STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT

REVISED LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
(LIHWAP) GUIDELINES

PUBLIC MEETING

REMOTE ONLINE MEETING

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022
1:00 P.M.
APPEARANCES

STAFF

Kathy Andry, Deputy Director of Energy and Environmental Services, California Department of Community Services and Development
Kristen Hart, Assistant Deputy Director in the Energy and Environmental Services Division
Sarah Nowshiravan-Burruel, Program Analyst, Environmental Services Division
Daphne Hunt, California Department of Community Services and Development

PUBLIC QUESTION/COMMENT

Doreen Sanchez
Veronica, CAP San Bernardino
Tulia Montes, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Michael
Renee Berrigan, El Dorado Irrigation District, Placerville
Kierstyn Reed, Butte Glen 211
Bob Beamont (Phonetic)
Helen Chang, Spectrum
Ann Alva
Michael Nelson, Castro Valley Sanitary District
Debbie Mackey
Michael Perlstein
Jackie Gibson
Maria Perez
April Scott
Fabiloa Lopez, City of Greenfield
Alfonso Chavez
James Scott
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MS. ANDRY: Good afternoon and welcome to today's public meeting. My name is Kathy Andry and I'm the Deputy Director of Energy and Environmental Services for the California Department of Community Services and Development. Today's public meeting will be recorded and made available on our public website in the next couple of days. CSD is holding the public meeting because we are proposing to make a significant change to the low-income Household Water Assistance Program, or LIHWAP, that's how I'll refer to it throughout the presentation, to expand program eligibility to households who do not have a past due balance and are seeking financial assistance to help offset the cost of their water or wastewater bill.

This public meeting is intended to obtain input from the public specifically on the proposed modification to expand eligibility for CSD to consider prior to finalizing the revised program guidelines in implementing this program change. I just wanted to announce that we did extend the comment period to 5:00 PM on December 2nd. We did release a formal notice of this extension, it was released today. However, we very much welcome early comments. So yeah, we just wanted to afford additional time for receiving input.
I will be presenting the revised program guidelines today. I have a couple of my colleagues who are also on the call today to respond to questions and receive comments. We have Kristen Hart, Assistant Deputy Director in the Energy and Environmental Services Division, and Sarah Nowshiravan-Burrel, who's a Program Analyst in the Division who will be helping moderate our questions today.

You can go to the next slide.

Okay. Speaking of questions, we do encourage you to ask questions or provide comments throughout the presentation. There will be two options to do that. First, at any time, you can submit a question or comment in the chat box. You'll see the chat box at the bottom of the screen, and CSD staff will try to answer questions as we go along. We will also have time for questions and comments at the end of the presentation. And at that time, after I get through the presentation, we will open it up and Sarah will call on you. You can raise your hand, raise your hand feature, and Sarah will call on you to give you access to unmute yourself. And after we get through the live comments, Sarah will read off some of the questions or comments from the chat if time allows.

We will be compiling all questions and comments into a document that we will later share with everyone attending this call. This document will also include any
comments we receive via email on the revised program guidelines. We do respectfully ask that questions and comments focus on the proposed modification to the program to extend -- expand eligibility.

Okay, next slide.

Okay, agenda for today. I'm going to start off with an introduction to CSD for those of you who are just becoming familiar with the LIHWAP program. Want to provide a very brief overview of the LIHWAP program, and again, review the revised program guidelines where I'll solely focus on the proposed changes to expand eligibility. And then we'll open it up for questions and comments.

Okay. Next slide.

Okay. A little bit about CSD. Again, we're California Department of Community Services and Development, CSD, and we are under the California Department of Health and Human Services Agency. Our mission is to reduce poverty for Californians by helping low-income families achieve and maintain economic security, meet their home energy and water needs, and reduce their utility costs through energy efficiency upgrades and access to clean renewable energy.

We have several federal and state departments that we administer to meet this mission, and a majority of these programs are implemented through our partner network.
of over 40 local service providers, and I'll refer to them as LSPs throughout this presentation. LSPs are comprised of nonprofit or government organizations throughout the state and are generally responsible for the outreach to low-income households, local coordination with community partners. They conduct the intake and eligibility determination of households applying for services.

Next slide please.

