FFY22 EAP Annual Training
August 10 – 11, 2021
FFY22 EAP Annual Training

Turn Around Document (TAD)

TAD Contents
1. Questions & Answers
   Includes questions asked during the training and those received following the training
2. Day 1 and Day 2 PowerPoint presentations

Training Logistics
Location: Online, via Webex
Dates: Tuesday, August 10 and Wednesday, August 11, 2021
Time: 9:00 – 12:00 each day
Agenda: EAP policies and procedures
Attendees: EAP Coordinators plus one additional SP staff person, and Commerce staff
Introduction & Overview

Michael Schmitz

Topics
• Logistics & Introductions
• Training overview
• Training Agenda
• FFY21 outputs
• FFY22 approach

Introduction & Overview

Logistics
• Breaks
• We will keep you muted
• Enter questions in chat Q&A or raise your hand
• For those on phone only, we will unmute during Q&A

Cisco Webex Training

Sandy Shoubash

Join a Cisco Webex training session
• Using the link provided in the email

Audio
• We recommend using your computer for audio
• To adjust your speaker and microphone settings, go to Audio > Speaker/Microphone Audio Test in the menu bar.
• If you are having difficulties, you can use your phone (two options)
• Call Me—Enter a phone number, select Call Me. You will receive a call and may be prompted to press 1 to connect.
• I Will Call In—select the Use Phone drop-down list. Dial the phone number shown on your screen. When prompted, use your phone keypad to enter the access code, and the Attendee ID shown on your screen.
Video and Audio

- Select \( \square \) to start your video and \( \square \) to stop your video.
  - We ask that you turn your video on when speaking.
- To mute or unmute yourself, click Mute or Unmute.
  - We ask that you stay muted during the presentations.

Ask a Question in a Q and A Session

During a training session, you can send your questions to all or specific panelists in a Q & A session.
1. Open the Q & A panel.
2. On the Q & A panel, type your question in the text box.
3. In the Ask drop-down list, select the recipient, and then select Send.

Q&A

For further assistance contact Sandy Shoubash at Sandy.Shoubash@state.mn.us

Introduction & Overview

State EAP Staff
- Amanuel Asghedom
- Ken Benson
- Jon Brown
- Natasha Fedorova
- Michael Schmitz
- S.Melaine Schwahn-Doyle
- Sandra Seemann
- Sandy Shoubash
- Tracy Smetana
- Andy Smialek
- Ian Villa-Watt
- Nicole Westling

Introduction & Overview

Introductions
- If this is your first EAP Annual Training, please type your name and SP name in the chat.
- Seasoned Coordinators and staff, please offer your time and knowledge.

Introduction & Overview

Annual Training Intentions
- Prepare for FFY22
- Enable train-the-trainer
- By training on
  - Program and policy changes
  - Areas of concern
- Excludes EAP 101, policy making, water assistance
Introduction & Overview

Annual Training Approach
• PowerPoint presentations by topic
• Q&A between topics – ask questions in Q&A box
• Issue a TAD (turn-around-document)
• PPTs by topic and recordings available at: https://mn-commerce.box.com/s/9mw28rpab314txma52anpc4zou9nyd6q

Day 1 Agenda
• Introduction & Overview
• Policy Manual Updates
• Safe at Home
• Data Practices
• Application Processing
• Eligibility

Day 2 Agenda
• Welcome Back & Reconnect
• Application & Mailing
• Fiscal Management
• Pending Process
• SP Webinar Update
• Debrief & Adjourn

Day 3 Agenda
• Canceled

FFY21 Production
• Over 125K applications logged in FY21
• May catch up with FY20 (132K) at current pace

Primary Heat
- 108K HHs served
- $559 avg. per HH
- $60.5M awarded

Crisis
- 36.5K HHs served
- $650 avg. per HH
- $23.7M awarded

ERR
- 3.9K HHs served
- $1.7K avg. per HH
- $6.9M awarded
Introduction & Overview

**FFY21 Production**
- Logged apps are steadily increasing

**FFY21 Operational Goals**
- Obligate $103M for benefits (including $18M in ARPA funds)

**FFY22 Approach**
- ARPA funds plus expect regular LIHEAP award
- Estimated average PHB $1000
- Minimum PHB $300
- Maximum PHB $1,600
- Maximum Crisis benefit $1200
- 15% - 25% EAPWX Transfer
- Start up funds and benefit payments available October 1
**FFY22 Policy Development**

- Many sources for FFY22 policy improvements
  - Program audits
  - Issues identified by SPs and Commerce in FFY21
  - Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
  - EACA
  - eHEAT Next Gen

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**FY22 Policy Development**

- JAD participants were essential to develop FFY22 policies and procedures – thank you!
  - Kevin Adams
  - Wendy Anderson
  - Sandra Cobenais
  - Feleshia Edwards
  - Pat Elizondo
  - Lynette Engelhardt-Stott
  - Andrea Goeden
  - Nora Guerra
  - Mary Lor
  - Emily Lukisk
  - Michael Spilman
  - Pam Wild

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**Q & A**
Policy Manual

Sandra Seemann

Agenda
• Policy Manual reorganization
• Contacting Commerce via email/fax
• Household Situation Changes
• Safe at Home

Manual reorganization
• Intent to remove non-policy content
• Removed Introduction & Ch. 1 - Program Control Environment
• Moved non-SP chapters to end of Manual
  • Ch. 16 – Energy Vendors
  • Ch. 17 – Mechanical Contractors
  • Ch. 18 – Water Vendors (new for LIHWAP)

Contacting Commerce via email/fax
• Many Commerce EAP staff working remotely
• Partial remote work expected to continue as “new norm”
• For faster service, use email/fax not U.S. Mail

