

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT

2022 LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
(LIHWAP)

INPUT SESSION ON DRAFT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

REMOTE ONLINE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022

1:30 P.M.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1:30 p.m.

1  
2  
3 MS. RUSSELL: My name is Becca Russell and I'm a  
4 Program Analyst with the California Department of Community  
5 Services and Development, or CSD, and I'll be walking you  
6 through an overview of our Draft Program Guidelines in the  
7 presentation today.

8 I have a few of my colleagues on the call from CSD,  
9 as well, so there's a whole team of us that can answer any  
10 questions or comments that you might have. So just to  
11 quickly introduce everyone, we have Daphne Hunt, our Deputy  
12 Director of all of our programs. We have Kathy Andry, our  
13 Deputy Director of the Energy and Environmental Services  
14 Division. And then we also have Monica Popescu, who is  
15 another Program Analyst in the Division, and she'll be  
16 moderating our live Q&A at the end of the presentation.

17 So speaking of questions, we just have a few  
18 housekeeping things before we get into the presentation.

19 First of all, as you probably just heard on the  
20 Zoom voice, that we are recording this webinar, so we will  
21 make that available on our public website once we process  
22 the recording.

23 We will share the slide deck with anyone who is  
24 attending today right after this presentation so that you  
25 have access to all the slides.

1           As I mentioned, at the end of the presentation, we  
2 will be doing a live Q&A. And this is an opportunity for  
3 you to provide comments and questions on the Program  
4 Guidelines, as well as the email that we had sent out, but  
5 there's going to be two methods for you to submit any  
6 questions or comments for us during the webinar, so we have  
7 those highlighted on the screen.

8           The first one is that you can submit a question or  
9 a comment via the chat box, and so that's highlighted in  
10 the green square. So feel free, at any time during the  
11 presentation, to submit a question or a comment through  
12 there. And we're actually going to have CSD folks going  
13 through and trying to answer them via the chat back if  
14 that's an appropriate platform to do that on.

15           And then the second option is that we'll move to a  
16 live Q&A after the presentation. And so if you would like  
17 to provide a verbal comment, you can do that, as well. And  
18 the way that you're going to do that is you'll raise your  
19 hand, and you do that through the reactions button. And  
20 then, as I mentioned, Monica is going to be moderating  
21 that, so we'll go in order of those who have raised their  
22 hand and Monica will call on you and give you access to  
23 unmute yourself. You'll be able to unmute yourself. And  
24 then you'll have up to three minutes to provide us a  
25 question or a comment during that time.

1           So we'll go through all the verbal questions,  
2 everyone raising their hand first. And then if we have  
3 additional time we'll start reading off some of the  
4 questions and comments that have been submitted through the  
5 chat.

6           We are going to document all questions and comments  
7 that are provided to us during the presentation and CSD's  
8 responses to it. So if you don't get your question or  
9 comment answered during this live format, we'll also be  
10 documenting that and releasing that to everyone on the  
11 call, as well as the public, so that you can go back and  
12 see what CSD's responses are to those.

13           Okay, so now we can get into the presentation. Our  
14 agenda for today is, first, we just want to introduce you  
15 to our organization. We'll provide some -- an overview of  
16 LIHWAP and some background on the program. And then we'll  
17 get into reviewing the Draft Program Guidelines.

18           We did have the document linked in the Program  
19 Notice that noticed you for this webinar, so we hope that  
20 you had a chance to read it or get through it enough so  
21 that you're familiar, but we will at least be going over  
22 some of the key highlights in the Draft Program Guidelines.  
23 And then, as I mentioned, we'll have time for questions and  
24 comments at the end.

25           Okay, so just a little bit about CSD, if you're

1 unfamiliar with who we are. CSD stands for the California  
2 Department of Community Services and Development. And we  
3 are a branch under the California Department of Health and  
4 Human Services. Our mission is to reduce poverty for  
5 Californians by helping low-income families achieve and  
6 maintain economic security, meet their home energy and  
7 water needs, and reduce their utility costs through energy  
8 efficiency upgrades and access to clean renewable energy.

9           So we have several different programs that we  
10 administer through our department and many of which are  
11 done in partnership with our network of local service  
12 providers, or LSPs. Those are organizations that are  
13 either nonprofits or local government agencies that  
14 implement the programs at a local level. And they do have  
15 a key role in LIHWAP, so we will be going through their  
16 role a little bit later on in the presentation. That's a  
17 little bit about us.

18           An introduction to LIHWAP. LIHWAP is a federally-  
19 funded program. It's overseen by the U.S. Department of  
20 Health and Human Services. And CSD, our agency, was  
21 designated as the administrator for LIHWAP in California.

22           Our state was awarded \$116 million and 75 percent  
23 of that is going to go directly toward household benefits,  
24 which would be approximately \$87 million.

25           And then the overall goal of this program is to

1 ensure that low-income households have access to safe and  
2 clean drinking water and wastewater services.

3           So here are some key dates on the implementation  
4 timeline for the program. First of all, our LIHWAP State  
5 Plan was approved by HHS in November, on November 8th of  
6 last year. So I would think a lot of people who are on  
7 this call participated in that process, as well, because we  
8 did have a whole stakeholder input session on our State  
9 Plan, as well, and we did take a lot of that feedback and  
10 incorporate it into the State Plan that is now final. And  
11 you can access our State Plan on our LIHWAP webpage that we  
12 have listed on the screen right here.

13           And just want to note that like the State Plan was  
14 kind of a higher-level plan, and now we have these Draft  
15 Program Guidelines that are a little more detailed, but the  
16 two documents really are companion documents and go hand in  
17 hand. So you know, you might want to get familiar with  
18 both as you're going through our Draft Program Guidelines,  
19 as well.

20           Our next key date is today, February 23rd, where  
21 we're holding this input session on the Draft Program  
22 Guidelines that we released last week. And also today, you  
23 have until 5:00 p.m. to submit any comments to us. So as I  
24 mentioned, you can do comments and questions through this  
25 webinar, through the couple methods that we went over, but



1 you also can email them to us. We've already been getting  
2 some comments through this inbox. And the email listed on  
3 the screen, and it's also in the Program Notice, is where  
4 you can send those comments to.

5 Our next milestone is next month, in March, we plan  
6 to enter into contracts with our local service providers.  
7 And we're doing that so that they can set up operations and  
8 be ready for customers to apply to them by the time the  
9 program launch comes around.

10 Our program launch will be either in May or June.  
11 Our goal is May but I won't happen any later than June.  
12 And when we say that we're launching the program, we mean  
13 that everything is set up and customers are able to apply  
14 at that point in time. And then the program will run until  
15 August 31st of next year.

16 Okay, so before we get into details of the program,  
17 we just kind of want to go over some of the program need  
18 for LIHWAP. And so we did pull some statistics out of our  
19 Program Guidelines, so apologies for all the text and all  
20 the numbers but we did think that it's important to share  
21 some of these stats with you.

22 But, essentially, what we're trying to say with all  
23 these statistics is that customers do have water and  
24 wastewater debt. And although there are other water  
25 assistance programs, there is a remaining need, such as

1 LIHWAP as an arrearage program to come in and continue  
2 helping customers, so just want to go over some of these  
3 statistics with you.

4           So even before the pandemic, in 2019 at least  
5 500,000 Californians experienced water shutoffs due to  
6 nonpayment. And we -- that's really, you know, a big  
7 purpose of this program is to prevent shutoffs from  
8 happening.

9           And then during the pandemic, in a 2021 survey  
10 conducted by the State Water Resources Board, they  
11 identified over \$300 million in residential drinking water  
12 arrearages for both residential and commercial. And in  
13 addition to drinking water arrearages, we heard from  
14 wastewater providers that they estimate there may be as  
15 much as, you know, another several hundred million dollars  
16 in wastewater arrearages as well.

17           So, again, customers have debt. And although the  
18 state did appropriate \$1 billion through the Federal  
19 American Rescue Plan Act to establish the California Water  
20 and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Plan, which is  
21 administered by the State Water Board, there's still a  
22 remaining need that that program wasn't able to cover.

23           So a couple areas there is that customers are  
24 continuing to accrue arrearages after June 15th. And the  
25 State Water Board's Arrearage Program was limited to the

1 pandemic relief period, which was March 4th, 2020 to June  
2 15th, 2021.

3 Another thing is that that program did cover 80  
4 percent of the drinking water customer population. But 20  
5 percent of those -- of our customers did not have access to  
6 this water assistance program because their water or  
7 wastewater system did not participate in the program, and  
8 so they just didn't have access to the assistance. So we  
9 really hope to be able to serve those customers through  
10 LIHWAP.

