

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services (OCS)**

**Instructions for Completion of the Quarterly Performance and Management
Report
for the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)**

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

This information collection (OMB Control No. 0970-0578; Expiration Date: 04/30/2025) is conducted in accordance with the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) statute (Public Law 116-260). Information received from this collection provides data to the Administration and Congress in its oversight of recipients' performance in administering the LIHWAP program.

Public reporting burden for this information collection (the *LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report*) is estimated to be an average burden of 40 hours per respondent. The estimates include the time for reviewing instructions, and gathering, editing, maintaining, and reporting the data.

The responses to this information collection are required in order to obtain LIHWAP data in accordance with the [LIHWAP Terms and Conditions](#). This information collection is required of all recipients that receive LIHWAP funds.

This information is not considered confidential; therefore, no additional safeguards are considered necessary beyond what is customarily applied to routine government information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

LIHWAP data is submitted through the *LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report* reporting form. The complete set of instructions for reporting the required data is available in the next section of this document.

OVERVIEW

The LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report is a tool for HHS to learn about the implementation of LIHWAP, including successes, challenges, needs, and innovations, in somewhat real time. The quarterly reports will focus on services provided to households during the reporting period, connections with water vendors, achievements, challenges, and training and technical assistance needs.

LIHWAP Laws and Regulations and the LIHWAP Terms and Conditions are available on the following web links:

LIHWAP Laws and Regulations

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/law-regulation/lihwap-laws-and-regulations>

LIHWAP Terms and Conditions

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ocs/Attachment%20A_LIHWAP%20Terms%20and%20Conditions_State%20Signature%20Block.pdf

On May 8, 2020, HHS notified recipients that 98.5 percent of the available LIHWAP funding will be released to recipients, and published a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\) 2021-05 LIHWAP Funding Release](#). The DCL notified recipients that LIHWAP recipients must track, account for, and report on, the LIHWAP Consolidated Appropriations Act funding separate from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funding.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

An Excel workbook entitled the *LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report* has been developed for states, territories, and tribes to report LIHWAP data for all four quarters. Recipients are required to submit their quarterly data submissions using the Excel workbook.

Reporting Periods and Quarterly Report Due Dates - The *LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report* will be due one month after the end of each quarter (quarters are based on the federal fiscal year).

FY 2023(October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2022) reporting periods:

Quarter 1: October 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022 (**Report due on January 31, 2023**)

Quarter 2: January 1, 2023 – March 31, 2023 (**Report due on April 29, 2023**)

Quarter 3: April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023 (**Report due on July 29, 2023**)

Quarter 4: July 1, 2023 – September 30, 2023 (**Report due on October 31, 2023**)

FY 2024(October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) reporting periods:

Quarter 1: October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023 (Report due on January 31, 2024)

Quarter 2: January 1, 2024 – March 31, 2024 (Report due on April 29, 2024)

Data Consistency - The data will be checked for consistency against the type of LIHWAP assistance that recipients report in their *LIHWAP Model Plan*, and with the data reported in each recipient's *LIHWAP Annual Report*.

Key Definitions

Arrearage and Rate Reduction - For the purposes of LIHWAP, an *arrearage* refers to an unpaid past due bill for household drinking water and/or wastewater utility services while *rate reduction* refers to a full or partial payment of a currently due bill charged to a household for drinking water or wastewater services. Both payments may include payments of standard reconnection fees, charges, and penalties. However, these fees should be standard fees consistent with the existing and ongoing business practices of the water utility (rather than a special fee charged to LIHWAP households). Recipients have discretion in determining whether these costs are included in the maximum benefit level or are in addition to the maximum benefit level.

Household - The unit for LIHWAP counting is the household, not the head of household or persons in the

households. LIHWAP defines the term "household" as “any individual or group of individuals who are living together as one economic unit for whom residential drinking water and/or wastewater services are customarily purchased in common or who make undesignated payments for those services in the form of rent.” Household members are those individuals who comprise the household unit.

Recipient - A Recipient is defined as the LIHWAP lead agency for a state, territory, or tribe. Recipient is synonymous with grantee, a term used previously in OCS communications.

Subrecipient - A Subrecipient is an organization that receives a portion, or sub-award, of the LIHWAP grant funding (usually through a contract or grant) from the LIHWAP lead agency for a state, territory, or tribe. While the LIHWAP lead agency retains responsibility and accountability for all activities carried out under the grant award, the state, territory, or tribe may select sub-recipient organizations to serve as local administering agencies who are subject to all terms and conditions of the award.