Mid-year household situation changes
• Ch. 8 - Benefit Payments and Refunds, p. 5
• The Household Situation Changes after Application is Approved section is updated to reflect eHEAT Next Generation functionality
• In old eHEAT, it was after eligibility was determined. In Next Gen, it’s after application is approved

Safe at Home
• SAH issued a new ID card
  • Old card is no longer used and very few are left in circulation
Policy Manual

Safe at Home

- What to do if a pre-logged HH submits app and they have moved into or out of SAH program
  - SAH HHS are logged into eHEAT differently than non-SAH HHS

Policy Manual

Safe at Home

- If pre-logged HH switches to/from SAH program
  - Cannot "switch" a HH in eHEAT to or from SAH
  - Their circumstances are very different - think of them as a new HH
  - Enter them into eHEAT as a new HH

Q&A

Oversight/Data Practices

Sandra Seemann

Trivial!

- Question
  - In what Minnesota town was a leading U.S. bus company launched over 100 years ago?
- Answer
  - Hibbing, Minnesota
  - In 1914, Swedish immigrant Carl Eric Wickman began taking miners from Hibbing to Alice for 15 cents a ride
  - Eventually became the Greyhound bus company

Oversight/Data Practices

Agenda

- Investigation of suspected fraud
- Appeals timelines
- Data practices
Investigation of Suspected Fraud

• Ch. 10 – Incidents & Appeals, p. 3

• New in this section - SPs must use Appendix 10C – Suspected Fraud Referral Cover Letter to ask their local authorities to investigate suspected EAP benefit fraud cases

New Appendix 10C - Suspected Fraud Referral Cover Letter

• Commerce Legal guided us to use a cover letter to refer suspected fraud to local law enforcement authority

• Letter explains that info provided is considered private data

• Cover letter must contain no private data

Appeals Timeline change

• Ch. 10 – Incidents & Appeals, p. 11

• Applicants still have 30 calendar days

• SPs and Commerce State Office appeals timeline is changed

• Changed to 20 calendar days (from 14 business days)

• This is easier to track

Data Practices

• Ch. 11 – Data Practices, p. 7

• In Providing Info Allowed by Privacy Notice section

• Commerce Legal says subpoena not sufficient for access to private EAP data

• Removed “persons so authorized pursuant to subpoena” from list of those allowed access to private EAP data
Topics

- Accessibility section changes
- Application submission alternatives

Accessibility section changes – Ch.2 pg.3

- Added new tool ‘Accessibility for People with Hearing and Speech Disabilities’
  - Info about assisting deaf, deafblind or hard or hearing clients moved from Manual to tool
  - Includes additional resources

Application submission alternatives

- EAP is adding ways applicants can submit an app
  - New section Ch 2 p 11 ‘Application Submission Alternatives’

Application submission alternatives – Ch.2 p.11

- 4 ways an application may be submitted
  - In person
  - Walk-in
  - Deliver to EAP drop box
Application & Application Processing

Application submission alternatives

• 4 ways an application may be submitted
  • By U.S. mail

Application & Application Processing

Application submission alternatives

• 4 ways an application may be submitted
  • Email
    • Emailing picture of the completed, signed and dated paper app
    • Emailing a completed fillable .pdf app WITH REQUIRED text and signature

Application & Application Processing

Application submission alternatives

• 4 ways an application may be submitted
  • Fax

Application & Application Processing

Application submission alternatives

• 4 ways an application may be submitted
  • Fax

Application & Application Processing

Application submission alternatives

• Required text and handwritten signature if using fillable app

Employee app status clarification/review – Ch. 2 pg. 16

• Apps from SP employees must be approved by Comm before reaching a terminal status
Application & Application Processing

Employee app status clarification/review

- SPs must:
  - Enter all info in eHEAT
    - ‘Board member or employee’ box MUST be checked
  - SP makes app complete
  - SP must click ‘Determine Eligibility’ button
  - Verify app is in ‘Benefit Determined’ status then submit to Comm

Application & Application Processing

Employee app status clarification/review

- Comm approves the employee’s eligibility within 14 days of receiving all documents
- Once approved, payments show in eHEAT as ‘Certifiable’
- SP processes the app

Application & Application Processing

Employee app status clarification/review

- Comm logs all employee apps submitted
- Comm does not retain a copy
- SP is required to maintain HH file documentation

Application & Application Processing

SAH has a new participation card – Ch 2 pg.19

- Card image appears on Ch 2 pg. 19 ‘SAH Participation Card’ section
  - Does not take place of official ID forms like a state ID or DL
  - Refreshed look; old cards still circulating and valid
  - Supports presumption of valid SAH enrollment
  - SAH can confirm participation if SP has info otherwise

Q&A

Program Eligibility

Topics
- Dwellings eligible for PH
- Change in Northstar Care for Children & Foster Care section
- Tribal Per Cap Payments changes
- Max Income remains at 60% SMI
- Changes to income inclusions/exclusions
- Appendix 3G – Online Income Verification
Program Eligibility

Dwellings eligible for PH

• New section Ch.3 p.11

  • Purpose
  • What is a dwelling?
  • Reference tables
  • Quiz

Dwellings eligible for PH

• Purpose
  • Added clarity in Manual for PH
  • Addresses other not-so-traditional housing types

Dwellings eligible for PH

• What is a dwelling?
  • A single unit providing complete, independent, living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

Dwellings eligible for PH

• New reference tables
  • Specific examples for quick reference
  • Not all inclusive

Dwellings eligible for PH

• Some dwelling types that may be eligible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potentially Eligible Dwellings</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedroom house</td>
<td>See 31P Publ/Manual, Household definition section, Ch. 6, p. 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Br</td>
<td>Contact Commerce for guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motel, motel</td>
<td>Contact Commerce for guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>Contact Commerce for guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational vehicle (RV)</td>
<td>Contact Commerce for guidance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dwellings eligible for PH

• Is it an eligible or ineligible dwelling?