11 And then just a little bit more background. We  
12 wanted to share some of the federal guidance that we  
13 received from the Department of Health and Human Services.  
14 And this really helped guide us in our program design.

15 So just to go through those, we were given guidance  
16 that funds shall be used as part of an overall emergency  
17 effort to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the  
18 coronavirus and make sure that low-income households have  
19 access to safe and clean drinking water and wastewater  
20 services. The program was focused on reducing arrearages  
21 and rates charged to households. And the benefits have to  
22 be paid directly to owners and operators of public water  
23 systems. So just to be clear, we do not have the ability  
24 to pay customers directly.

25 And then program models, such as the Low Income

1 Home Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP, shall be used where  
2 practical. So we did model LIHWAP after LIHEAP. CSD has  
3 administered LIHEAP for 40 years, so we already had  
4 existing policies and procedures for that program. And we  
5 modeled LIHWAP after that so the programs can pair with  
6 each other and just to try to use as many existing systems  
7 as possible.

8           Okay, so now getting into more of the details of  
9 the program design in California. So we designed this as  
10 an arrearage response program. And when we say arrearage,  
11 we mean money owed to a water or wastewater system from  
12 nonpayment of residential accounts that occurred during any  
13 time period. And when we say arrearage for the LIHWAP  
14 program, you can really think of that as like an  
15 eligibility requirement, not just what the money is going  
16 to. So this program is focused on helping customers that  
17 have debt.

18           However, the LIHWAP benefit can be applied to more  
19 than arrearages. So on the righthand side of the screen we  
20 have information on how the benefit payment, the amount, is  
21 set up. So each customer that applies to LIHWAP and is  
22 qualified can receive up to \$2,000. And that is a one-time  
23 payment throughout the program period, so each customer can  
24 only apply once, and that's on a first-come-first-served  
25 basis that it will be given out. The benefit amount can be

1 applied to either drinking water or wastewater services.  
2 And this is a customer-based program, so the customers are  
3 applying. And when they apply they can decide if they want  
4 their drinking water or wastewater services to be covered.

5           However, if a water or wastewater bill is bundled  
6 with other services, such as garbage, I just want to note  
7 that LIHWAP is only able to pay for the water and  
8 wastewater charges, so we wouldn't be able to cover any of  
9 the garbage cost. How that works is the LSP is going to be  
10 determining the payment amount during the application  
11 process and CSD is going to give guidance to them, so we'll  
12 either look at the charges broken out or, if they are not  
13 broken out on the bill, CSD will be providing some guidance  
14 to the LSPs on how to identify the amount associated with  
15 water or wastewater costs.

16           If water and wastewater are on the same bill the  
17 benefit amount can be applied to both and that's in order  
18 to restore services or prevent disconnection. And that  
19 would also include stormwater, which I'm not sure if we  
20 have that detailed of a stormwater piece in the program  
21 guidelines. We did get a comment on that earlier, so we'll  
22 make sure that that is clear, but we did want to share that  
23 with you today, that it would include stormwater.

24           And then what the benefit amount can cover, it can  
25 cover the customer's past due balance. And again, that's a

1 way to -- eligibility requirement of the customer. And  
2 then -- but then we can pay a little more than that because  
3 we want to make the customer whole. So we also will pay  
4 any current charges that's on that particular bill. And  
5 then we'll pay fees and taxes associated with the water and  
6 wastewater costs. And our overall goal in designing the  
7 program as this arrearage response program is so that we  
8 can restore services or prevent service disconnections.

9           However, we do have a little note at the bottom  
10 here that CSD is going to assess the need of customer  
11 arrearages six months after the program launch. And if we  
12 see that the need is really declining, we will consider  
13 adjusting our program guidelines to potentially pay for a  
14 customer's current bills, but we'll do that assessment a  
15 little further into the program.

16           Okay, another key objective of our program is to  
17 come in and fill the gap after the State Water Board's  
18 Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program. The two  
19 programs do work together. We've actually been meeting  
20 with the State Water Board every other week to learn about  
21 their program and get any advice as we've been developing  
22 the LIHWAP program. So we do really want to make sure that  
23 our programs are compatible. And if you are a water or  
24 wastewater system on this call and you did receive the  
25 State Water Board's funding, you can definitely also

1 receive LIHWAP funding, so just want to make that clear.

2           And so we have noted the gaps that LIHWAP would  
3 potentially come in and help serve some customers that  
4 couldn't have been served under the Water Board's program,  
5 so the main one being that we kind of already spoke to but  
6 LIHWAP can be applied to arrearages during any time period,  
7 whereas the Water Board's program was limited to the COVID-  
8 19 pandemic bill relief period which was March 4th, 2020  
9 through June 15th, 2021. So, again, customers are still  
10 accruing debt after June 15th of last year. And so LIHWAP,  
11 that will be a main area where LIHWAP can go and serve  
12 those customers.

13           LIHWAP can also serve customers that have their  
14 utilities included in rent.

15           And then, as we mentioned before, as well, not all  
16 water and wastewater systems participated in the Water  
17 Board's Arrearage Program and so those customers didn't  
18 have access. And we are going to work to hopefully get  
19 those water systems enrolled in our program so that we can  
20 then serve those customers.

21           Okay, another section we have in the program  
22 guidelines is on who will do the local administration. So  
23 we have selected our LIHEAP LSP network. As I mentioned  
24 before, we're trying to model this after LIHWAP as much as  
25 possible, so we just wanted to give you a little background

1 on who they are.

2           So the LIHEAP local service providers are made up  
3 of nonprofit and local government agencies. They've been  
4 administering LIHEAP at the local level for 40 years, same  
5 as CSD. And we work with the same organizations year after  
6 year, so they're very experienced in providing assistance  
7 programs to low-income communities. And we work with 41 of  
8 these agencies, so they span across the entire state. They  
9 all have their local service area. It could be that they  
10 serve an entire county or that they serve multiple counties  
11 but, as a whole, all 41 of them can cover the entire state  
12 of California while serving at a very local level.

13           Okay, so here's an overview of our service delivery  
14 model, so how customers are going to be able to access  
15 these benefits. And we have three key players involved in  
16 making this service happen, so we have CSD, the local  
17 service providers, or LSPs, and then the water and  
18 wastewater systems. And so what we have here, and this  
19 isn't the Program Guidelines, but it's just the roles and  
20 responsibilities for each of these groups.

21           So for CSD, we are responsible for the overall  
22 administration and oversight of the program. And we are  
23 working with a third-party funds disbursement partner whose  
24 name is HORNE, and together we are responsible for outreach  
25 to water and wastewater systems. And we'll be doing



1 outreach so that we can enroll them in our Direct Payment  
2 Program, which is going to be our method to being able to  
3 disburse the funds and provide the benefit, eventually, to  
4 the customer and then -- so we'll get them in our Direct  
5 Payment Program.

6           And then we are also responsible for issuance of  
7 financial assistance payments to those water and wastewater  
8 systems who will then, eventually, credit their customers.

9           And then the second group is the local service  
10 providers, who was just speaking to in the past slide. So  
11 again, they are responsible for the local administration  
12 which includes doing outreach to low-income households.  
13 And then they're also responsible for the intake and  
14 eligibility verification of applicants.

15           And so what that means is when a customer wants to  
16 apply, they're going to find their local service provider.  
17 We'll eventually have all that contact info on our website  
18 when we get close to the program launch. But a customer  
19 will come to the LSP, apply to them. The LSP will help  
20 them through the application and get everything that they  
21 need and they will verify that that customer is eligible.  
22 During that application process the LSP will also identify  
23 the LIHWAP benefit amount based on that individual  
24 customer's needs.

25           And then the third group is water and wastewater

1 systems, so they must enroll in our Direct Payment Program.  
2 Again, that's going to be our process to be able to release  
3 these payments. They need to accept LIHWAP payments on  
4 behalf of the household. They need to confirm benefits are  
5 credited to the customer accounts, confirm their services  
6 are restored or disconnection was prevented, assist with  
7 promoting LIHWAP to customers, again, wanting to do that a  
8 little closer to our program launch but we would appreciate  
9 if water and wastewater systems wanted to do that in  
10 coordination with the local service providers because,  
11 again, they're responsible for doing outreach. And then  
12 lastly, the water and wastewater systems need to notify  
13 customers that the LIHWAP benefit is applied to date.