Okay. So just touch briefly on the LIHWAP program. So, LIHWAP is a federally funded program overseen by the US Department of Health and Human Services, and CSD was designated as the administrator of the LIHWAP Program for California. Our state was awarded approximately 116 million, of which 75 percent of that, or 87 million, is for direct household benefits. CSD began LIHWAP services in June of this year. And the overall goal of the program is to ensure that low-income households have access to safe and clean drinking water and wastewater services.

We can get into the next slide, please.

In developing the LIHWAP program, some of the key guidelines or directives received from the US Department of Health and Human Services are, again, that funds are to be used to ensure that low-income households have access to safe clean drinking water, wastewater services. Funds are to be used to reduce arrearages in rates charged to
households, prioritizing customers with arrearages first with addressing rates. And when we say rates, that is defined as paying current bills where a customer does not have a past due balance last.

In addition to the federal guidance, state government code states that LIHWAP program funding shall be prioritized for services that reduce the arrearages of eligible households that have a past due balance. The government code is referenced in our program guidelines if you would like to refer to that for more details.

Additionally, benefits must be paid directly to the owners and operators of public water systems. In California, these systems are defined as community water systems, wastewater treatment provider, sewer system, corporations, and billing entities for these systems. The definitions of these various systems are found in the program guidelines, and I recommend you can refer back to them if you want more details. Throughout this presentation, I will refer to these systems as water or wastewater systems.

The program is to be modeled over program models, excuse me, such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, shall be used where practical. So just some background on this last bullet. CSD is the administrator for LIHEAP as well. We've been administering
LIHEAP for over 40 years through our network of local service providers, and we did build off existing policies and procedures for LIHEAP in the development of LIHWAP.

Okay, next slide.

Okay, so an update on implementation to date.

Again, consistent with the federal and state directives, we did establish the LIHWAP program as an arrearage response program. And we did model LIHWAP primarily after our LIHEAP program where we've leveraged existing processes, procedures, and systems that we use for our LIHEAP energy assistance program. In April of this year, we issued contracts to our network of LIHWAP local service providers. who are also the same local service providers who administer LIHEAP. And the release of this contract supported their efforts for ramping up and getting ready for direct service activities and doing some outreaching and eligibility verification and application enrollment.

You can go to the next slide.

In June, we launched the program June 3rd of this year, where LIHWAP payments began to be issued to eligible households. For low-income households to be able to participate, again as a requirement, their water or wastewater systems or their billing entity must enroll in our LIHWAP direct pay agreements. As of November, we estimate that we have established LIHWAP direct pay
agreements with water systems representing approximately 90
percent of residential drinking water connections in
California. And as of November, we've issued-- again,
approximately 8.8 million has been issued to 10,874
households.

You can go to the next slide.

So, you know, CSD indicated in the program
guidelines that we issued earlier this year that we would
evaluate the need to expand eligibility to customers who
did not have a past due balance, and we would do this
evaluation within six months after we implemented the
program. CSD can maintain its commitment to uphold the
federal and state directives that prioritize services to
customers with past due balances, while at the same time
expanding LIHWAP eligibility to assist households
struggling to pay current bills for households who are not
past due. Our understanding, this need also exists across
the state. You know, for example, according to a report
by the State Water Resources Board issued in 2020, the
average family is paying 45 percent more for water in 2015
than in 2007. Water and wastewater costs continue to rise,
and this change will address water affordability challenges
for low-income households.

We are informed by our local service providers
who have been implementing this at the local level, that
there is a strong demand for services from customers who are seeking assistance and are not past due on their water bill. There has been low grant expenditures over the first five months of service delivery and there is a need to maximize this one time LIHWAP expenditures through August, 2023, which is the end of the federal grant period. As I mentioned, we've expended 8.8 million in direct household benefits. We still have approximately 78.4 million to expend in less than nine months or the funds will revert back to the federal government. It is also our hope that by expanding eligibility to include current bills, outreach efforts will be less confusing to the customer and ultimately more effective.

Okay, next slide.

Okay, so these next two slides will provide an overview of the benefit amounts for the arrearage assistance program component and the new non arrearage assistance, the new proposed non arrearage assistance program component. So, the arrearage assistance program component will remain the same. The overall goal, again, of this program is to provide financial relief to households to restore services or prevent disconnections. And by arrearage, we mean money owed to a water or wastewater system from non-payment of residential account, and the account has a past due balance. Or, it's money
owed to a landlord from non-payment of rent that is past
due where the residential water or wastewater costs are
included in rent.