Yes
Program Eligibility

Dwellings eligible for PH
• Is it an eligible or ineligible dwelling?

25 No

Program Eligibility

Dwellings eligible for PH
• Is it an eligible or ineligible dwelling?

26 No

Program Eligibility

Dwellings eligible for PH
• Is it an eligible or ineligible dwelling?

27 No

Program Eligibility

Dwellings eligible for PH
• Is it an eligible or ineligible dwelling?

28 No

Program Eligibility

Change in Northstar Care for Children Foster Care section
• What changed?
• Why the change?
• Impact to processing eligibility

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Program Eligibility

Change in Northstar Care for Children
• What changed?
• Policy change on Ch.3 p.12

Northstar Care for Children & Foster Care
Northstar Care for Children includes Foster Care, Kinship Assistance (formerly known as Relative Custody Assistance), and Adoption Assistance payments. Other foster care programs serving children include programs by non-profit or private organizations. For EAP:
• Count the child as a household member.
• Do not count Northstar Care for Children or foster care income.
• Count SSI, Veteran’s Benefits, Railroad Retirement Benefits, Black Lung Benefits, and any other countable income the child receives.

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Program Eligibility

Change in Northstar Care for Children
• Why the change?
  • MN DHS changed how they count income for Northstar
    • In FFY21 certain income types were counted
    • In FFY22 certain income types no longer counted
  • Income types involved: RSDI, Veteran’s Benefits, Railroad Retirement Benefits, and Black Lung Benefits

• Impact to processing eligibility
  • Continue to NOT count Northstar/Foster Care income – No change
  • DO count other federal program income – Change to policy
    • Income types involved: RSDI, Veteran’s Benefits, Railroad Retirement Benefits, and Black Lung Benefits

Tribal Per Cap Payments changes
• What changed
• Income inclusions/exclusions table

Max Income remains at 60% SMI
• FFY22 Max EAP Income Guidelines – Ch.3 p.14

2022 Maximum EAP Income Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Annual Income</th>
<th>1 Month Max.</th>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Annual Income</th>
<th>1 Month Max.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$35,237</td>
<td>$2,856</td>
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<td>$156,736</td>
<td>$11,591</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$113,485</td>
<td>$8,101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Eligibility

Tribal Per Cap Payments changes
• What changed?
  • Ch.3 p.13

  Tribal Per Capita Payments

  For the Indian Tribal Judgment Funds Use or Distribution Act (25 U.S.C. §5403 – 5408), up to $2,000 of a tribal distribution or per capita income shall be exceptions income. If it is the result of interests of individual Indians in trust or restricted lands, tribal judgments or agreements. This applies to per capita payments to members of the Bois Forte and Grand Portage tribes. The first $2,000 of income is not counted for EAP eligibility.

  • Applies to Bois Forte and Grand Portage tribes
  • First $2,000 of income is not counted for EAP

Changes to income inclusions/exclusions
• COVID-19 related aid – Ch.3 p.17
• Tribal Judgement Funds above $2,000 – Ch.3 p.21
• Unemployment Insurance – Ch.3 p.22
Changes to income inclusions/exclusions – Ch.3 p.14-22

- New income type ‘COVID-19 related aid’ is not counted as EAP income

Changes to income inclusions/exclusions – Ch.3 p.12-22

- ‘Unemployment Insurance’ benefits extended due to COVID-19 are also counted as EAP income.

Appendix 3G – Online Income Verification updated

- Changed date range for UI documentation requests
  - Request prior 12 months from HH
  - Starting in FFY22, DEED will provide UI income
Primary Heat

Ian Villa-Watt

Topics
• What’s different?
• The PHB Formula
• How does income affect a PHB?
• Let’s Calculate a PHB

Primary Heat

What’s different?
• Benefits will be based on total energy costs
• Part of PHB will be paid to electric by default
• Payments will not be scheduled by default

Primary Heat

What’s Different: Total Energy Costs vs. Heating Costs
• In the past, adjusted consumption based on fuel type
• ARPA will allow us to pay for cooling and other non-heat energy costs
• Benefits could double for many households

Primary Heat

What’s Different: Payment to Electric by Default
• Part of PHB will be paid to electric by default
• PHB could easily exceed annual heat consumption for many HHs
• Split between main heating/electric TBD
• HHs can still request different arrangements as usual

Primary Heat

What’s Different: No Payment Schedules by Default
• Payments will not be scheduled by default
• IOUs say: schedules don’t impact payment behavior
• Some want schedules gone for good, others are ambivalent
• HHs can still request a schedule
• This is a trial run, not a permanent change yet
**The PHB Formula**

\[ \text{Energy costs} \times \text{income factor} = \text{PHB} \]

Where does this come from?

**How does income affect a PHB?**

- We only pay part of a household's energy costs – not the full amount
- That portion is based on how close a household is to our maximum income guidelines

- We only pay part of a household's energy costs – not the full amount
- That portion is based on how close a household is to our maximum income guidelines

**Example**

A household of 5 earns $8,000 in 3 months. The income max for a household of 5 is $19,651. Because the household’s income is between 40% and 50% of the max, EAP will pay 65% of their energy costs.