Unduplicated Household Counts - Recipients are required to report “unduplicated counts” of LIHWAP assisted households for each type of LIHWAP assistance provided each quarter. Unduplicated counts mean that households are only counted once for each specific data variable.

SECTION-BY-SECTION INSTRUCTIONS

Recipient Information – Include all of the information being requested (i.e., name, phone number, and email address) for the individual who is filling out the quarterly data report/the person who should be contacted if OCS has questions concerning the report.

Section I: Total Households Assisted

This question requires the recipient to report the total number of unduplicated households assisted, across all service areas, during the quarter. An assisted household is one that applied for and received LIHWAP assistance. Households that have applied for a LIHWAP benefit but have not received one by the end of the quarter should be counted in the quarter(s) that the household actually receives their benefit(s). An unduplicated count of households means that households are to be counted only once regardless of the types of LIHWAP assistance received. For example, even if a household receives assistance with restoring their services and reducing the rate charged to them, for this particular question, the household would only be counted once.

*Quarters two, three, and four will include a section for “Total Cumulative Households Assisted,” this number will be automatically calculated based on the information the recipient provided in prior quarterly reports.

Section II: Assistance Provided by Service Type

This section includes three questions that focus on the type of LIHWAP assistance provided to each household by service type. Each question is a two-prong question. For each type of LIHWAP assistance provided, recipients should report the number of households assisted by both the type of assistance provided and the service type (definitions of “type of assistance” and “type of service” are included below). Given that households could have received multiple types of assistance, recipients are required to report unduplicated counts of the number of households assisted by the type of assistance and service received. Households that received multiple types of assistance should be included in the count of households for each relevant assistance type. For example, a household receiving assistance with restoring their water services and reducing the rate charged to them on their water bill is to be counted once under each applicable service (see example

Unduplicated Household Counts

Unduplicated counts will help us obtain an accurate sense of the reach of household assistance and the specific ways in which households are being served.

Section I asks for an unduplicated count of the total number of households served. In this case each household is only counted once, even if the household received more than one type of LIHWAP service. This count will help OCS quantify the unique number of households reached by LIHWAP.

Section II, on the other hand, asks for an unduplicated count of the number of households assisted **by the type of assistance and service received** (i.e., a household receiving two different LIHWAP services such as assistance with the restoration of services and the reduction of rates charged to the household) should be counted once under each applicable service type in Section II. This information will help us understand how many houses are served for each particular service type and assistance type.

below under *Assisted Household Scenarios* for additional directions on how to report unduplicated counts for the types of assistance and the types of services provided).

The three main types of assistance a household could receive are:

1. Restoration of services – households that were disconnected that received assistance to have drinking water and/or wastewater services restored.
2. Prevention of disconnection of services – households that received assistance that prevented drinking and/ or wastewater services from being disconnected.
3. Reduction of rates charged – households that received assistance to reduce the rates charged to them on their water bill to help ensure affordable drinking water and/or wastewater services.

The three main types of services a household could receive are:

1. **Water and/or Wastewater Services** – assistance with only water and/or wastewater services. In these instances, water and wastewater services are itemized on the beneficiaries’ water bill. The majority of households should receive this service.
2. **Multiple Water Services** – assistance with both water/wastewater services and other water services. In these instances, due to the inability to obtain an itemized list of charges on the water bill, households receive assistance with their entire bill, which could include fees related to the regular cost of water services, in order to restore services or prevent the disconnection of services. This could include payment of standard reconnection fees, charges, and penalties related to water and wastewater systems, including stormwater. However, these fees should be standard fees consistent with the existing and ongoing business practices of the water utility (rather than a special fee charged to LIHWAP households).
3. **Other Water Services** – assistance with other water services as outlined in the recipient’s grantee implementation plan, which may include limited water delivery services, specialized wastewater disposal services, or an annual tax to the tribe for support services, such as a membership tax. Recipients providing assistance with “other water services” should include a list of these services under the section that states: *If other services were paid for with LIHWAP funds, please explain.*

Assisted Household Scenarios

Below are five example households to help illustrate how to accurately report unduplicated counts for the types of assistance and the types of services provided to households.

Household A received a LIHWAP benefit that both restored the household’s water services and reduced the rate charged on their next water bill. Household A receives water and wastewater services from the same vendor and has an itemized list that clearly shows the bill was only for water/waste water service.

Household B received a LIHWAP benefit that prevented the disconnection of their water and wastewater services, as the benefit paid for the household’s water, wastewater, stormwater, and late charges that was overdue.