14           Okay, so that was an overview of who and how the  
15 benefits are getting out.

16           Now, just moving into some eligibility. So for  
17 household eligibility the household -- the applicant needs  
18 to be low income, and we're only serving residential  
19 customers. So for LIHWAP, we're defining low income as 60  
20 percent of the state median income or they can be a current  
21 recipient of CalFresh, CalWORKS, and LIHEAP, so they will  
22 need to provide some documentation to prove that. They'll  
23 need proof of income for all household members to make sure  
24 that they meet the income guidelines or prove that one  
25 household member is a current recipient of CalFresh,

1 CalWORKS, and LIHEAP. The applicant will also need to  
2 provide proof of identification.

3           The second thing is that, again, the customer has  
4 to have a past due balance. And that arrearage could have  
5 occurred during any time period. If utilities are included  
6 in rent, we are considering that the customer has a water  
7 and wastewater arrearage as long as they are past due on  
8 rent, because that's all tied together. So documentation  
9 for this piece, the customer will need to provide a water  
10 and wastewater bill, or a property tax statement if that's  
11 where they're getting charged, that identifies the past due  
12 amount. And then if utilities are included in rent the  
13 customer will need to provide a landlord agreement which  
14 will essentially say that the landlord is going to pass  
15 down the benefit to the tenant. And then the customer  
16 would also need to get a water and wastewater bill for the  
17 rental property.

18           Lastly, for a household to be eligible their water  
19 or wastewater system has to be enrolled in our Direct Pay  
20 Program. Otherwise the customer won't have access to this  
21 program.

22           So that brings us to the water and wastewater  
23 system eligibility. So for water and wastewater systems,  
24 they need to meet the definition of being either a  
25 community water system or a wastewater treatment provider.

1 So we have the definitions listed here on the screen.  
2 They're also detailed in our Program Guidelines if you want  
3 to refer back to that.

4           Just a note here that we're not doing any like  
5 private systems, such as wells or septic, so these are for  
6 bigger systems serving more customers. The only addition  
7 to a community water system or wastewater treatment  
8 provider is if you are a billing entity that is billing on  
9 behalf of a community water system or wastewater treatment  
10 provider that meets one of these definitions. Those are  
11 the two options. Either one of those entities needs to  
12 enter into a direct payment agreement with HORNE which,  
13 again, is our third-party funds disbursement partner. And  
14 the entity that should do that is whoever is responsible  
15 for crediting a customer's account, so either the water  
16 system or if you have a billing entity, you should have  
17 them do that.

18           I did want to just note that we did hold a couple  
19 webinars specifically for water and wastewater systems  
20 where we went over the Direct Pay Program a little -- in a  
21 little more detail on how to enroll, and an introduction to  
22 HORNE. So if you have not heard about that and you're a  
23 water and wastewater system, or if you just missed the  
24 webinar, please do reach out to us at CSD and we'll get you  
25 connected with HORNE and HORNE can walk you through all of

1 that process and answer any questions you have about  
2 enrollment. But again, you'll need to enroll in that so  
3 that your customers have access to this assistance program.

4           Okay, so another section we have in the program  
5 guidelines is on allocation. So this is how the funding is  
6 all broken down. We have allocated 75 percent of the  
7 funding towards direct household benefits. Ten percent of  
8 the funding is going to go toward the LSPs to do outreach  
9 and eligibility determination. And then we have 15 percent  
10 going to administration and that's covering both CSD and  
11 the LSPs administration costs.

12           In terms of allocating the different amounts to  
13 each local service area, we use a two-factor formula which  
14 is modeled off how we determined this for LIHEAP. And the  
15 two factors are, one, we looked at the low-income county  
16 population and we used 150 percent or below federal poverty  
17 level for that. And we pulled that from Census data. The  
18 second factor is a county water cost factor. And that is  
19 defined as the average amount paid per household for 6  
20 cubic feet of water per month by county. And we got that  
21 data from the State Water Board's 2019 annual reporting.  
22 That's how we're allocating the funds.

23           And now the next -- we have a few slides on  
24 reporting, so please bear with us. It's multiple slides  
25 and lots of facts. But we do have this in the Program

1 Guidelines and we did want to walk through them with you  
2 today so that you can just hear what all the reporting  
3 requirements are. But again, it's a few slides, so I'll  
4 just take a moment to walk through these.

5           So we went over that service delivery model with  
6 CSD, local service providers, and then the water and  
7 wastewater systems. All three of us need to be doing  
8 reporting, so that's what we're going to break down right  
9 now.

10           So first of all, CSD has to report back to the U.S.  
11 Department of Health and Human Services. And what we have  
12 to report on is the amount, cost and type of water systems  
13 provided to households, the type of water assistance used  
14 by various income groups, the number and income levels of  
15 households assisted, household demographics, the number of  
16 households on a wait list due to limited funding, the  
17 impact on recipients. And really, what the impact means is  
18 what we keep mentioning, tracking whether services were  
19 restored or if we prevented a disconnection from happening.

20           And then lastly, just some administration  
21 information and it really ties into this being the first  
22 year this program is implemented. So first of all, we're  
23 tracking the number of agreements that we get into with the  
24 water systems so that your customers -- those customers  
25 have access to the program. But again, yeah, we're going

1 to be in a lot of communication with HHS, as this is a new  
2 program, on any recommendations, accomplishments, and unmet  
3 needs and lessons learned that we encounter as we implement  
4 this.

5 CSD also needs to report to the legislature. And  
6 we'll make this reporting available on our public website.  
7 So what we're going to be reporting after the program  
8 period is the total allocation and allocation by service  
9 category. Every six months we also are reporting to the  
10 legislature on a few more details. So the two above, the  
11 total allocation and allocation by service category, total  
12 expenditures, expenditures by service category, households  
13 served, and households served by service category.

14 So for CSD to be able to report on all of that, we  
15 do require that the local service providers report back to  
16 CSD on the work that they are doing. So LSPs have to  
17 submit to CSD the number of households served, household  
18 demographics, amount of benefit, account status if services  
19 are disconnected or an account is past due, successes and  
20 challenges of the program implementation, again, this is a  
21 new program for us, and then number of applicants seeking  
22 assistance for current bills, so that will help with our  
23 mid-program assessment if we're going to continue with only  
24 arrearages, and then number of applicants seeking  
25 assistance due to their water and wastewater system not

1 enrolled in the Direct Pay Program. So we do want to track  
2 if there's any customers that don't have access because of  
3 that.

4           And then I just wanted to note that the last two  
5 bullets are not listed in the Draft Program Guidelines but  
6 they will be in the final, so those were additions. But,  
7 again, we'll share these slides so that you can refer back  
8 to those. But I just wanted to flag that it's -- you won't  
9 find it in the Draft Program Guidelines.

10           Lastly, we do have a couple areas where water and  
11 wastewater systems will need to report. And they're going  
12 to be reporting back to HORNE who is disbursing the funds  
13 to them. So from water and wastewater system, we need  
14 amount of assistance credited to each account and whether  
15 assistance restored water services or prevented a  
16 disconnection if either of those apply.

17           Okay, so that was our presentation. I just want to  
18 first go over some ways to get in touch with us.

19           So again, here is our LIHWAP email. That is where  
20 you can send any questions or comments that you have about  
21 the Program Guidelines or just the program in general. But  
22 for the Program Guidelines, those comments are due by 5:00  
23 p.m. today. So again, you can give them during this  
24 webinar or email them, or both if you just want to, you  
25 know, be clear. That's always helpful for us, too, so you



1 can email us for that.

2 I also, again, encourage you, if you're a water and  
3 wastewater system, to use that email. If you have not  
4 heard more about the Direct Payment Program and you would  
5 like to know, please, just let us know and we'll get you  
6 connected with HORNE.

7 And then we also have a couple of links here for  
8 our webpages. So here we -- the first one is our LIHWAP  
9 webpage where it has just like general program information,  
10 that's where we're posting the Draft Program Guidelines,  
11 and then just other details as we implement the program.  
12 And then the second link is or a customer-facing webpage,  
13 so that has information on eligibility. And there's also a  
14 spot to sign up to get notified when the program launches.

15 So again, just want to remind everyone that the  
16 program is not going to launch until either May or June.  
17 So if you are a customer looking for services at this  
18 point, I do recommend you go to that link, familiarize  
19 yourself if you could qualify, and sign up so that we can  
20 notify you as we get closer to launching that program. So  
21 that's (indiscernible) with us.