**Let's Calculate a PHB**

\[ \text{Energy costs} \times \text{income factor} = \text{PHB} \]

\[ \text{Gas} = \$700 \]
\[ \text{Electric} = \$900 \]
\[ \text{HH Size} = 5 \]
\[ \text{HH Income} = \$8,000 \]
\[ \text{Income Factor} = 65\% \]

\[ \text{Energy Costs} = \$1,600 \]

\[ \text{Income Factor} = 65\% \]

\[ \text{PHB} = \$1,600 \times 0.65 = \$1,040 \]
Refunds

Jon Brown

Topics
• Refund Statuses
• Refund Notifications
• Primary Heat vs Crisis Refund
• Managing Refunds
• Missing Payments
• ERR Refunds

Refund Statuses
• Refund statuses apply to vendor payments
• Pending refund is when a vendor enters the refund
  • Funds are immediately available to the HH
  • SPs don’t advance refunds statuses
  • Can’t close an app with a pending refund
  • Refunds can be entered on closed apps

Refund Statuses
• Refund in progress is equivalent to payment in progress
  • Once there is a payment that the refund can balance against, pending refund changes to refund in progress

Refund Statuses
• Refund is the final status
  • Changes to refund once the payment is paid and the refund is balanced
  • If a vendor sends a check in for a current year refund the status will immediately be refund

Refund Notifications
• SPs are notified when a refund is entered
  • Email, Workflow and Notification Center
  • Link takes you to EAP Benefits
  • Recent enhancement indicates if refund is Primary Heat or Crisis

Refund of 300 and [Accept All] 12345678. Click on 'HH 381988 refunded from Xon Energy. Click to view this application.
Refunds

Primary Heat vs Crisis Refund
- Primary Heat refunds managed in EAP Benefits
- Crisis refunds are updated on the Crisis screen
  - A new Crisis is needed to pay a Crisis refund

Managing Refunds
• Funds are available in eHEAT as soon as the refund is entered
• SPs search for refunds in EAP Benefits

Managing Refunds
• If SPs know where the refund should be sent:
  - Select the refund and “Pay Remaining Benefit”
  - Use the popup window to manage the payment

Managing Refunds
• If SPs don’t know where the refund should be sent:
  - Check refund info
  - Void remaining payments if needed
  - Send refund letter to the HH
  - SPs can indicate a refund is reviewed to track what still needs follow up

Managing Refunds
• HH Moves
  - Void remaining payments to current vendors
  - Contact HH to get information on where they moved
  - Update eHEAT with new HH and vendor info and manage payments
  - If unable to contact HH, nothing more needs to be done with the refund

Managing Refunds
• HH passes away
  - Void remaining payments
  - Request refund for HH
  - Close app once refund is received and is in refund status
Refunds

**Missing payments**
- Warrants (checks) not received are canceled and reissued
  - Must wait 10 business days
- Fiscal notified of returned payments for bad address
  - Fiscal reissues payment after verifying address

**Missing payments**
- Affidavit of Failure to Receive Minnesota Management & Budget Warrant is no longer used by MMB
  - If an EAP direct payee does not receive their warrant due to a new address or an address that is unacceptable to the U.S. Post Office, request an affidavit from MMB at mmmb-MM@state.mn.us

**ERR Refunds**
- eHEAT does not have a built-in ERR refund process
- Still some scenarios where funds need to be retuned
- When the original check is uncashed and/or returned:
  - Fiscal voids the payment on the contractor payments screen and stops payment in SWIFT

**ERR Refunds**
- When contractor cashes check or paid by EFT:
  - Contractor sends check to Commerce
  - Fiscal deposits the money and documents on their log
  - SPs make notes on the ERR event and task explaining the reason for the incorrect payment and what happened with the money

Q&A
New Crisis reasons

- Past Due Energy Payment
  - This was implemented for FFY21 in late Oct 2020
- Less than 10 days Pre-pay Energy
  - New for FFY22

Crisis reason: Past Due Energy Payment

- HH has unpaid past due balance
  - Past due is any previously unpaid balance beyond the current month’s charges
- HHS with CWR payment plans or participating in affordability programs like PowerOn or GAP are eligible for Crisis if they have a past due balance
  - Prioritized after Crisis triage categories 1-3

Crisis reason: Less than 10 days Pre-pay Energy

- For HHS on pay-as-you-go programs
  - HHS pay for connected energy, usually electricity, in advance
- Eligible for Crisis when shut off or when account balance is at/below $50, or the EV account minimum, whichever is greater
- Crisis benefit is $300
- Crisis triage level 1, 2, or 3 depending on situation

Crisis Triage Timelines

In general, requests for Crisis and water assistance should be triaged in the following order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triage Level</th>
<th>Crisis Request Type</th>
<th>Relevant Timelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Less than 10 days′ bond or pre-pay energy (shut off, less disruptive)</td>
<td>18 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shut off or energy, life threatening</td>
<td>48 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Disconnect notice for energy or water (eligible for disconnection)</td>
<td>Appropriate for situations where categories 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A* Disconnect notice – including non-electric utility, current notice is 10 days, except in the case of water, where it is 60 days

Chapter 5

Crisis EAP Crisis benefits are used to prevent shut-off service of residential energy sources, and to ensure they must be addressed immediately to assure life the timely and effective energy emergency intervene Assistance Act of 2001 (Crisis 6 U.S. C. § 8623(d)).
New Crisis reason info is added in Crisis chapter
- Added to Processing Events by Crisis Reason section (p. 16, 17)
- Water Assistance benefit not added to this manual section
  - Water Assistance will have separate tab on Client Services screen
  - Water Assistance training will happen later, once DHHS approves our LIHWAP State Plan