Household C applied for a restoration of wastewater services benefit but has not received it yet.

Household D received a benefit that both restored the household’s wastewater service and reduced the rate charged on their wastewater bill. The household receives separate bills for water and wastewater services and the cost of each service is clearly stated in the bills.

Household E received a benefit that reduced a current bill for water delivery services because there is no other method to access safe drinking water.

Table 1. Counting Unduplicated Numbers of Assisted Households for Each Type of LIHWAP Assistance, By Service Type

	<i>Water and/or Wastewater</i>	<i>Multiple Services</i>	<i>Other Water Services</i>
Restoration of Services	Household A, Household D		
Prevention of Disconnection		Household B	

Reduction Rates Charged	Household A, Household D		Household E
-------------------------	-----------------------------	--	-------------

In this scenario, there are four total unduplicated households that applied for and received assistance during the quarter (Household C did not receive assistance by the end of the quarter and should not be included in the report until LIHWAP assistance is provided). Therefore, in this scenario, “four” should be the answer to the question in section one on the total number of unduplicated households served. However, for section two of the quarterly report, we are examining unduplicated services by service type, which means that a household needs to be counted once for each type of service the household received. Based on scenarios described above, the answers to questions 1-3, in Section II of the report, would be as follows:

II. Assistance Provided by Service Type			
Type of LIHWAP assistance for households	A. Water or Wastewater	B. Multiple Services	C. Other Water Services
1. Restoration of services	2	0	1
2. Prevention of disconnection of services	0	1	0
3. Reduction of rates charged	2	0	0
<i>*If other services were paid with LIHWAP funds, please explain</i>			
<i>Response: One household received a benefit that paid for emergency water delivery.</i>			

Section III: LIHWAP Implementation Information

This section includes two questions that focus on key aspects of implementation, including vendor and sub-recipient agreements, the program start date (i.e., the date the state, territory, or tribe started accepting applications for LIHWAP benefits), and the service areas covered by LIHWAP. Instructions for each question are included below.

1. Of the water vendors in your state, territory or tribe, how many vendors have you entered into an agreement with?

For this question, recipients should report on the total number of water service vendors that they have established an agreement with.

2. Are you still accepting applications for LIHWAP?

The recipient should report if they or any of their subrecipients are still accepting LIHWAP applications

Section IV: Performance Management

Recipients are required to provide a brief narrative description for each of the four questions included in this section (*there is a 5th question posed in quarter 4). Instructions for how to answer these questions are below.

1. Describe up to three notable accomplishments achieved by LIHWAP implementation during the reporting period. Including any innovative approaches or policies that were put into place during the reporting period. Please include a participant success story, if applicable.

Recipients should report on accomplishments that they believe are notable, including accomplishments related to implementation, partnerships, innovations, polices, procedures, outreach, and/or outcomes.

2. Describe any challenges with LIHWAP implementation during the reporting period.

Recipients should describe any challenges they have experienced with LIHWAP implementation and or administration.

3. Are there additional unmet water and wastewater needs in your service area? If yes, please

describe.

Recipients should describe any unmet needs they are aware of. Unmet needs may include needs related to administering LIHWAP or the needs of beneficiaries.

4. Do you have any training and/or technical assistance needs that you would like the Office of Community Services to offer support for?

Recipients are encouraged to highlight any additional training and technical assistance they may need to successfully administer LIHWAP at the state and/or local level.

5. Please list and describe up to three lessons learned during the third year of LIHWAP implementation.

Recipients are encouraged to add information about their lessons learned planning for, implementing, and administering LIHWAP.

Section V: Use of Funds

This section requires the recipient to report use of LIHWAP funding by funding source that has been obligated during the reporting period. Grant recipients are required to provide estimates of obligation for both the Consolidated Appropriation Act 2021, and the American Rescue Act, 2021.

In reporting their obligation of funds to date for the reported Fiscal Year, grant recipients should follow their state, territory, or tribal definition of obligation.

Section V: Remarks

If the recipient has concerns about the reliability or the validity of the data they provided in the quarterly report, they should provide an explanation of these concerns in section V.

Section VI: Certification

This is where the authorizing official that is inputting the data in the *LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report* certifies that the information provided is true, complete, and accurate to the best of their knowledge. The authorizing official is required to provide their name, job title, and electronic or written signature. The report will be considered incomplete and not accepted unless this information is included. Recipients should submit their completed *LIHWAP Quarterly Performance and Management Report* to their LIHWAP program specialist by the due date outlined in these instructions.