22 Now we're going to move into our live Q&A. So I  
23 see that many people have been utilizing the chat box, so  
24 that's great. Again, we're going to start off with verbal  
25 comments. So just to go over how you do that again, you're

1 going to raise your hand through the reactions button where  
2 you can then select raise-your-hand. Monica will then  
3 announce your name and give you permission to unmute  
4 yourself. You'll have three minutes to provide us a  
5 comment or question. And so if you are getting close to  
6 that time, Monica will give you a little time warning. And  
7 if you are going -- if you are exceeding the time a little  
8 too far, we may have to cut it off and move on to the next  
9 question. So I just want to make sure we have plenty of  
10 time for all of the questions and comments as much as  
11 possible.

12           And, oh, just a reminder, when you are done giving  
13 your question or comment, please lower your hand, that  
14 we're, you know, going to go in order of raised hands we  
15 see. So I know it can be hard to remember to do that but,  
16 please, just lower your hand so that we know that you've  
17 already participated in providing the comment.

18           Okay, again, we'll go through verbal comments, and  
19 then we'll switch to reading off any of the chat if we have  
20 time. And as a final reminder, we will be putting a  
21 document that summarizes all of the feedback we've been  
22 getting, as well as any comments that are submitted to that  
23 inbox.

24           So with that, I will hand it over to Monica, who is  
25 going to facilitate the live Q&A portion for us.

1 MS. POPESCU: Thank you, Becca.

2 And as Becca has said, we are going to start in  
3 order of the raised hands, so we're going to start with  
4 Lindsey.

5 Lindsey Lopez, hi. Please unmute yourself.

6 MS. LOPEZ: Hello. Thank you for taking my  
7 question.

8 Number one, really excited to hear about this  
9 program. I work for a community-based organization in  
10 Stockton, California, in San Joaquin County. I'm very  
11 familiar with LIHEAP, we offer that, as a bunch of other  
12 payment assistance programs for electric bills. So this  
13 was amazing to hear about something as a resource for  
14 water.

15 My only question is: How, on our end as a  
16 community-based organization that administers this, how do  
17 I make sure that I'm in the right talks with my county to  
18 make sure that we have whatever we need to be able to run  
19 this program?

20 MS. ANDRY: Yeah. Hi Lindsey. Thank you for your  
21 question. So are you talking about ensuring that the  
22 utility provider in your community signs up for the Direct  
23 Pay Program?

24 MS. LOPEZ: Yeah, like because I know right now, I  
25 go online to get my LIHWAP -- I mean my LIHEAP application

1 and we, as a community resource center, we assist people  
2 and sometimes pay for the birth certificate that's needed,  
3 and help get some of those documents needed so that they  
4 are able to process their application and have a better  
5 outcome of, hopefully, you know, applying for the right  
6 program.

7           So knowing that community-wise I'm going to be  
8 having people coming in who are hearing about this program,  
9 I'm wondering, how do I make sure that San Joaquin County  
10 has this and that we're offering it correctly?

11           MS. ANDRY: Sure. So at the state level we are  
12 conducting aggressive outreach to all the water and  
13 wastewater systems. As we mentioned, we started that  
14 outreach effort last week with hosting a series of  
15 webinars, which will continue to do so. Our goal at the  
16 state level is to outreach to all water systems and  
17 wastewater systems to make sure they're informed of the  
18 LIHWAP program and encourage them to enroll at the local  
19 level. You know, we welcome the support at the local level  
20 to also reach out to your water and wastewater systems to  
21 inform them of the program and direct them to CSD. Again,  
22 you can direct them to our LIHWAP inbox that I know I  
23 shared in the chat to reach out to us to encourage them to  
24 enroll.

25           So we're doing everything we can to try to do our

1 outreach and due diligence in really working with the water  
2 and wastewater systems to get them onboard.

3 MS. LOPEZ: Awesome. So not for sure yet in San  
4 Joaquin County or for Cal Water if they're signed up at  
5 this moment?

6 MS. ANDRY: Not at this moment. We just started it  
7 last week.

8 MS. LOPEZ: Okay. Thank you so much.

9 MS. ANDRY: We're going to -- yeah. We'll be  
10 actively, also, working to work on the public site to let  
11 the public know which systems are enrolled, as well, and  
12 making that information available.

13 MS. POPESCU: Okay. Next, Cindy Tuck.

14 You have the floor.

15 MS. TUCK: Thank you. Cindy Tuck with the  
16 Association of California Water Agencies. Like Lindsey,  
17 and I've never met Lindsey, but we're very excited about  
18 this program, also, appreciate the meeting today. We have  
19 three comments.

20 One, we thought the Draft Guidelines were written  
21 very well. We appreciated the webinars last week for the  
22 water systems and the statewide associations.

23 The second comment has to do with section 7 of the  
24 Draft Guidelines, and particularly on page ten, and this is  
25 the discussion about benefit payments. There's a series of

1 bullets there. And in the third bullet it talks about the  
2 payment can cover the water or wastewater arrearage amount.  
3 We would suggest after that, after the word "amount"  
4 inserting "or both if the bill includes both services."  
5 That insert would track with the first bullet that appears  
6 above that. And we did submit this in writing today if  
7 that's helpful? So that's just a clarifying edit.

8           And then last but not least, we appreciate the  
9 clarification again today about stormwater. And we'd  
10 suggest that that clarification be made in writing in the  
11 final version of the Guidelines.

12           And that concludes our comments.

13           MS. ANDRY: Thank you, Cindy. Appreciate it.

14           MS. POPESCU: Danielle Blacet-Hyden.

15           MS. BLACET-HYDEN: Great. Thank you so much. I  
16 wanted to echo Cindy's comments and express our  
17 appreciation for all the work that CSD has done to get this  
18 up and running. I work for the California Municipal  
19 Utilities Association and we represent about 50 water  
20 agencies who we will be urging to make sure that they sign  
21 up for the program. And also echo her comments about storm  
22 drainage and the wastewater technical clarification.

23           So thank you for the opportunity to comment today.

24           MS. ANDRY: Thank you, Danielle.

25           MS. POPESCU: Adam Link.

1 MR. LINK: Hi. This is Adam Link with the  
2 California Association of Sanitation Agencies. Just want  
3 to echo everyone's appreciation for this and all the  
4 stakeholder meetings that went before. I think they were  
5 really helpful getting these developed.

6 I just had a couple of quick questions or  
7 clarifications maybe.

8 One, you mentioned in the presentation, but I just  
9 want to be really clear since I've gotten a bunch of  
10 questions from my members about this, but there's not  
11 necessarily conflict between folks that are going after the  
12 arrearages money at the Water Board program and this  
13 program; right? And so that's sort of one of the big  
14 questions is, you know, is there overlap? And I  
15 understand, you know, you can't double -- be double  
16 reimbursed. But in terms of the programs themselves, I  
17 just want to make sure there's no conflict there.

18 The second question has to do with -- and we talked  
19 about this at the stakeholder meetings, but as you know, on  
20 the wastewater side there really isn't a shutoff  
21 equivalent. I mean, our systems aren't, you know, designed  
22 that way in the same way that water systems are. And so I  
23 know one of the criteria for some of the submittals was to  
24 show that the system had been turned back on or would avoid  
25 a shutoff. I just want to make sure there was clear

1 guidance for wastewater agencies on that element when  
2 they're certifying that the funds went in.

3           And then the last question or comment was one of  
4 the early slides in this showed you sort of had to choose  
5 between the water and the wastewater billing segment. And  
6 just, I'm curious, for those that are both water and  
7 wastewater agencies, is that still true, do you have to  
8 pick one or, you know, if you have different providers, can  
9 you apply for both programs? How does that work in terms  
10 of reimbursing for the water and the wastewater side for a  
11 single customer through the same LSP?

12           So thanks very much and, yeah, just a couple of  
13 clarifications.

14           MS. ANDRY: Okay. Did you want me to answer those  
15 now, Adam? Okay.

16           If I recall, I can -- we definitely will be  
17 providing responses to your questions. And if I recall,  
18 the first comment that you had is, yes, if a utility is  
19 participating in the state Water and Wastewater Arrearage  
20 Program the customer, since this is customer-based, there's  
21 no conflict. So if the customer comes in and they still  
22 have a past due amount that is owed, they can apply. And  
23 if the water and wastewater system is enrolled in direct  
24 pay and their eligible, they can receive a benefit, and the  
25 water system can receive that payment on behalf of the



1 customer.

