

Brunswick County Department of Social Services
Energy Program Outreach Plan
FY 2021-2022

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded block grant program that is comprised of three different programs - Crisis Intervention Program (CIP), Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and Weatherization. There are also non-Federal Crisis Intervention Programs - Energy Neighbor, Share the Warmth, Wake Electric Round Up, and Helping Each Member Cope.

To maximize the success of this program, outreach to county residents through key community partner stakeholders, each county department of social services is required to develop and implement an Energy Program Outreach Plan (EPOP). This plan is a framework to assure that eligible households are made aware of the assistance available through these programs.

The county director and/or his/her designee is required to develop the EPOP, which addresses outreach and application activities related to the Energy Programs. The Outreach Plan is due to North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) by July 26, 2021.

Each county must form an outreach planning committee that creates the opportunity for county level collaboration to discuss and plan how to effectively reach county residents to inform them of the services provided by the energy programs. The committee should meet at least twice yearly; September for outreach planning related to LIEAP and April to review the outcomes related to LIEAP and to plan for outreach activities for summer weather.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Director of Social Services should engage a number of various community partners such as Vendors, Housing Authority, Public Libraries, Public School System/Local Colleges/Head Start, Legal Services, Meals on Wheels, Media, Public Health/Health Centers, Churches, Food Banks, Councils on Aging/Senior Centers, Community based Indian organizations, Volunteer Programs, Vocational Rehabilitation Offices, and Transportation, services, etc.

1. Provide a list of committee members and their agencies.

Interagency committee will consist of the following agencies:

- Social Services
- Brunswick County Health Services
- Brunswick County Senior Resources, Inc.
- Brunswick Family Assistance
- Brunswick County Public Information Officer

2. Potential Meeting dates, times, locations, as well as agenda topics:

The committee will meet in October to discuss outreach plans for LIHEAP season at the Department of Social Services. The topics will include space needs/location, outreach activities, current needs/barriers such as COVID 19, staffing and PPE needs. The committee will meet again in December to plan for

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opening of LIHEAP application to the general public. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed to address community, agency, or any other special needs.

Define how DSS/DHS will work with the committee as well as any other agencies to collaborate regarding the Energy Program and how outreach will be provided to the citizens in your area.

A press release will be sent out to all media outlets as well as the county's website by the county's PIO and posters will be placed in the waiting areas of the Social Service building.

The press release will outline the dates and times that applications will be accepted, location, and basic information that clients need to provide to complete energy applications.

A second press release will be issued prior to LIHEAP opening to the general public. All press releases are posted on the county's website and sent to all county partners.

Adult service social work staff will take applications out to their clients and one individual will go to each of the Senior Center sites to take applications during the first month of LIHEAP, if COVID 19 restriction allow.

Child welfare social workers will be given applications to share with families.

Information will be shared at JCPC, Smart Start, CCPT, and CFPT meetings.

1. What is the process for referring customers? What marketing tools or items will be used (please provide a copy of your previous marketing material & how you plan to enhance those in the future)?

Program information will be shared with community partner and local groups. Information will include eligibility criteria and information on how to apply. Press releases will also be posted on county website.

2. What strategy does the county have, to continue to collaborative efforts with community partners to complete outreach activities to target potential eligible households including individuals and families?

Application process and timeframes will be shared with community partners and groups. Community partners understand the importance of the programs to their clients. Information is shared with Senior Centers, Public Housing, Social Workers, WIC and CC4C staff to share with their clients.

3. What additional activities will be conducted to target households with members with children under 5 and age 60 and over and disabled?

Information is shared with Senior Centers, Public Housing, Social Workers, WIC and CC4C staff to share with their clients.

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Media involvement is vital to the success to outreach activities. How will your county utilize media such as newspapers, social media, radio and television stations to publicize the Energy Programs?

Energy Program information listed on the county website. The County Public Information Office will share press release with all local media outlets.

1. Provide a list of media outlets that will be used as well as timeframes in which they will be contacted (provide examples of how the county can enhance these efforts):

November a press release is sent to all community partners, media, and local groups. Media outlets include Brunswick Beacon, State Port Pilot, & WWAY. Media outlets post and share the information. Additionally, outreach information will be available at the following locations:

- Local Food Pantries
- Health Department
- Local Churches
- Senior Centers
- Veterans Office
- Public Housing Office
- DSS Lobby

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Counties are required to provide application processes for CIP, non-Federal CIP programs, and/or LIHEAP. This information must be reported to the NCDHHS annually.

Brunswick County DSS will accept CIP and LIHEAP application via in person, phone, fax, mail, email and epass.

- Address: 60 Government Center Drive, Bolivia NC
- Phone: 910-253-2077
- Fax: 910-253-2271
- Email: dss.fns.ma@brunswickcountync.gov

The agency hours of operation are Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 5pm. In person application are accepted 8:30 am – 2:00pm daily. Due to COVID 19, the department is awaiting guidance regarding changes to the LIHEAP application process.

Crisis Intervention Program:

All CIP applications will be processed by the Intake Income Maintenance Caseworkers (IMC).

All applicable IMC's complete the NC FAST Energy Training and policy refresher training as needed.

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The Triage Supervisor, the QA Supervisor and the Energy Program Specialist are assigned to oversee the CIP program. The supervisor will be backed up by the Economic Service Program Administrator and/or Economic Service Program Manager.

Wait times are minimal due to number of IMC's available to take and process applications.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program:

Applications for LIHEAP will be taken and processed at the Brunswick County Government Complex.

Application Process:

- Applications will be accepted at DSS until LIHEAP is open to the public. At that time applications will be accepted at a predetermined site in the county complex.
- The Economic Service Program Administrator/Manager will assign a supervisor to oversee administration and quality reviews of the LIHEAP program.
- The assigned Supervisor will be the point of contact for LIHEAP until funds are exhausted or the end of the LIHEAP season, whichever comes first. The Economic Program Administrator/manager will be the backup.
- The Supervisor will review a random sample of applications daily.
- DSS will provide all needed supplies for the application process.

BEST PRACTICES:

Best practices are a method or technique that has been generally accepted as superior to any alternatives because it produces results. Best practices are essential to the program.

1. If your county has gone above and beyond what is listed on this form, please provide this information below:

Brunswick County DSS will send staff to senior centers in the month of December to ensure seniors receive needed assistance and to minimize transportation barriers.

2. Any additional comments or activities for CIP, non-Federal CIP, and/or LIEAP?

n/a

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

Your contact information is essential to the success of the Energy Programs. Please complete the following information.

Name: Catherine Lytch

Address: 60 Government Center Drive, Bolivia, NC 28422

Telephone: 910-253-2113

Email: catherine.lytch@brunswickcountync.gov

Please indicate which program:

☒ LIEAP

☒ CIP

This plan must be approved by the local Board of Social Services/Human Services Board or local agency governing body prior to submission. Refer to the latest Dear County Director Letter for instructions on how to submit this document to the North Carolina State office.

Board of Social Services/Human Services or governing body Signature

Date

Director's Signature

Date