
**APPLICATION PROCESS
PART TWO – INTAKE**

EP - 300 PART TWO - INTAKE
Change #2-2010
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300.06 APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

- A. Everyone who wishes to apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) must be given the opportunity to apply without delay during the application taking time frame. If an applicant comes into an agency that takes applications and requests to apply, he must be allowed to sign an application on the day he appears.

NOTE: Native Americans residing in Cumberland, Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland counties, who wish to apply for LIEAP benefits, must do so through the Lumbee Tribal Council.

- B. Application-taking should be provided by state and local governmental entities or community-based organizations as well as by social services. Examples of community-based organizations are not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations, area agencies on aging, and community action agencies. (See EP-200 for additional information.)
- C. Inform all applicants, either verbally or in writing, that unless the application and/or the requested information are received by the deadline given, the application will be denied.
- D. Inform households of additional services such as the Linkup and LifeLine Programs. See EP-200.09.
- E. LIEAP applicants must be provided with the opportunity for voter registration.

300.07 DMA-5093, APPLICATION LOG

Use the DMA-5093, Daily Reception Log, for Medical and Financial Assistance, which includes the LIEAP and CIP Programs. Under "Result," the receptionist or intake staff must enter whether an individual was referred to WFFA or Medicaid. If the individual does not wish to see a caseworker that day, record the reason in the "Other" block on the log. Do not record the purpose of his visit on the log as an inquiry.

300.08 ACTIONS TO TAKE WHEN AN APPLICANT COMES INTO THE AGENCY TO APPLY

- A. Explain to the applicant his rights and responsibilities. (See 301.04 below.)
- B. Ask the applicant if they receive Food and Nutrition Services.
1. If yes, go to C.
 2. If no, complete a blank [DSS-8114](#). See EP-430 for instructions on completing the DSS-8114.
- C. Check the "automatic" and "screen out" log to see if he needs to apply.
1. If his name appears on the automatic log, he does not need to apply.
 2. If his name does not appear on the automatic log, but is on the screen out log, use the laser printed DSS-8114 form. (See instructions in EP-430.)
 3. If his name does not appear on either log, fill out a blank DSS-8114 for him.

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300.09 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

A. General Information

Duplicate payments to LIEAP households are not allowed. Establish controls to ensure that households do not receive duplicate benefits.

1. Set up a separate Energy Unit to process applications. This will assure a single portal of entry, reducing the potential for duplication.
2. The State automatically sends alphabetized lists of Work First, Food and Nutrition Services, and Medicaid recipients for the county to use as control lists at intake. The alphabetized lists are also available in NCXPTR. For SSI recipients, obtain copy of the SDX already in the county.

NOTE: Use the control listing to identify Work First, Food and Nutrition Services, and Medicaid recipients only. Other information listed on the control listing must be verified when processing LIEAP applications.

3. Use the Energy System inquiry to check whether there are other energy applications for any household members. If the name, address, and social security number for a household member match that of an applicant already in the system, conduct additional research before approving the case. Evaluate each household member to determine the correct household composition to eliminate the duplication. Refer to EP-430 for energy assistance inquiry instructions.

B. Procedures for Completing Form DSS-8116-I, Eligibility Worksheet

1. It is mandatory to complete a DSS-8116-I, Eligibility Worksheet, for an application if:
 - a. A non-recipient household member has earned and/or unearned income, or
 - b. A household member is an ineligible alien with income, or
 - c. A household member has reserve that is questionable, or
 - d. A different income amount from that listed on the DSS-8114 is used to compute the budget.
2. Complete all sections on the DSS-8116-I that apply to the household. Complete "Food and Nutrition Services Case No." (if applicable), "LIEAP Case No.," and "Applicant Name" for each case. The DSS-8116-I must be signed by the caseworker who completes the form. The date is the date the DSS-8116-I is completed. If you have questions about how to complete a particular section of the form, please refer to that section of the manual for instructions.

NOTE: Walk-in applicants not currently active in Food and Nutrition Services, WFFA, or Medicaid must sign the DMA-5001, Notice of the Use of Social Security Numbers, when Income and Eligibility Verifications System (IEVS) matches are performed prior to the applicant's signing of the DSS-8114, Low Income Energy Assistance Program Application.