2           And I think your last question, I can't remember  
3 your second question, the last question had to do with if  
4 services are bundled. We are able to pay both services for  
5 water and wastewater if they're on the same bill in order  
6 to prevent or restore services. And I know the question  
7 for wastewater is there is not disconnection and there was  
8 just wanting to have clear guidance on how to report that.  
9 And we will definitely have guidance for wastewater systems  
10 with respect to that once they enroll into the Direct Pay  
11 Program.

12           MR. LINK: Great. Thanks very much. No, that  
13 covers it all.

14           MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

15           MS. RUSSELL: Actually, Kathy, could I just add one  
16 thing to the first question?

17           MS. ANDRY: Um-hmm.

18           MS. RUSSELL: Because I just want to make it really  
19 clear that, yes, water and wastewater systems can  
20 participate if you're getting the State Water Board  
21 funding. I believe, I want to say, in the Program  
22 Guidelines from the Water Board, they even encourage it, to  
23 seek out LIHWAP after you've provided their assistance to  
24 your customers. So, yes, please participate if you did  
25 receive that funding.

1 MS. POPESCU: Okay. Next is Gilda Arreguin.

2 Please unmute yourself, Gilda Arreguin.

3 MS. ARREGUIN: Yes. I just had some quick  
4 questions.

5 On the last previously LIHWAP webinar it was  
6 mentioned about the agreements for the direct payments.  
7 Will there be a link provided on the contract for those  
8 individual -- for those particular cities that have not  
9 submitted then? Because I know it's going to be updating  
10 as we go since some have not submitted theirs yet. Would  
11 that be considered?

12 MS. ANDRY: I'm sorry, could you -- I apologize.  
13 Can you repeat your question again, Gilda, so I can  
14 understand?

15 MS. ARREGUIN: Yeah, Kathy. Remember the list you  
16 mentioned before on the last webinar, that there is a list  
17 already that CSD has on the vendors that have already  
18 submitted their agreements. So for me, for the Fresno  
19 County area, I would like to know which ones have not  
20 submitted theirs so I could call them or talk to them to  
21 see if we could find a way --

22 MS. ANDRY: I see.

23 MS. ARREGUIN: Yeah.

24 MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

25 MS. ARREGUIN: Yes.

1 MS. ANDRY: Just to clarify, we're currently doing,  
2 as I mentioned, aggressive outreach. So we just commenced  
3 that. We will be making sure that we sort of make sure  
4 that on our public website, as systems as starting to  
5 enroll, that we make that information available of which  
6 systems are onboard and to really try to work to provide  
7 the most current information. And, again, this information  
8 will help guide you to do your outreach to your local water  
9 and wastewater systems.

10 MS. ARREGUIN: And my last two questions, Kathy, is  
11 the -- since you mentioned that LIHWAP is going to be  
12 similarly aligned to the LIHWAP process, will the LIHWAP  
13 have the pledge component to restore or to prevent a  
14 disconnection of water? So we could contact the vendors so  
15 we could provide that amount that they were approved for.

16 MS. ANDRY: Because this is a new landscape of  
17 vendors, we are not requiring a pledge system at this time.  
18 And for those of you on the call under our LIHEAP program  
19 for gas and electric, we have the ability to contact the  
20 water -- or to contact the gas and electric company to say,  
21 hey, a customer has been deemed eligible, we're going to  
22 pledge this amount and payment is forthcoming to put the  
23 water system -- or the gas and electric company on notice  
24 that a benefit is coming. We do not have the same  
25 infrastructure in place for water and wastewater.

1           And we definitely would like to explore opportunity  
2 to implement that if a system is able to accommodate or  
3 implement a pledge process, similar to what we have under  
4 our Utility Assistance Program.

5           MS. ARREGUIN: Just want to make sure. My last  
6 question would be, I believe you mentioned this on the last  
7 webinar, there will be a training regarding how to do the  
8 invoicing and the deadlines and all those good details  
9 regarding a contract?

10          MS. ANDRY: Yes.

11          MS. ARREGUIN: Correct then?

12          MS. ANDRY: CSD will be providing

13          MS. ARREGUIN: Okay.

14          MS. ANDRY: -- a regional training to our local  
15 service providers and intake workers for this program.

16          MS. ARREGUIN: Thank you, Kathy.

17          MS. ANDRY: Um-hmm.

18          MS. POPESCU: We have Michelle Powell next.

19          MS. POWELL: Thank you everyone for being here  
20 today. I have a couple of the questions in that my agency  
21 is a special district that collects their sewer service  
22 charges on property tax bills. Are you doing outreach to  
23 counties to let them know about this program? In the chat,  
24 it was written to me that the county would need to sign up  
25 to be, you know, to be directly paid for this. So that's

1 question number one.

2           And question number two would be could you suggest  
3 the proper department within my county, which is Alameda  
4 County, to ask them if they are planning to do so?

5           MS. ANDRY: Now the county is the biller for the  
6 service because it's on the property tax roll?

7           MS. POWELL: Correct.

8           MS. ANDRY: Okay. So I know we've identified all  
9 of the wastewater systems and the community water systems  
10 in the state. And in our Guidelines, if the county is the  
11 biller or collecting the wastewater on the tax rolls, then  
12 they should be the entity that applies for the program.

13           MS. POWELL: Um-hmm.

14           MS. ANDRY: I don't have the specific, in your  
15 area, who that would be. But you can certainly reach out  
16 to the LIHWAP inbox and we can, you know, have a dialogue  
17 and we can try to work out what entity that would be in  
18 your area.

19           MS. POWELL: Thank you. I'd very much appreciate  
20 that.

21           MS. ANDRY: Sure.

22           MS. POPESCU: Vincent Karlson, please unmute  
23 yourself.

24           MR. KARLSON: Yeah. Thank you for taking my  
25 question.

1           Our utility actually bills for four utilities,  
2 electric, water, wastewater, and garbage. So currently our  
3 LIHEAP program, you know, because it's a blended bill, pays  
4 all utilities to prevent a disconnection or to restore  
5 services. So how does this work with the LIHWAP program  
6 now? Is the customer eligible for two different benefits  
7 throughout the course of the program offering or it is for  
8 the LSP to identify and make the appropriate allocations?

9           MS. ANDRY: Yeah. Thank you. Good question,  
10 Vincent.

11           So under the LIHWAP program, HSS has issued  
12 guidance that we can only pay for the water, wastewater, or  
13 stormwater charges associated with the bill. So how it  
14 could potentially work is the customer can come in and  
15 apply for both LIHEAP and the water assistance. And then  
16 we can pay sort of the electric with the LIHEAP and we can  
17 pay the water and wastewater portion with the LIHWAP  
18 dollars. So there is opportunity for the customer to get  
19 two benefits because it's under two different programs.

20           MR. KARLSON: Okay. And then I'm slightly  
21 confused. On one of your first slides you mentioned the  
22 \$2,000 maximum benefit. How does that come into the  
23 equation?

24           MS. ANDRY: So it, again, it will be determined by  
25 the local service provider on the amount that's past due

1 and which also includes covering current charges and  
2 associated taxes and fees. And they'd have to -- if  
3 there's a way for them to isolate the water and wastewater  
4 charges or itemize it on the bill, you know, there's  
5 different methods we'll have to look at because I know that  
6 a lot of different entities bill differently. So we're  
7 working on some solutions on how to identify what costs are  
8 associated with water and wastewater.

9 MR. KARLSON: Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

10 MS. ANDRY: Okay. You're welcome.

11 MS. POPESCU: I think Gilda has one more question.  
12 Okay. There you go.

13 MS. ARREGUIN: Hi, Kathy, again. On page seven on  
14 the draft, are the allocations capped already on those line  
15 items for the percentages?

16 MS. ANDRY: Is that -- are you talking about the  
17 percentages?

18 MS. ARREGUIN: Yes. Correct. The 15 and 10  
19 percent.

20 MS. ANDRY: Yes.

21 MS. ARREGUIN: Okay. And then the second question  
22 that I have, as you know, we always try to make it easy for  
23 clients to apply for LIHEAP. So for LIHWAP, if a client  
24 forgets their bill and that's the only bill that they have  
25 under this agreement that they have submitted to you at

1 CSD, are we able to access that bill for the client or not  
2 yet since we are new with LIHWAP?

3 MS. ANDRY: I'm not sure if I understand the  
4 question.

5 MS. ARREGUIN: Currently, for LIHEAP, if a LIHEAP  
6 client submits a full completed application but, oops, they  
7 forgot their PG&E bill, well, instead of a client, because  
8 they don't have a vehicle, they don't have the bus money or  
9 anything, we're able to call PG&E and retrieve that bill  
10 under the permission of the client.