So, here's some details. The customer can
receive up to $2,000. This is a one-time benefit provided
on a first come first serve basis. This amount can either
be applied to drinking water or wastewater, including
stormwater service charges. The customer will have to
select the bill they want the benefit to be applied to. If
water or wastewater costs are bundled on a bill, then the
benefit can cover the cost of both services including
stormwater charges. The benefit cannot cover non-water
charges such as garbage or recycling. The benefit amount
is intended to cover the customer's past due balance,
current charges, and fees associated with the water and
wastewater costs including late fees, reconnection fees,
and to cover taxes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 1: There's now 206
participants.

MS. ANDRY: Yeah, could everyone please mute
themselves? Kind of hearing some conversations. Thank
you. And let's see the next slide please.

Okay. The goal of the non-arrearage assistance
program component is to provide financial relief to
households who are not past due and, you know, are
struggling to pay their bill. The program is similar to CSD’s LIHEAP Home Energy Assistance program that provides onetime financial assistance to customers who are not behind on their energy bill. And by non-arrearage we mean a money owed to a water or wastewater system from a residential account that does not have a past due balance, or money owed to a landlord for rent that is not past due where residential water wastewater costs are included in rent.

Okay. So, the benefit amount for the non-arrearage program is -- ranges from 200 to up to 1,030. It's a one-time payment, it's first come first serve. Customers with an arrearages will be prioritized over customers without an arrearage. This will be particularly important as funding levels decrease.

The benefit amount is a set amount per household, and I will go into an example of the benefit formula and walk you through that. And, similar to the arrearage program, it can be applied to drinking water or wastewater costs. A customer will select the bill to apply it to. Same as arrearage; if a water or wastewater cost are bundled in one bill, then the benefit can cover the cost of both services including stormwater. Again, the benefits cannot cover non-water charges such as garbage or recycling.
The benefit amount, again, is current charges. And it can cover future charges for water or wastewater including stormwater if a credit remains. So, for example, if a customer comes in and their current bill is $100 and they're eligible for 200, then they will receive or be approved for a $200 benefit that can cover their current charges and remain as a credit on the bill to cover future water or wastewater charges. It also can cover the fees and taxes.

Okay, next slide.

Okay, so this gets into the benefit formula, the non-arrearage benefit formula. In accordance with the federal requirements, the benefits are structured to provide the highest amount of assistance to households with the lowest income and highest water cost or need, taking into consideration household size. This is a requirement, again, of the federal government that we establish a benefit amount. And so, we definitely leveraged the LIHEAP program in the development of this benefit formula for LIHWAP.

And the benefit calculation formula includes three elements. We've used the published 2021 Housing and Urban Development, or HUD, water and sewer allowances for each county. And we increased the allowances by 20 percent to account for annual rate increases since 2021. CSD did
deem the HUD data to be the best available data that included allowances for both water and wastewater. The second element is, you know, there's -- we've established a target number of months of assistance based on four household income categories, and we'll refer to them as poverty groups, and you'll see that as I walk through the formula. And lastly, we've established a minimum benefit restriction of no less than 200 within any county.

Okay. Now the next slides, 12 through 16, I'm going to walk you through an example. Okay, so this example we're taking factor one, which is the HUD Water and Wastewater Allowance. And we're going to times that by the poverty group coefficient, and that will basically get us to the benefit amount by county for a household size of one. And then the last step is that we'll add additional dollar amount per household member.

So, we'll go to the next slide.

So, I'm going to use Yuba County as an example. And I know in the program guidelines we did provide an example of the benefit levels for a household size of one. So, for Yuba County, the data point, again, is the HUD utility allowance. We selected the utility allowance for a house with three bedrooms based on census data that indicates a prevalence of three-bedrooms in California. So, in this example the -- for three-bedroom, water
allowance is $53, for sewer, it's 52, for a total of 105. And then we increased that by 20 percent, again, to account for annual rate increases since 2021. And for Yuba County, the allowance in increased to 126.

You can go to the next slide.

So, the next factor is what we term as a poverty group coefficient. And this is similar to our LIHEAP formula. We have the same factor where we have four poverty groups. And you'll see the poverty groups are -- poverty group one, it's a hundred percent federal poverty level and so on, 125 for poverty group two, 150 for poverty group three. And then for poverty group four, it's a maximum of 60 percent state median income. And I just want to be really clear that these percentages are just to establish the benefit amount. It's not for household eligibility. To be eligible for the program, we use a 60 percent state median income guidelines for the program. This is just being used to determine the benefit amount.