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- C. Explain to the applicant he has the right to:
1. Receive assistance if found eligible.
 2. Be protected against discrimination on the grounds of race, creed, or national origin by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. He may appeal such discrimination under Section 504 of the Disability Act.
 3. Have any information given to the agency kept in confidence.
 4. Appeal, if
 - a. He was denied the right to apply for assistance on the same day he or his representative went to the county department of social services; or
 - b. His application was denied; or
 - c. His assistance is incorrect based on the county's interpretation of the State regulations; or
 - d. A decision is not made on his application in a timely manner.
 5. Withdraw from the assistance program at any time.
 6. Reapply if the household is denied and the situation changes. The household must reapply before the application period expires. (See Time Table in EP-105.)
- D. Explain to the applicant he has the responsibility to:
1. Spend his LIEAP check on heating related bills.
 2. Provide requested information needed to determine eligibility. Use the DSS-8185 to request needed information. This is the only request sent to the applicant. If the DSS-8185 is used, you must:
 - a. Establish a reasonable time period, normally ten days but no later than the deadline date listed in EP-105, to return information. Record the agreed upon date on the DSS-8185; **and**
 - b. Notify the applicant that if information is **not** received **by the deadline date**, the application will be denied for failure to provide information. (See Time Table in EP-105.)
 3. Provide verification of his social security number. If he does not have verification, accept his statement.
 4. Report changes of address within five calendar days. This is the only change that must be reported.
- E. County Department's Responsibilities
- You have the responsibility to:
1. Assist the household in obtaining information to determine eligibility, if requested.
 2. Inform the applicant or his representative of the eligibility requirements and hearing rights. You may wish to use the DSS-8117 for this purpose.

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3. Ask the applicant to specify the type of fuel used most often. Explain to the applicant that the fuel type given at the time of application will not be changed even if the household later changes its primary source of heat.
4. Explain the meaning of fraud to the applicant.

F. Prevention of Overpayments

1. Interviews

The key to fraud prevention is skilled interviewing. The interviewing process must involve two-way communication. First, you must be specific and thorough in the questions asked. It is important to phrase questions in a way that the a/r will understand them. For example, spell out specific items included as "income" to avoid the misunderstanding that the only item included is wages. Secondly, listen carefully to the a's/r's responses. Give the a/r a chance to respond in his own words. Repeat the a's/r's responses back to him to ensure you understand and to give him a chance to add additional information.

2. Other Preventive Measures

a. Intra-agency

Establish communications among the various units in your office. Fraud prevention is the responsibility of the entire agency. Therefore, you must develop a systemic way to report changes and exchange information. Each agency should have several controls in place such as card files to avoid duplication of payments. Also, agencies should use the terminals to check whether there are any other energy applications for any household member. Refer to EP-430 for energy assistance inquiry instructions.

b. Inter-agency

In order to obtain prompt and accurate information needed to determine eligibility, it is important to establish a good relationship with other agencies, employers, and institutions. Inform them of the program requirements and the importance of receiving prompt and accurate information.

c. Public Awareness

Inform the public about your agency's attempt to prevent fraud. This is important both as a deterrent and as a public relations measure. Information regarding court actions taken against fraudulent clients, amount of collections over a period of time, etc., could be periodically offered to the news media. Publicize the telephone number for calling in reports of possible fraud. Emphasize that such reports are kept confidential. If the public realizes the importance of preventing fraud, you may be able to obtain much more information and cooperation.

d. Match Listings

In order to avoid duplicate payments, two matches are run and sent to the counties. These matches are: Payee social security number, and mailing address. Review these matches prior to the energy checks being sent in order to avoid making duplicate payments. The matches are:

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- Social Security Number – This is a list of different cases within the state that have the exact social security number in the Energy System.
- Address – This is a list of different cases anywhere in the state that have the exact mailing address in the Energy System.

NOTE: When completing the address on the DSS-8114, follow instructions in EP-430. Any inconsistencies in spacing or abbreviations prevent accurate matching.

For example, Rt. 1 Box 23A will not be an exact match with Rt. 1 Box 23 A. This is because of the space between “23” and “A” in one case and not the other.

Review each match upon receipt. Contact the household to evaluate and resolve the situation to prevent duplication. Submit a DSS-8114 to data entry to correct any errors found or to deny the case, whichever is appropriate.

All lists contain the energy number, county case number, district number, payee name, social security number, address, city, and the code from the DSS-8114 which indicates more than one energy household at the same address. Also, letters under a final column headed “Match On” indicate all lists on which the case matches (“A” for address and “S” for social security number). This final column prevents you from having to recheck cases which you have already reviewed on prior lists. The indicator appears only after the first case of a match. (The computer does not know there is a match until it goes to the second case.)

NOTE: When reviewing the Match Listings, an asterisk indicates a new entry not previously listed.

- G. Agencies must begin taking applications by the mandatory starting date. (See Time Table in EP-105.) The DSS-8114 is used for walk-in applicants.
- H. For walk-ins, the date of the application is the date the applicant or his representative signs the DSS-8114 under penalty of perjury.
- I. The applicant or his representative must apply for LIEAP in the county in which the household resides. The payee must be the individual readily assuming the obligation for household maintenance.
- J. If the applicant or his representative decides not to apply, document the inquiry. Include as much information as possible about the situation.
- K. Households may receive a LIEAP payment and Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) benefits.
- L. Inform every applicant, either verbally or in writing, that if they are ineligible they will receive an automated denial notice when the application is completed. If they are eligible, they will receive an automated notice when the application has been completed and an approval notice and a check in February.