11 So with LIHWAP, if the application is complete and  
12 all we need is their bill for their water bill, are we able  
13 to obtain it --

14 MS. ANDRY: We'll have to work --

15 MS. ARREGUIN: -- from the --

16 MS. ANDRY: -- with each water or wastewater  
17 provider to hopefully be able to establish a process where  
18 the local service provider can contact them to get a copy  
19 of the bill. I'm not sure if that will be guaranteed for  
20 each and every water or wastewater system to be able to  
21 provide that.

22 MS. ARREGUIN: Your advocacy will be greatly  
23 appreciated, Kathy, particularly if we have families that  
24 are like about an hour drive and there's no transportation  
25 available for them, so --



1 MS. ANDRY: Absolutely.

2 MS. ARREGUIN: -- greatly appreciated it. Thank  
3 you.

4 MS. POPESCU: There are no other raised hands at  
5 the moment.

6 MS. HUNT: Monica, would you like me to run through  
7 some of the remaining questions in the chat?

8 MS. POPESCU: That would be great.

9 MS. HUNT: Okay. Great. So just a couple things  
10 that I'll flag first.

11 One is we noted that there are some specific  
12 questions and concerns about signing up for direct pay. So  
13 for those specific issues, if you could please email us at  
14 lihwap@csd.ca.gov, that email address is also listed a  
15 couple times in the comments, then I think we can best  
16 address your specific concerns.

17 Also noted, there are a couple questions, Kathy,  
18 about will we be providing a public list of participating  
19 providers, water and wastewater?

20 MS. ANDRY: Yes.

21 MS. HUNT: And there was a question about do we  
22 know when we'll make that available?

23 MS. ANDRY: I don't have a time frame. We just  
24 started. So we can maybe look to see what we have, who's  
25 enrolled, in the next 30 days and start to put together a

1 list.

2 MS. HUNT: Great. Thank you.

3 And then there was a question just about who the  
4 LSPs are and the areas they service? So I was wondering if  
5 someone could put that website in the chat for folks,  
6 please?

7 Will this recording be made available?

8 MS. ANDRY: Yes, absolutely. Um-hmm.

9 MS. RUSSELL: Thank you. Yeah, we can share it to  
10 everyone attending today and also, too, on our public  
11 website. And we'll also share the slide deck right after  
12 the presentation so that you call can refer back to that  
13 before our deadline for the comments today.

14 MS. HUNT: Okay. Now I'm going to try to go -- I  
15 know there were a number of questions, so I'm going to try  
16 to go back through. And I apologize if I ask any questions  
17 that were previously answered. And, Kathy, you can just  
18 let me know to fast forward if that's the case.

19 So Nayamin asked, "If someone lives in a mobile  
20 home park where the rent for space includes water, could  
21 they apply?"

22 MS. ANDRY: If they live in a mobile home park and  
23 the rent -- is this utilities included in rent question?

24 MS. HUNT: Yeah. Yes.

25 MS. ANDRY: So, yes, utilities that are included in

1 rent are part of the program. And it does require, again,  
2 that the water and wastewater system is enrolled but that  
3 the tenant would have to get a landlord agreement in place.  
4 And we'll have that documentation available for the local  
5 service provider to provide to the tenants through the  
6 application process. And basically, through that process,  
7 the applicant can apply.

8 MS. HUNT: Great. Thank you.

9 I'm not sure, did we answer yet the question about  
10 what types of proof of income we're requiring?

11 MS. ANDRY: There's a variety of different proofs  
12 of income. And I mean, for example, obviously, wage  
13 statements, your -- if you have, for example, if your on  
14 CalFresh or CalWORKS, your Notice of Benefit Letter can  
15 apply. There's a variety of different ways to show proof  
16 of income. I would suggest going to -- I believe it's in  
17 our State Plan that includes a list of income sources and  
18 things that are not counted as income, as well.

19 MS. HUNT: Thank you.

20 MS. POPESCU: And, Daphne, we have a raised hand,  
21 if you can take a little break, to give the floor to  
22 Nayamin Martinez?

23 MS. MARTINEZ: Thank you. I just have a follow up  
24 to the question about the mobile home.

25 So the mobile home park is located in the City of

1 Mendota, so then we need to make sure, first, that the City  
2 of Mendota as a water provider is registered. But in terms  
3 of the other document that you mentioned, that will be from  
4 the administrator or the company that runs that mobile home  
5 park because they are the landlords that receive the  
6 payment for their rent that includes the water; correct?

7 MS. ANDRY: Right. So if I'm following you  
8 correctly, the landlord or property management company will  
9 have to complete what we're calling a landlord agreement,  
10 which will be fairly simple, and they'll have to confirm  
11 that you're a tenant. And they'll also have to confirm the  
12 amount of utilities that is owed based on the amount of  
13 months that are past due on the rent.

14 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Thank you.

15 MS. ANDRY: You're welcome.

16 MS. POPESCU: No other raised hand.

17 MS. HUNT: Okay. Thank you for your patience.  
18 There are a lot of questions. Now I've got to find the  
19 spot here.

20 Jean Hurst asked, "What is the outreach or  
21 incentive to ensure systems enroll in direct pay?" And  
22 then just flagged concern about, you know, the number of  
23 providers that, I think what you're saying, didn't enroll  
24 in the State Water Board Program.

25 MS. ANDRY: The number of --

1 MS. HUNT: So I think just citing the -- I think  
2 citing the State Water Board Program enrollment.

3 And, Jean, I don't know if you're on and want to  
4 elaborate any? Maybe not. Okay.

5 Well, I think the question is about the outreach  
6 and incentive and that we are, you know, working with our  
7 third-party vendor to do aggressive outreach to ensure we  
8 enroll as many providers as possible.

9 MS. ANDRY: Yeah. Definitely. I'm hoping that the  
10 water and wastewater systems see this as, obviously, a  
11 benefit to their customers, you know, in being able to pay  
12 off past due amounts, keep their services on. And you  
13 know, as far as incentive, it's a service to the customers  
14 for sure, and a benefit. And it's a service offering that  
15 you can offer to your customers who are struggling.

16 MS. HUNT: Great. Thank you.

17 MS. POPESCU: Jean Hurst said she would like to  
18 clarify (indiscernible).

19 MS. HURST: No. Thanks. I think you answered the  
20 question appropriately. I think we're -- it's concerning  
21 that so many systems did not sign up for the Arrearages  
22 Program. So we were just hoping to hear about special  
23 efforts to ensure that as many systems enroll in the LIHWAP  
24 program as possible, so appreciate that answer. Thank you.

25 MS. HUNT: Thank you, Jean.

1 MS. POPESCU: And we have one more verbal comment  
2 or question from Nanette Bailey.

3 MS. BAILEY: Hello. Can you hear me?

4 MS. POPESCU: We can.

5 MS. BAILEY: Okay. So I kind of just had a  
6 question about clarifying. I'm with a wastewater utility  
7 and our billing is done through the county utility billing  
8 system for us. And I'm just trying to make sure, like I  
9 know whose role is who, so for us would the LSP be -- we  
10 call them CUBS, county utility billing system, would the  
11 LSP be CUBS? And would HORNE enter into an agreement with  
12 the wastewater with us but would they send a lump of  
13 payment to CUBS to distribute to the customers or how would  
14 that work?

15 MS. ANDRY: Sure. Thank you for the question,  
16 Nanette. So what we -- what -- the county, that you're  
17 referring to as CUBS, would enter into the direct payment  
18 agreement with HORNE as the billing entity for the  
19 wastewater treatment providers. And so they would --

20 MS. BAILEY: Okay.

21 MS. ANDRY: Because they're responsible for  
22 crediting the accounts, that's the entity that would need  
23 to enroll in the program.

24 MS. BAILEY: Okay. Thank you so much for clearing  
25 that up.

1 MS. ANDRY: You're welcome.

2 MS. HUNT: Okay, back to the chat.

3 Tracy asked,

4 "Do you have an estimated turnaround for customers  
5 getting payment to water agencies? Also, what  
6 information will be provided in the direct payment to  
7 identify the customer, for example, account number,  
8 street address?"

9 MS. ANDRY: Okay. So we are working on our payment  
10 issuance process. Obviously, our goal is to get the  
11 payments to the utilities as quickly as possible. We're  
12 modeling our Direct Payment Program after our LIHEAP  
13 program. So we, you know, we currently don't have -- in  
14 other words, it could take three to six weeks to get  
15 payments to the utility systems based on our experience  
16 under LIHEAP. We're working to see if we can even shorten  
17 that time frame down a little bit further.

