

# Low Income Household Water Assistance Program

## MISSOURI LIHWAP PROFILE SUMMARY



The Missouri Department of Social Services Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is funded at \$22,048,579 in FY21. The program addresses Missourians' need for relief assistance caused by the temporary and permanent loss of employment that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, and their inability to pay their bills for drinking water and wastewater services. Available data indicated that about 75% of residential customers with a past due balance, have past due balances of under \$200. While 85%-95% of customers with a past due balance, have a balance between \$300 and \$500. The state utilizes LIHWAP grant funds to restore water services for households that have been disconnected and eliminate arrearages and disconnection fees.

### Program Operation

The Missouri Department of Social Services LIHWAP program is managed at the state level in partnership with 17 Community Action Agencies, the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis and Mid America Assistance Coalition (MACC) that administer the program and determine client eligibility. The state agency is responsible for processing benefit payments to water service providers. Missouri's LIHWAP provides relief assistance to **two priority groups**:

- Customers whose water and wastewater services have been disconnected
- Customers facing the threat of disconnection of their water and wastewater services

### FY21 LIHWAP FUNDING ALLOCATION



#### AMOUNT

**TOTAL: \$22,048,579**

- ARP: \$9,687,425
- CAA: \$12,361,154



#### OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

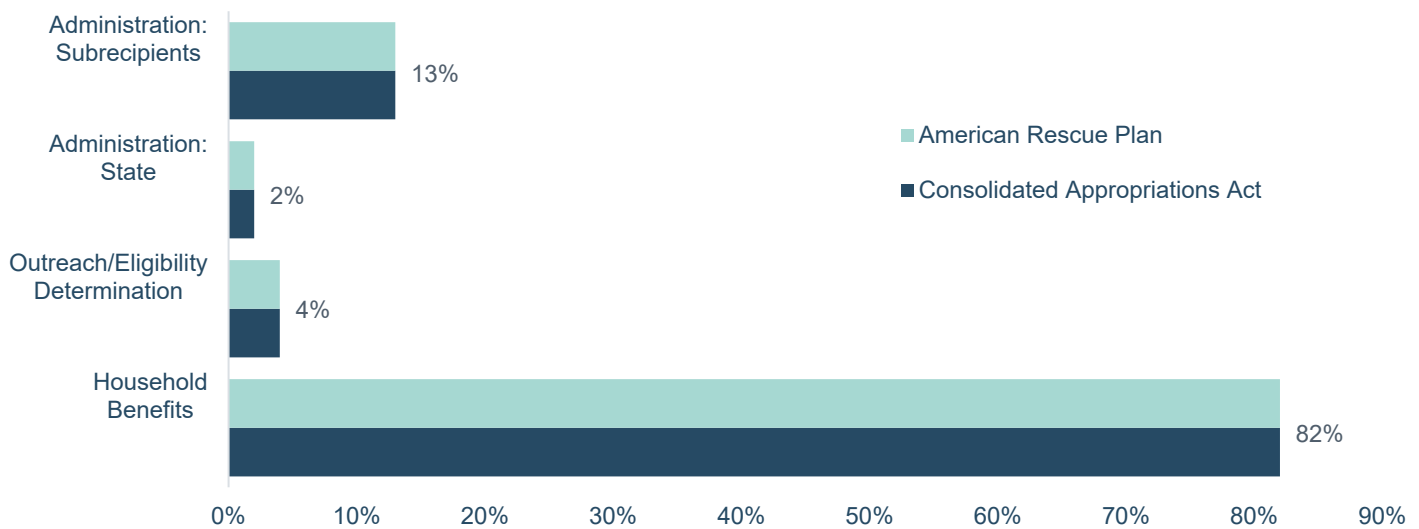
- Restoration of services
- Payment of arrearages



#### PROGRAM COORDINATION

- Local staff at state and partner agencies are given information on the program to share with their clients
- DSS shares information on the LIHWAP program with the Office of Workforce Development and the Workforce Development Boards

## Use of Funding by Funding Source



## Benefits on Behalf of Households

Under the Department of Social Services' administration of the program, the application process includes allowing applications for disconnections and threat of disconnect, and restoration of services at the same time. Eligible households may receive up to \$750 in financial staff assistance to pay the account balance, past due arrears, or disconnection and reconnection fees. Agency staff use applicants' current water and/or wastewater bill to determine the benefit amount.

## Priority Populations

Households that meet program eligibility criteria and fall in one of the following categories can apply and receive benefit assistance one month prior to other applicants.

- ✓ People with disabilities
- ✓ Older Adult/Seniors (60+)
- ✓ Households with high water burden

In addition, program staff prioritize all applications where the households' water and/or wastewater services have been disconnected.

## Program Outreach Activities

- Inclusion of inserts in water vendor billings to inform individuals of the availability of LIHWAP assistance.
- Mass mailing(s) to prior-year LIHEAP recipients or recipients of other government benefits
- Automated phone campaigns and/or social media outreach.
- Multi-lingual announcements in languages spoken by low-income households within utility service area and/or notification in ethnic language news and broadcast media outlets
- Inform low-income applicants of the availability of all types of LIHWAP assistance at application intake for other low-income programs.
- Outreach to faith-based institutions, including those serving low-income people and people of color.
- Text blasts about the LIHWAP program to clients receiving Temporary Assistance, child care subsidy, MoHealthNet, and SNAP benefits
- Share LIHWAP information through the GovDelivery site which has 145,000 registered users
- Update the MO Services Navigator with LIHWAP information

## Eligibility and Benefit Determination Criteria

Title	Item
<b>Income Threshold</b>	
	150% Federal Poverty Guideline
✓	60% State Median Income
	Hybrid Federal and State (based on household size)
<b>Categorical Eligibility</b>	
✓	LIHEAP
✓	Means-tested Veterans Programs
✓	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
✓	Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
✓	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
<b>Eligible Households</b>	
✓	Homeowners
✓	Renters
<b>Benefit Level Determination*</b>	
✓	Income
✓	Household size
✓	Household drinking water burden
✓	Household wastewater burden
<b>Benefit Amount</b>	
<b>\$0</b>	Minimum
<b>\$750</b>	Maximum
<b>Benefit Period</b>	
	One Time
✓	Multiple

\*Grant recipients are required to determine a benefit level for households seeking assistance with their current water and wastewater bills. Benefit level determination is based on household income, size, and drinking water and wastewater burden.

### For more information about the Missouri LIHWAP, contact:

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