FFY22 Crisis maximum
- As in FFY21, the FFY22 Crisis max will be $1,200
- HHs with connected utilities that were not shut off may have very high past due bills we need to address
- Due to ARPA funds we have funds to keep a high Crisis max
- ARPA will substantially increase the PH benefits, so we believe $1,200 will address most HHs’ Crisis needs

Reminder: HHs with pending EAP application or receiving EAP are protected from disconnection by regulated utilities, but may receive shut off notices
Energy Assistance Program

FFY22 Annual Training

DAY 2 – August 11, 2021

Agenda

• Welcome back & reconnect
• Pending person refresher
• Application & mailing
• Fiscal management
• SP webinar update

Q&A

Pending Person

Topics
• Log a new application
• Add a household member
• Pending status
• Q&A

Pending Person

Log a new application

TEST DATA

Pending Person

Log a new application

TEST DATA
**Pending Person**

**Add a household member**

**Pending status**
- Means another person is in the database with the same SSN
- 2 reasons
  - Duplicate entry
  - Different person

**Pending status – duplicate entry**

**Pending status**
- Duplicate entry
  - SP does not need to submit documentation to Commerce
  - Commerce resolves original entry to accepted
  - Duplicate entry resolves to rejected

**Pending status**
- Different person
  - Commerce requests documentation
  - Review paper app vs eHEAT entry
  - Contact HH to verify info
  - Take appropriate steps to address fraud, error, overpayment
Pending status – 2 different people

- Acceptable SSN proof – matches REAL ID requirements
  - Social Security Card
  - Federal Form W-2
  - Federal Form SSA-1099 or other Federal Form 1099 with SSN
  - Computer-printed US employment pay stub with name, address, SSN

- Acceptable Other ID proof
  - Other ID

Pending status

- Cannot modify SSN or Other ID in eHEAT
- Submit documentation to Commerce via secure email
  - HH number
  - Acceptable proof
- Commerce resolves to accepted or rejected
- Same person can be in multiple households – unless primary

If the person with Rejected status is the only HH member:
  - Change the person with Rejected status’ first name
  - Add the person with Accepted status to the HH
  - Make the person with Accepted status primary
  - Remove the person with Rejected status

Rules for Apps with Persons in Pending or Rejected Status

- HH Members Accordion: cannot be Verified
- Eligibility Tab: cannot move from Verified to Complete status
- Eligibility Tab: cannot make Eligible
- Eligibility Tab: cannot move to Benefit Determined status
Pending Person

Rules for Apps with Persons in Pending or Rejected Status

- Crisis Tab: cannot move to Benefit Determined status
- Payments: cannot make Primary Heat or Crisis payments Payable
- ERR Tab: cannot add a new ERR Task
- ERR Tab: can pay for an ERR Task already authorized and completed
Application Changes

- Why changes?
  - Feedback from SPs, Commerce, other stakeholders
  - Simplify and streamline
  - Accommodate program changes
    - Benefits based on total energy
    - Adding Water and Solar as vendors

Application Changes

- Instructions continued
  - Moved income instructions up and moved income guidelines from the application to instructions
  - Changed “Wages” text – paystubs only needed if we can’t verify
  - Removed instructions from “Unemployment” – EAP will verify
  - Added “What happens next” section
  - Removed Parts 3, 4, and 5 except for Energy Emergency information
  - Updated CWR dates

Application Changes

- Privacy Notice
  - Added Department of Health and Housing Finance Agency
  - Removed 2020 Census notice
  - Rights and Responsibilities
    - Moved Ask for Assistance to instructions

Application Changes

- Topics
  - Application changes
  - Access to EAP Application
  - Mailing
Application Changes

• **EAP Application**
  - Changed “Home” phone to “Primary” phone
  - Added “Mobile” indicator after primary and other phone
  - Changed example name from John to Pat
  - Changed Gender from M/F/Other to write in
  - Added “How many people live in your home”
  - Income section header text changed

• **Spread out and reorganized income and benefit types**
  - Removed box with income proof details, application deadline
  - Housing information moved ahead of energy providers
  - Changed heating No. 1 and 2 to Main heating, Other heating
  - Added Solar Garden and Water
  - Moved Account Number before Name on Account

• **Instruction Changes**
  - Added “How to fill out this application” section

**How to fill out this application**
- Read all the information in this application.
- ERI is all the information for everyone living in your home. All people living in the home are household members if they share the kitchen or other living areas in the home.
- Complete and turn in the application, income proof, and other documents to your Service Provider.
- We must have the complete application to determine if you qualify for help.
Application Changes
• Instruction Changes
  • Moved section about needing help with app from Rights and Responsibilities to instructions
  • Added "What happens next" section

- Your local Service Provider will review your application and contact you if they need additional information.
- If they have all the necessary information, your Service Provider will process the application as quickly as possible, and you will receive a letter telling you if you can get help.
- If approved, we will pay your benefit to the companies listed on your application.
- If denied, we will tell you the reason and how you may appeal or appeal the decision.