18 As far as what was part two of the question, was  
19 that notifying the customer?

20 MS. HUNT: The information provided in the direct  
21 payment to identify them?

22 MS. ANDRY: Oh, the information, the datapoints.  
23 So it will include the account number, the accountholder's  
24 name and the service address, and the amount of the  
25 benefit.

1 MS. HUNT: Christina Henry asks, "Are only active  
2 accounts eligible for the LIHWAP credit or are closed  
3 accounts eligible?"

4 MS. ANDRY: Closed accounts are if the customer  
5 comes in and, perhaps, it was open at the time that they  
6 stopped services, we issue a benefit based on the amount is  
7 owed by the time the benefit gets to the water system. If  
8 the account is closed we're allowing that you can pay the  
9 past due amount and if there's anything remaining, that you  
10 would have to return those funds back to HORNE.

11 MS. HUNT: Great. Thanks, Kathy.

12 Francisco asks, "What about utility companies that  
13 have electric and water on the same account?"

14 MS. ANDRY: So that's the bundled bills. Again, as  
15 I had mentioned earlier, under the LIHWAP program, and  
16 we're only able to pay the water, wastewater or stormwater  
17 charges. And so as far as if there's still a need to pay  
18 for the electric, they could leverage the LIHEAP program to  
19 pay for the electric portion of the bill.

20 MS. HUNT: Thank you.

21 Catherine just wanted to clarify, "Is LIHWAP," she  
22 says, "is it different from California Arrearage Payment  
23 Program?"

24 I imagine you mean the Water and Wastewater  
25 Arrearage Payment Program, so they are different, and they



1 can be overlapped in that a customer can receive benefits  
2 from both, so that LIHWAP would come after the State Water  
3 Board's Water Arrearage Program and they're allowed to  
4 receive both.

5 MS. ANDRY: Um-hmm.

6 MS. HUNT: Monica asks, "Will applicants be able to  
7 apply for LIHWAP via CALIHEAPApply?"

8 MS. ANDRY: Again, this is at the local service  
9 provider level. So each of our LSPs will have an  
10 application process, so applicants would have to follow  
11 that application process that's determined by the local  
12 service provider. So there's no standard way to submit an  
13 application because it's administered locally.

14 MS. HUNT: Thank you.

15 Will we be sharing a copy of this chat and the  
16 answers with participants?

17 MS. ANDRY: Yes. We will be putting together a  
18 comments response document that will include the chat  
19 questions and answers.

20 MS. HUNT: Great. Thank you. Okay.

21 It looks like a water provider is asking, "We were  
22 going to reinstate disconnections in March. Do we need to  
23 hold off on that until this program is available for  
24 residents?"

25 MS. ANDRY: We don't have authority at CSD to

1 implement any type of moratorium. We certainly would  
2 appreciate if water and wastewater or water systems did not  
3 disconnect knowing that this program is in place and  
4 they're interested in signing up. And we strongly  
5 encourage all water and wastewater systems to sign up.

6 That definitely would have to be determined by the  
7 water system.

8 MS. HUNT: Great. Are past webinar recordings  
9 available?

10 MS. RUSSELL: We do have our webinar recording for  
11 the State Plan located on our webpage. So we did have, you  
12 know, the same invitation to the public for that.

13 If you are a water and wastewater system, and if  
14 you're referring to the webinars that we did last week that  
15 are more detailed on the Direct Payment Program, we do have  
16 a recording of that, as well. And if you email our LIHWAP  
17 inbox, we'd be happy to share that with you and get you  
18 connected with HORNE.

19 Kathy, do you know of any other resources we should  
20 be sharing?

21 MS. ANDRY: No, I think you covered it. Thank you.

22 MS. RUSSELL: Okay.

23 MS. HUNT: Thanks Becca.

24 MS. POPESCU: We have another question. Sorry,  
25 Daphne.

1 MS. HUNT: Oh, go ahead.

2 MS. POPESCU: Nanette Bailey, please go ahead and  
3 ask your question.

4 MS. BAILEY: Okay. Thank you. One more question  
5 related to our wastewater company, you know, having CUBS  
6 bill for us, and that had to do with the Direct Payment  
7 Program. Would the wastewater agency enter into that  
8 agreement or would our billing --

9 MS. ANDRY: Billing.

10 MS. BAILEY: -- agency enter into that?

11 MS. ANDRY: Your billing entity.

12 MS. BAILEY: Okay. Okay. Thank you.

13 MS. ANDRY: Uh-huh. You're welcome.

14 MS. POPESCU: And Vincent Karlson has a question.  
15 Please unmute yourself, please.

16 MR. KARLSON: Yeah. One quick question in regards  
17 to HORNE. Is that the same vendor that administers the  
18 direct payments for LIHEAP?

19 MS. ANDRY: No, it is not. This is a third-party  
20 disbursement partner that we've engaged with to assist with  
21 this new program. Because of the vast landscape of water  
22 and wastewater systems, we definitely had a need to have a  
23 partner under the LIHWAP Program.

24 MR. KARLSON: Okay.

25 MS. ANDRY: Um-hmm.

1 MR. KARLSON: And they will, after we submit our  
2 application for the LIHWAP Program, then we will receive  
3 information in regards to signing up for the HORNE; is that  
4 correct?

5 MS. ANDRY: Yes. Yes, definitely. Right now I  
6 know we're going to -- we're doing web info. And they will  
7 be reaching out to you by the end of the week to complete  
8 the enrollment process.

9 MR. KARLSON: Perfect. Thank you.

10 MS. ANDRY: You're welcome.

11 MS. RUSSELL: Daphne, can I jump in real quick and  
12 answer? I kind of got mixed up in responding to that.

13 MS. HUNT: With Stephanie's question?

14 MS. RUSSELL: So, yeah, with Stephanie's question.

15 So Stephanie, I know you had asked if you need to  
16 wait for the program to launch in order to be able to  
17 enroll. And I had assumed you were maybe a customer and so  
18 I sent you a link to get updates on waiting for the program  
19 launch. But now that you've clarified that you're asking  
20 for utilities, yes, you can enroll now. Yes, we are  
21 actually going to get all the water systems enrolled before  
22 the May launch so that customers can apply at that point.

23 So, yes, you're right that our deadline is April  
24 30th. And again, if you need help with getting any water  
25 utilities enrolled, please -- and have more questions about

1 that, do reach out to us. But we can get you connected  
2 with HORNE who is enrolling systems right now. So  
3 definitely, yes, you can do that before the program launch.  
4 And, yeah, the due date is before it's ready for customers.

5 MS. HUNT: Thanks Becca.

6 MS. HUNT: All right. Back to you, Daphne.

7 MS. HUNT: Tiffany says,

8 "I understand it can take three to six weeks for a  
9 utility to receive payment on behalf of the customer.  
10 Will the utility be notified that a customer was  
11 approved for help? That way we know to hold off on  
12 disconnection if a customer is receiving help."

13 MS. ANDRY: That's a good question and we haven't  
14 quite figured out how that process would work with each of  
15 the water or wastewater systems. But we certainly would  
16 like to discuss with water systems, if they have the  
17 ability to receive that information, if -- you know,  
18 receive the information knowing that a benefit payment will  
19 be coming, whether that's providing the customer  
20 information ahead of time before payment if that's  
21 beneficial, so you'll know which customers you should be  
22 expecting a payment for. And so we need to think through a  
23 little bit more on that, how that process would work.

24 MS. HUNT: Great. And then I see, Juanita, I think  
25 you have a specific question, so we'll get you an email

1 address where you can email us and we can get you an answer  
2 to that.

3           There's a question about what is the last date that  
4 customers can apply?

5           MS. ANDRY: It's in August in 2023. I know the  
6 program ends August 31st, 2023. And I believe we'll be  
7 taking our last applications like mid-August.

8           MS. HUNT: Great. Thank you.

9           Then Marie, if you're still on, you had a question  
10 that's Los Angeles County specific. Would you mind  
11 unmuting and asking your question? Okay.

12           MS. RUSSELL: Oh, she's not -- she's unable to  
13 unmute.

14           Monica, it's Marie Riveras -- Rivas.

15           MS. POPESCU: Okay, I'm unmuting.

16           MS. HUNT: I think it's Rivas.

17           MS. RUSSELL: And Marie, if you can raise your  
18 hand, that will help Monica find you, as well.

19           MS. HUNT: Yes. Yeah, if you could do that. There  
20 we go.

21           Hi Marie.

22           MS. RIVAS: Hi there. HI there. Sorry about that.  
23 So I had a quick question.

24           I wasn't sure if you had mentioned that in about a  
25 month's time, then a list for participating LSPs would be

1 provided so that like community-based organizations could  
2 know who to kind of reach out to and have community members  
3 kind of apply; is that correct?

