are listed on the back of this flyer. Find the county you live in and return the application to the office listed.

### What Items are Needed?

Before mailing your application, make sure you:

- Answer all questions completely.
- Ensure everyone in the home is included on the application.
- Ensure everyone age 16 or older signs and dates the application.
- Include your recent water and wastewater (sewer) bill(s).
- Include income records for the previous three months for everyone sixteen (16) years of age and older.
- Include a recent bank statement for all open bank accounts.
- Include copies of Social Security cards.

## Local LIEAP/LIHWAP Offices

Find your county and return the application to the office listed.

If you live in this county:	Return application to:	If you live in this county:	Return application to:
Carter Custer Daniels Dawson Fallon Garfield McCone Phillips Powder River	Prairie Richland Roosevelt Rosebud Sheridan Treasure Valley Wibaux  Action for Eastern Montana 2030 North Merrill P.O. Box 1309 Glendive, MT 59330-1309 Ph. 377-3564 or 1-800-227-0703	Fergus Golden Valley Judith Basin Musselshell Petroleum Wheatland	District VI HRDC Centennial Plaza 300 First Avenue North, Room 203 Lewistown, MT 59457 Ph. 535-7488 or 1-800-766-3018
Blaine Hill Liberty	District IV HRDC 2229 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Havre, MT 59501 Ph. 265-6743 or 1-800-640-6743	Gallatin Meagher Park	District IX HRDC 32 South Tracy Avenue Bozeman, MT 59715 Ph. 587-4486 or 1-800-332-2796
Cascade Chouteau Glacier	Opportunities Inc. 905 First Ave North P.O. Box 2289 Great Falls, MT 59403-2289 Ph. 761-0310 or 1-800-326-0955	Broadwater Jefferson Lewis & Clark	Rocky Mountain Development Council LIEAP Office 648 N. Jackson P.O. Box 1717 Helena, MT 59626-1717 Ph. 447-1625 or 1-800-356-6544
Big Horn Carbon Stillwater Sweet Grass Yellowstone	District VII HRDC 3116 First Ave North P.O. Box 2016 Billings, MT 59103 Ph. 247-4778 or 1-800-433-1411	Beaverhead Deer Lodge Granite Madison Powell Silver Bow	Action Inc. – Human Resource Council 25 W Silver Street, Butte, MT 59701 P.O. Box 39, Butte, MT 59703 Ph. 533-6855 or 1-800-382-1325
Missoula Mineral Ravalli	District XI Human Resource Council 1801 South Higgins Missoula, MT 59801 Ph. 728-3710	Pondera Teton Toole	North Central Area Agency on Aging 311 S Virginia St, Suite 2 Conrad, MT 59425 Ph. 271-7553 or 1-800-551-3191
Flathead Lake Lincoln Sanders	Community Action Partnership of NW MT 214 Main Street P.O. Box 8300 Kalispell, MT 59904-1300 Ph. 758-5433 or 1-800-344-5979	For additional information visit: <a href="http://lieap.mt.gov">lieap.mt.gov</a>	