Energy emergency help
The Energy Assistance Program may be able to help if you have an energy emergency. Contact your Service Provider if:

- You have a past due energy bill that you cannot pay
- Your heat or electricity is shut off or will be shut off
- You are unable to get fuel delivery
- You own your home and your furnace is not working
### Application and Mailing

#### Application Changes
- Instruction Changes
  - Updated CWR dates
- Privacy Notice Changes
  - Removed 2020 Census notice
- Rights and Responsibilities Changes
  - Moved “Ask for Assistance” to instructions
- Application Changes
  - Changed “Home” phone to “Primary” phone
  - Added “Mobile” indicator after primary and other phone
- Application Changes
  - Changed example name from John to Pat
  - Changed Gender from M/F/Other to write in
  - Added Latino/a/x to Hispanic column

#### Privacy Notice Changes
- Added Department of Health and Housing Finance Agency

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**Who may see this information?**
The following persons may receive information contained in your Energy Programs application if (i) they need access to the application information to do their jobs in connection with the Energy Programs (EAP), WAIP, and DP; or (ii) they are otherwise authorized by federal or state law to receive it, or (iii) they use the information for reports, to measure outcomes, and for informational and eligibility purposes:
- Local Energy Programs Service Providers under contract with the Minnesota Department of Commerce (Commerce).
- Community Services Block Grant and Minnesota Community Action Grant Service Providers under contract with Commerce.
- Program auditors as required or permitted by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance.
- Minnesota Departments of Administration, Commerce, Employment and Economic Development
- United States Departments of Health and Human Services and Energy.
Application and Mailing

Application Changes
- Application Changes
  - Income section header text changed

FFY21
INCOME, BENEFITS AND OTHER ASSISTANCE (Check all that apply for your household and SEND PROOF OF INCOME)

FFY22
Income, benefits, and other assistance: Check all that apply for everyone in your household and send proof.

Application and Mailing

Application Changes
- Application Changes
  - Housing information moved ahead of energy providers

Application and Mailing

Application Changes
- Application Changes
  - Replaced 30% to electric question with benefit split info and options
  - Added question about sharing fuel tank or meter with another HH
  - Removed ranking of heating fuels
  - Removed % list for wood/biofuel

Application and Mailing

Application Changes
- Application Changes
  - Added water to emergency section
  - Removed amount due from emergency section

Energy on

Water Company
If you have an emergency right now or cannot pay your past due bill, check the type of situation below and send a copy of the notice:
- Disconnected
- Disconnect Notice
- Disconnected
- Disconnected
- Disconnect Notice
- Disconnect Notice

Contact your energy company to set up a payment plan.
**Application and Mailing**

**Application Changes**

- Application Changes
  - Removed electric heat questions

Do you use electricity to heat your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Furnace fan/blower only
- Space heaters used as needed
- Other electric heat used: Check all that apply: ☐ Air conditioner ☐ Floor System ☐ Radiant ☐ Electric Furnace ☐ Heat Pump

**Application and Mailing**

**Application Changes**

- Application Changes
  - Added Additional Information section

Additional Information:
- Do you want information about how to receive improvements through the Weatherization Assistance Program? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you want to register to vote or update your registration if you have moved? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- How did you hear about the Energy Assistance Program? ☐ Friends/Family ☐ Newspaper ☐ Radio ☐ Landlord
- County Worker ☐ Veteran’s Office ☐ Housing Program ☐ State or County Website ☐ Utility/Provider ☐ Other

**Application and Mailing**

**Application Changes**

- Application Changes
  - Added two statements to section 5 of survivor section
    - I understand that missing information will delay determining if I qualify for help.
    - I understand that my Service Provider may be able to help pay past due energy bills and/or make a payment plan with my energy companies.

- I understand that missing information will delay determining if I qualify for help.
- I understand that my Service Provider may be able to help pay past due energy bills and/or make a payment plan with my energy companies.

**Application and Mailing**

**Access to EAP Application**

- Commerce will:
  - Provide SPs version of the app for printing after training
    - Caution: Do not alter content, including local questions
    - Post Application Requirements Tool to online Toolkit
    - Post other app versions on the Commerce website soon (Sept)
      - Translations in Hmong, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese
      - Fillable PDF
      - Online app fall TBD

**Application and Mailing**

**Access to EAP Application**

- SPs will:
  - Have apps available on their SP website
  - Make apps accessible to persons with disabilities
  - Ensure apps are available throughout service areas
Mailing Application

- Mailing Timeline (Plan)
  - First Recert applications will be mailed Sept. 3
  - Pre apps will follow (immediately after Recerts finish)
  - Queued Blank Apps will be mailed end of Sept.
  - Second bulk mailing – Late fall/winter
    • Applied after May 31 – 9,000-12,000

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Q&A
Fiscal Management

Natasha Fedorova

Fiscal Management

Topics

• Admin Cost Cap
  • Restriction on use of other federal funds for EAP admin costs
  • New section on p. 6 of Fiscal Chapter (Ch. 14)
  • Reporting on sources of funds for EAP expenditures (for both Admin & A16)
  • Single Audit to verify non-use of other federal funds for EAP admin costs
  • New addition to existing “Required Audit Contents” section on p. 16 of Fiscal Chapter
• Contracting & Bidding Requirements for Non-ERR
  • New section on p. 17 of Fiscal Chapter

Fiscal Management

Restriction on Use of Other Federal Funds for EAP Admin Costs

• The LIHEAP statute requires that:
  • No more than ten percent (10%) of the LIHEAP award be earmarked for administrative costs, inclusive of funds from other federal programs
  • Any costs in excess of the LIHEAP admin allocation must be paid from non-federal funds
  • Other federal funds are not to be used to supplement LIHEAP admin funds, except for A16 activities

Restriction on Use of Other Federal Funds for EAP Admin Costs

• Commerce EAP (“State”) allocates 10% for Admin Costs for EAP for both SP Admin & State Admin
  • 8% SP Admin + 2% State Admin = 10% Admin
  • 10% Admin Cost Ceiling is already reached when allocated to SPs
Fiscal Management

Restriction on Use of Other Federal Funds for EAP Admin Costs

• In order to comply with this LIHEAP Statute requirement/EAP Policy:
  • SP must not supplement their EAP admin funds with other federal funds, e.g., CSBG funds
  • Unless these supplemental funds are utilized for administering A16 activities
  • Any costs in excess of the EAP admin allocation must be paid from non-federal sources