4 MS. ANDRY: I was speaking to a list of the water  
5 and wastewater systems that have enrolled into our Direct  
6 Pay Program.

7 MS. RIVAS: I see. I see.

8 MS. ANDRY: Um-hmm.

9 MS. RIVAS: And do you know how, maybe in Los  
10 Angeles County, we'd be able to find out, you know, how to  
11 kind of access this service then for participants who may  
12 need this assistance?

13 MS. ANDRY: I see. You want -- you're wanting to  
14 know who the local service providers are --

15 MS. RIVAS: Yes.

16 MS. ANDRY: -- in Los Angeles?

17 MS. RIVAS: Yes.

18 MS. ANDRY: Okay. Certainly. You can, actually,  
19 currently identify who the LSPs are. And I know we have to  
20 set this up on our LIHWAP page. But on our LIHEAP page, if  
21 you go to Seeking Services for Energy Bills, you can find  
22 who the local service provider is for Los Angeles.

23 MS. RIVAS: Got. Thank you so much.

24 MS. ANDRY: There's, yeah, there's three providers  
25 in Los Angeles based on the zip code.

1 MS. RIVAS: I see. Thank you so much.

2 MS. ANDRY: You're welcome.

3 MS. RUSSELL: And just to add to that, Kathy?

4 Marie, I did link the LIHWAP service providers in  
5 the chat, so I'm sure it's buried in some of the chats but  
6 I did put that link in there. And I noted the names that  
7 they might be titled as for the energy assistance.

8 MS. HUNT: Great. We have just a couple more  
9 questions here. Patrick asks,

10 "As a utility provider, is there anything else we need  
11 to do after completing the interest form, other than  
12 waiting for HORNE to verify eligibility?"

13 MS. ANDRY: No. At this point, once you complete  
14 the web form, HORNE will be reaching out to you. And then  
15 you'll -- they'll activate the enrollment process for you  
16 to sign up and complete the direct pay agreement and get  
17 you all set up. Again, they're going to start reaching out  
18 by the end of the week. So no more at this point. Just  
19 I'll encourage all systems to complete the web info form.

20 MS. HUNT: Thanks Kathy.

21 MS. ANDRY: Um-hmm.

22 MS. HUNT: And then our last question, Michelle  
23 asks, she wants to confirm, "Are participants only eligible  
24 for a one-time payment, they enroll once and they are paid  
25 once?"



1 MS. ANDRY: So for customers, they can apply. And  
2 if they're determined eligible and their system is  
3 enrolled, they can just -- it's just a one-time benefit,  
4 yes.

5 MS. HUNT: Thank you. Nicole asks,  
6 "If a renter is approved for funding and utilities are  
7 included in their rent, is the utility provider supposed  
8 to apply the funds to the utility account that's in the  
9 landlord or property owner's name?"

10 MS. ANDRY: Yes. Um-hmm.

11 MS. HUNT: Elizabeth asks, "Can applicants who have  
12 received emergency rental assistance funds also apply for  
13 LIHWAP?"

14 MS. ANDRY: If they still have an amount due on the  
15 bill when they apply they are eligible to receive our  
16 benefits. But if their utilities have been paid off by the  
17 Emergency Rental Assistance Program then, no, they wouldn't  
18 be able to receive a LIHWAP payment.

19 MS. HUNT: Thanks Kathy. And I think that is it  
20 for the chat questions right now.

21 Julie asks, "If we can review the two new fields  
22 referenced in the reporting slide?"

23 MS. ANDRY: We'll have to go back to that slide.

24 MS. RUSSELL: Moving back. So that is the number  
25 of applicants seeking assistance for current bills. So,

1 basically, we want to track that as we're going to do our  
2 assessment for the need to pay current bills halfway  
3 through, and then the number of applicants seeking  
4 assistance in water -- if their water or wastewater system  
5 is not enrolled in the Direct Pay Program.

6 So, yes, this is -- just was not listed in the  
7 Draft Program Guidelines.

8 (Pause)

9 MS. HUNT: Yeah, still not seeing any more  
10 questions in the chat.

11 MS. RUSSELL: Okay. Well, if we don't have any  
12 more questions, it sounds like we will wrap up. Oh, here's  
13 one coming in. I can go ahead and read it since I -- oh, a  
14 few more coming in.

15 "Do residential applicants need to make application  
16 in person with the LSP?"

17 It will depend on the local service provider how  
18 they accept applications.

19 I don't know if anyone else wants to add to that?

20 MS. ANDRY: Yeah, I mean, it's -- again, there's  
21 different application processes based on the local service  
22 provider.

23 MS. RUSSELL: And then I do want to answer the --  
24 there's a few questions coming in on like how they -- you  
25 submit a comment. So we don't have an official form. We

1 are just asking you to submit comments through our LIHWAP  
2 email, which was listed in the program notification that  
3 went out with this webinar information. But we're also --  
4 right after this call, we'll send out the slide deck with  
5 all of our contact info to the group, as well. But, yeah,  
6 it's not like a form, it's just go ahead and send us  
7 questions or comments by email.

8           Just a moment. There's a couple more coming  
9 through, just reading through them. I'll go ahead and read  
10 this one. I'm not sure if I have an answer, so maybe,  
11 Kathy, you can help.

12           "Reading through the guidelines, it's not clear if  
13 undocumented mixed-status families can apply for relief.  
14 Federal guidance was released encouraging such relief.  
15 Are mixed-status families eligible for relief?

16           MS. ANDRY: So I know that for -- the applicant has  
17 to be a qualified citizen. But household members who are  
18 not, it doesn't exclude household members that have mixed  
19 status, it's just the applicant has to have the status. We  
20 can maybe provide more of an answer in the FAQ on that  
21 specific question.

22           MS. HUNT: So it looks like there's still maybe a  
23 question about what's due by 5:00. I'm not sure if that  
24 popped up since you spoke, Becca.

25           MS. RUSSELL: Yeah. It looks like the -- who the

1 question came from, I think, lost service connection. So,  
2 yeah, I'll just restate that, especially because the due  
3 date is today.

4           So we -- or if you would like to make a comment or  
5 ask a question about the Program Guidelines, that is what  
6 is due, so that's the -- any feedback you wanted to give us  
7 to consider for our Program Guidelines. And that is not a  
8 form. All you need to do is send us an email. And I'll  
9 put the email in the chat but it was in the Program Notice,  
10 it will be on the slide deck that we send out, but I will  
11 send that to -- I'll just put that in the chat, as well, so  
12 that's easy. But, yeah, just a simple email for any  
13 comments that you want to share with us is due by 5:00 p.m.  
14 today on the Program Guidelines.

15           Okay, I think that was all the questions, unless  
16 anyone from CSD is noticing any other questions that came  
17 in? I know we have a lot coming through but, all right.

18           Well, thank you everyone so much for joining us  
19 today and providing input to us. You can continue to  
20 submit questions to us, also, via that email. And, really,  
21 the 5:00 p.m. deadline is for us to incorporate comments  
22 into the Program Guidelines, so feel free, after today, if  
23 you just have questions, as well, to send those to us.

24           And it looks like one more came through. We have  
25 five more minutes. So I think maybe we'll just read off

1 from Laura and then officially wrap up this meeting, but  
2 the question is,

3 "We are a water district and we'll shutoff for  
4 nonpayment in accordance with SB 998. I would encourage  
5 customers who are applying with an LSP to enter into a  
6 payment agreement with their water provider. That will  
7 stop the shutoff process until the water provider  
8 receives the check."

9 So it sounds like that was just a comment for us,  
10 so we'll include that in the comment document. And, again,  
11 we'll have all of CSD's responses to the comments and  
12 questions that we received.

13 So thanks everyone for your input. And we'll  
14 provide that document to everyone who participated today.  
15 And you can stay tuned with the implementation on our  
16 website. So thanks everyone.

17 MS. ANDRY: Thank you. Thank you so much for  
18 attending. I appreciate it.

19 (Whereupon, the Public Hearing was adjourned at  
20 2:56 p.m.)

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## CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were transcribed by me, a certified transcriber and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.



MARTHA L. NELSON, CERT\*\*367