**Section 100.220 Assistance Available**

a) Assistance Options

All applicants eligible for assistance under LIHEAP as described in Section 100.250 are eligible to receive assistance under the following options:

1) Option 1

A) If the applicant: is not a customer of record of a home energy provider for winter energy services; and is not an applicant for winter energy services from a home energy provider; and has housing rental expenses greater than 30% of his/her household income.

B) Then the applicant shall receive one direct cash payment in an amount determined annually by the Department. Subject to applicable requirements of this Part, the applicant must provide verification of rental expenses, and attest that he/she is not a customer or applicant for winter energy services from a home energy provider,

C) The Department will apply an equal weight to each of the major items considered in setting the amount.

2) Option 2

A) If the applicant or member of the applicant's household: is the customer of record of a home energy provider for winter energy services; or has a household member who is an applicant for winter energy services from a home energy provider,

B) Then a one-time direct vendor payment will be made to the home energy providers per program year on behalf of the applicant in the amount prescribed by the Department. The amount will be established annually after consultation with the Policy Advisory Council and will be based on factors including, but not limited to, available funding, energy costs, and economic conditions. The Department will apply an equal weight to each of the major items considered in setting the amount.

3) Option 3 (Emergency Assistance):

A) If the applicant: is a customer of record of a home energy provider for winter energy services and was receiving home energy provider services but is now disconnected, then:

i) The applicant shall receive emergency assistance consisting of an amount up to the minimum amount needed to reconnect and/or establish service to the applicant, but in no case shall such assistance exceed the amount determined annually by the Department, in consultation with the Policy Advisory Council, on the basis of available funding and energy costs. Equal weight shall be given to each of the items considered in setting the amount.

ii) The applicant is subject to the emergency assistance program requirements (as provided in subsection (b)(2)).

B) If the applicant is a customer of record and homeowner, the applicant may receive benefits designed to restore heat in the event of an inoperable heating system.

b) Explanation of Benefits

1) Energy Assistance

A) Assistance under Option 1 will be limited to a one-time cash payment that will be sent directly to the applicant.

B) Assistance under Option 2 will be limited to a one-time paymentthat will be sent to the energy providers if the providers sign a vendor agreement with the Department in which they agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the LIHEAP or to a qualified heating contractor for repairs or replacement to the heating system.

2) Emergency Assistance Program Requirements

A) Assistance under Option 3 will be limited to the provision of energy assistance funds designed to help applicants obtain a continuous supply of heat or home energy and expedited processing. Emergency Assistance will be provided only after an applicant has actually been disconnected. Emergency Service assistance will be provided within 48 hours from the date the client application is complete (all client documentation has been submitted); 18 hours if the energy crisis is life threatening.

B) An emergency payment will not be made on behalf of an applicant unless the household makes a good-faith effort at maintaining service at the time of reconnection. A good-faith effort is defined in Section 100.30. Prior heating assistance payments received by the home energy provider will not be counted as a contribution forthe good-faith effort. An applicant who has failed to make a good-faith effort will be required to provide an amount specified in the operations manualtoward the amount needed for reconnection at the time of reconnection. The good faith rule may be waived in cases of extreme economic hardship. Extreme economic hardship exists when the household's source of income has been permanently terminated for at least 30 days and a new source of income has not commenced.

C) The amount of emergency assistance will be an amount up to the minimum amount needed to re-establish the applicant or restore the heating system to an operable condition. In no case will the amount of emergency energy assistance exceed the total amount owed by the applicant. The applicant may only receive assistance under Option 3 one time for the primary home energy provider and/or one time for the secondary home energy provider during the program year.

D) In order to carry out this option, the Department will utilize delegate agencies and/or LAAs to provide assistance.

(Source: Section 100.220 recodified from 89 Ill. Adm. Code 109.220 at 33 Ill. Reg. 9466)