Admin Cost Reporting – Expenditure Detail Report

• Expenditure Detail Report – updated
  • Appendix 12B of FFY22 EAP Policy Manual
  • Due November 1 as part of Annual Grant Closeout Package

• Report EAP Expenditures not from LIHEAP Funds
  • Federal & Other Sources
  • For both Cost Categories (Admin & A16)

Admin Cost Reporting – Expenditure Detail Report

• EAP Expenditures not from LIHEAP Funds – Admin Cost Category
  • Column C. Other Federal Funds (e.g., CSBG, etc.) – per EAP Policy, expect to see $0
  • Column D. Other Non-Federal Funds

Admin Cost Cap Verification – Single Audit

• Auditors should verify and include in the Single Audit Content that
  • SP did not supplement LIHEAP Admin Costs with other federal funds
  • SP did not exceed the allocated LIHEAP Admin Amount

Fiscal Management
Trivia

• True or False: The first open heart surgery and the first bone marrow transplant in the United States happened in Minnesota?
• Answer: True
• Fact: Both of these things were done at the University of Minnesota (Source: FunTrivia.com)

1952: First successful open heart surgery using hypothermia – performed on a five-year-old girl
1968: World’s first successful human bone marrow transplant matched sibling donor – in an infant with an immune deficiency syndrome

Fiscal Management

Contracting & Bidding Requirements for Non-ERR (NEW)

• EAP Policy Manual
  • New section in Fiscal Chapter – p. 17
• EAP Grant Contract
  • ODM Requirement for Grant Contract Agreements
  • Included in the FFY22 EAP Grant Contract (already exists in WAP Contract)
• Pertains to Non-ERR Contracting for EAP for $10,000 or more
  • E.g., with an ad agency to create TV, radio, and billboard ads for EAP, etc.

$100,000 or more
  • A formal notice and bidding process
$25,000-$99,999
  • Competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids
$10,000-$24,999
  • Competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids OR
  • Awarded to a targeted vendor

13 14 15 16 17 18

Thank you!
Application Processing
Q: Regarding Authorized submission alternatives – submitting via email: Can you explain why we need to retain the email in the file if client emails application to us. What are we verifying or what is the purpose in saving it?
A: To verify the email address sending the application matches the email address on the application. Again, if there is no email on the application, it is okay to accept - and do not add that email address to the application/eHEAT. This accounts for situations where a helper is submitting the application.

Q: On the application proof it lists proof is not needed for income, is this for all apps, or just recert?
A: This is the language for the recert box - the regular application includes language about submitting income proof.

Q: What are the rules on electronic signatures?
A: This information is detailed in the FFY22 EAP Policy Manual, Ch. 2 – Applications & Application Processing, p. 11.

Q: Is it true that we still do not count the extra $300 they received for COVID?
A: Correct, do not count that “bonus” $300 UI, as shown in the Income Inclusions/Exclusion table under ‘COVID-19 related aid’.

Q: For Self-Employment are we still asking about Covid affected income?
A: Refer to the most recent COVID supplement when processing any FFY21 apps. For FFY22, any COVID-related policies carrying forward are incorporated into the FFY22 EAP Policy Manual. COVID impacts to households were greatest during the 2020 tax year. The requirement to file for the 2020 tax year is well passed. Tax year 2020 1040s should reflect more accurately (and generally favorably) the household’s income, including COVID impacts. Service Providers should assume the 1040 accurately reflects the household’s current income. If a household has stopped or started a business during the eligibility period, the household completes the Self-Employment Income Cash Accounting Worksheet. Other scenarios for processing specific self-employment income scenarios are also well-documented in Ch. 3- Program Eligibility Requirements. In other words – return to “normal” self-employment processing.

Primary Heat
Q: What is the default main heating/electric split? 50/50?
A: Not sure until we collect consumption information. Stay tuned.

Q: We have a vendor who hates when we pay more than the client owes. When looking at the change for payments, do we go by the client’s wishes or the vendors?
A: Default to household wishes - use judgement to manage relationship with vendors. Could split into two payments, for example.

Q: Is it possible to provide Service Providers with the income factor breakdowns?
A: Once we know that, we will. In the past, we used income factors. This year we are using a formula instead of the “buckets.” Using the formula smooths it out and doesn’t move a household into a new bucket due to $1 extra income. We’ll provide the formula once it’s determined.

Q: Are you making changes to how we calculate HIR and subsidized?
A: No.

Crisis
Q: We are seeing shutoffs even when people have a pending application.
A: The PUC Order applies to regulated utilities and protects households with pending/approved EAP applications from being disconnected. If you are seeing something else in real life, please provide us with details. Xcel reports they check the Active EAP report daily and update their shutoff protection list.

Q: Xcel is shutting off.
A: Regulated utilities may be sending shut off notices. They also may disconnect for some reasons - like safety issues.

Q: If the household has all their Primary Heat grant go to their electric, and they heat with propane - do we do a Crisis grant for them to get a delivery?
A: Yes, you may use Crisis to get a propane delivery in this situation.

Q: Crisis Clarification – if we receive a disconnection notice with the EAP application but the vendor does not disconnect during the winter months (e.g., Litchfield Utilities sends out disconnection notices throughout the year, but as a rule they don’t disconnect until April), we are not to process as a crisis application but when working it in the Logged Date order if we verify they are still past due at that point we can complete and approve any crisis funds needed, correct?
A: There is no change to the application or Crisis handling process. Regardless if the vendor chooses not to shut off as a business practice, the disconnect notice triggers a potential Crisis once the household is deemed EAP-eligible. In general, these applications are triaged and worked in log date order. These households may be prioritized after categories 1-3 depending on the Service Provider’s process, as long as households within a given category are treated consistently. See the Crisis Triage Timelines table under Crisis Implementation section in Ch 5.