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300.10 CHANGES DURING APPLICATION PROCESS

If a household applies for LIEAP and part or all of the household members move into a new household, the household situation must be re-evaluated.

- A. If the new household applies for LIEAP, take the following actions:
 - 1. Process the second application for the new household.
 - 2. Adjust the first application to delete the members who moved out.
 - 3. If all members moved into the new household, deny the first application as a duplicate.
- B. If the new household does not apply for LIEAP, the first application remains the same except for an address change.
- C. A household is not required to report changes other than addresses.

NOTE: See Section 440 D & E, County Reassignments and Address Changes for further instructions.

300.11 SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR WAIVING THE OFFICE INTERVIEW

- A. Agencies may complete interviews by telephone in the following situations if no member of the household is able to come to the agency:
 - 1. The household lives in a rural location and does not have transportation; or
 - 2. The household member is unable to come to the agency for reasons such as, but not limited to disability or incapacitated, illness, caring for a household member, prolonged severe weather, or employment hours or training schedule which conflicts with the agency hours.

NOTE: Date of telephone interview is the date of application.

- B. Application Procedure for Telephone Interviews
 - 1. Complete the application interview over the telephone.
 - 2. Establish a reasonable time period, normally ten days but no later than the deadline date listed in EP-105, to return information. Record the agreed upon date on the DSS-8185. This is the only request sent to the applicant.
 - 3. Mail application form (DSS-8114) and DSS-8185 to the applicant.

NOTE: Applications are not considered complete unless all questions have been answered and documented and has been signed. Applications mailed after the conclusion of a telephone interview must be signed by the applicant or authorized representative. Applications not returned or returned not signed are not complete applications. Notify the applicant, verbally or in writing, that his application is incomplete and will not be processed. Document your verbal contact or file a copy of the letter in the case record. Do not key an unsigned application into the energy system.

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300.12 ACTION TO TAKE WHEN A DSS-8114 IS RECEIVED/COMPLETED BY THE COUNTY

A. When a DSS-8114 is:

1. Complete

The application is complete if all questions have been answered and are documented on the application form. It must be signed by the applicant or his representative.

Key the DSS-8114. See EP-430 for instructions. A system generated notice (Figure 300-5) is mailed automatically to these households.

2. Incomplete

The application is incomplete if all the questions have not been answered and documented or it is not signed.

a. Telephone Call

(1) If the information needed to complete the application can be obtained by the telephone, call the applicant.

(2) Document the telephone call and the information received in the case record.

b. DSS-8185, Notice of Incomplete Application

(1) List on the DSS-8185 the information needed to complete the application. Establish a reasonable time period, normally ten days but no later than the deadline date listed in EP-105, to return information. Record the agreed upon date on the DSS-8185; **and**

(2) Document on the log or in the case record the date you sent the DSS-8185. Keep a copy of the DSS-8185 in the case file.

B. Requested Information Returned

When all the requested information is received:

1. Document in the case record the date you received the requested information.

2. Determine if any changes have been reported.

a. If **no** changes are reported, key the DSS-8114.

b. If changes are reported, follow procedures in 301.07 D.

C. Requested Information Not Returned

If the requested information is **not** received by the deadline (See Time Table in EP-105.),

1. Enter the following information on a blank DSS-8114 or Preprinted DSS-8114 (if available):

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- a. Food and Nutrition Services case identification number, If applicable (Field 2);
 - b. County case number (Field 6), if applicable;
 - c. Denial code for failure to provide information (Field 9); and
 - d. Payee name in Field 32 on Line 1.
2. Key the DSS-8114.
- D. Change Reported
1. If the applicant has reported changes on the DSS-8114 form:

Contact the household by telephone and/or send the applicant a DSS-8185 to obtain the information needed. Document in the case record the telephone call and the information received. If the DSS-8185 is sent, list the information needed to complete the application.
 2. Establish a reasonable time period, normally ten days but no later than the deadline date listed in EP-105, to return information. Record the agreed upon date on the DSS-8185; **and**
 3. Document on the log or in the case record the date you sent the DSS-8185. Keep a copy of the DSS-8185 in the case file.
- E. Actions to Take If You Receive an Application after the Deadline
- You must:
1. Verbally or in writing notify the applicant that his application was received **after** the deadline and it will not be processed; and
 2. Document your verbal contact with the applicant or file a copy of the letter in the case record.
 3. You may for easy reference, maintain a log of all applications received after the deadline.