ERR
Q: On slide 3 you discussed the 20% in fuel change. Is this saying that Service Providers are finding it costs 20% more to install propane or natural gas (LP/NG) compared to replacing with oil? In our area it is always less to switch to LP/NG.
FFY22 EAP Annual Training

A: If switching from oil to LP/NG - can go up to 20% more versus the 5%.

Q: 20% of what?
A: Compare the total cost of replacing with existing fuel type (oil/wood/biofuel) to the total costs required to switch to LP/NG – Service Providers can authorize this replacement if difference does not exceed 20%. If greater than 20%, consult Commerce.

Pending person

Q: Is the link with Social Security for SSN verification going to work in FFY22?
A: We expect it to go live sometime in FFY22. We don't have a timeline at this point.

Q: Is there any chance we could be given the ability to edit the ID information for a person in eHEAT? For example, household didn't provide child's SSN, so was entered as Other ID, refusal...But then the household provides the SSN. Instead of deleting, could we edit?
A: No. Entering ID info creates a new person in the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) database – which we cannot edit. This has to do with SSA security requirements. In the example above, you would need to remove the person from the household and add them back in with the SSN.

Application / Mailing

Q: Are the income guidelines going to be put on the application at all?
A: Yes, the income guideline grid is in the instructions.

Q: What will we be doing with the solar information? Will we be given more training on solar?
A: Solar will be treated like other energy vendors. We'll provide training when it's set up in eHEAT.

Q: Does a water disconnect fall into a "crisis" situation with timelines for response?
A: Water disconnect is on the Crisis triage table - however, the water program does not include the same specific timelines as the LIHEAP statute.

Q: Will the instructions reflect DEED verification once that is truly available, or will it be on there now?
A: We expect to have the DEED connection available at the start of FFY22. We have the connection in place, and IT is currently testing.

Q: Who asked for the healthy home question be added to the application?
A: Commerce Weatherization.

Q: With the heat source rankings gone - are we just going to have to verify what the heat sources are with the vendors they list on the application and/or with the client?
A: Since we are using total energy cost to determine benefits, we don't need to verify which is primary, etc. Whomever they indicate is their prime heating vendor, that's who the benefit would be split with the electricity vendor.
FFY22 EAP Annual Training

Q: We still need to know the heat source to enter in eHEAT, right? For example, Hibbing PUC has steam, natural gas, and electric. We'll have no way to know what the heating source is from the client listing them as a primary heating company.
A: Thank you for clarifying. We will add heat source questions to the application.

Q: If there are edits needed on our application sample, will we get to see an updated proof before it is finalized?
A: Yes, we will send one more round of proofs with the final information. When we get the green light on those, we’ll send you the final version for printing.

Q: I may have misunderstood Jon - did he say we are asking for income for re-certs?
A: No, we will not be asking for income for re-cert applications.

Q: Will eHEAT follow the order of the application, particularly the housing and heating section?
A: Yes. You can see the changes in eHEAT test now.

Q: Can we see a sample version of the full application?
A: Yes! We'll provide Service Providers with the complete application shortly.

Q: What is the default split between heat and electric? Will it remain 70%/30%?
A: To be determined. We'll look at consumption data, where we want the average benefit to land. Of course, the household has flexibility to choose something other than the default.

Q: This seems like contradiction regarding payment arrangements. There a box asking the client to make arrangements, then towards the end you state Service Provider may make arrangements.
A: Both are true. We encourage households to work directly with their energy vendor to make arrangements – the Service Provider can offer assistance as well.

Application comments:
− Great improvements to the application and instructions!!! Thanks!
− So glad to see the electric heat questions disappear!
− I really, really like the changes you made to the app and the way it looks. I’m excited about this.
FFY22 EAP Annual Training

SP status update

Q: During this annual training will you be discussing the DEED interface and will the income be available by month or quarter. What time period will we be looking at to process? Still the past 3 months or the past quarter provided by DEED?
A: We will cover the DEED connection at a separate training.

Water vendors

Q: Are we able to find out which new water vendors have registered in our service territory? Is there a place in eHEAT for us to find which ones have sent in and which ones to follow up on?
A: You can see which individual energy vendors have the fuel type of “water.” There’s not a simple way to pull a list in eHEAT. Commerce can provide a list. We can’t enter them into eHEAT until we have the registration info.

Q: For Water Assistance, what if the water bill is in the landlord's name or another person's name, and it is the responsibility of the renter?
A: We will know more about how to handle these situations once HHS approves our plan.

Application processing after Sept 1

Q: We seem to have a backlog of applications starting in October through December. So, if we are still working on applications received in September in the October/November timeframe and we received a 2021 application - will we need the client to sign a new signature page if we need to use their signature page to verify income from the counties or employers? Their release states that signature is in effect until Sept 30, 2021.
A: Accept FFY21 applications and process as an FFY22 application during September 2 – September 30. YES, you need a FFY22 signature page for these applications. Starting with applications received October 1, the household must submit an FFY22 application. Service Providers should send them the new FFY22 application.

Q: What is your estimated release of the FFY22 application to the public? When can we start handing them out?
A: When we distribute the applications to Service Providers, we'll include that information.

Q: Will there be an exception list, e.g., if postmarked 9/1 and received later?
A: Yes.

Q: Can energy vendors now enter consumption for FFY22?
A: They can do that starting in September. We will notify them when they are able to enter it.