Okay. So for -- or to establish -- can you go back? I'm not -- yeah, thank you. So, what this poverty group coefficient represents, is that it's the estimated number of months of water and wastewater assistance that we are establishing for each poverty group. So obviously poverty group one is the lowest income, so we want to ensure that they're getting the highest benefit. And so,
we are establishing an estimate of three months of assistance. Poverty group two, you'll see, is 2.5, three 2.2, and poverty group four is 1.9.

Okay, we're going to go to the next slide.

So, the formula is, we take the hundred and 26 times the three. And so, for a household size of one, it'll be $378 that they will receive, be approved for. Poverty group 2, 315, poverty group three is 277, and poverty group four is 239.

And go to the next slide.

The last step in the formula is because we have to take into consideration household size and we know that more family members in the home, the more usage they will have for water. So, we established an additional $11 after starting with household size two, it's the add-on. And we -- the source of that data, we did look at the 2019 State Water Board Needs Assessment and took a look at the average water cost data in there, and then we divided it by four. So, we came up with an additional $11 per household member. So, if you go back to the poverty group one, I think it was -- can you go back to the last slide? I think it was, yeah. So, 378 you'd add in another,

MS. SANCHEZ: Excuse me, excuse me. Ma’am? Who is --why are you referring to poverty? Who are that? What does that mean? What does that mean?
MS. ANDRY: Ok -

MS. SANCHEZ:: Poverty.

MS. ANDRY: Doreen, I'm almost done. If I could just finish and --

MS. SANCHEZ: I got a -- yeah, but I keep - lis---

... hearing that word and it's-- I’m getting more and more angry, and I just don't understand how this educated force of individuals in a beautiful state of California cannot come up with another term for human beings.

MS. ANDRY: Okay, I respect that. I definitely respect that.

MS. SANCHEZ:: Thank you.

MS. ANDRY: Thank you, Doreen for calling that out. Definitely noted. Appreciate that. So, the next -- so we added on, so for 378 you would add on another $11 to that. So, 389 for example, for household size two. And then you can go to the next slide.

And so, then you would add on another $22. Another for household size three, household size four is $32, household size five is an extra 44, household size six is an extra $55. So, this is essentially our benefit formula that we're using to establish benefits to assist customers with needs to help take care of their bill when they're not behind or not past due.

And so, we can go to the next slide.
And so, what we're looking at for implementation is June 3rd. Again, we launched the program, we released the revised program guidelines to expand eligibility to obtain public input, which is our meeting today. And again, we have until December 2nd to get written comments. And then December, our goal is to finalize the revised program guidelines and to begin issuing benefits. Our goal is to strive for January to start issuing benefits to eligible customers. And again, just a reminder but it may be February depending on how, you know, the time it takes to finalize the guidelines, et cetera. And then again, a reminder, the program ends August 31st, 2023.

Next slide.

So, I know we have a well-attended webinar today and I really appreciate all of you being here today and welcome your input. Just wanted to provide some contact information here. We have a LIHWAP inbox. That information is there, and we also provided links to our public facing pages for the customer and to provide more information on the LIHWAP program. Comments are due by 5:00 p.m. December 2nd, 2022.

Now I'm going to hand it over to Sarah. If you do have any verbal comments you would like to make, we would like to prioritize those comments first. I you could please raise your hand. The raised hand feature is in the
reaction button, right? I believe -- yes. I believe so.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Correct.

MS. HUNT: And Kathy, can I jump in for one moment? Thank you. Hi everyone. I'm Daphne Hunt, also with CSD. And just wanted to encourage folks to please prioritize their questions and comments regarding the change being discussed today, which is the expansion of LIHWAP eligibility to include current bills. I see there are a number of other questions, and we certainly want to help get to those. But I think given that the focus of this meeting today is about this program change to cover current bills, I'd ask that folks please prioritize those questions first. And then with any remaining time we can address additional questions. Thank you.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay, I see Darrell Johnson has his hand up.

MS. ANDRY: Is Darrell unmuted?

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: I just asked him to unmute so he should be able to right now.

MS. ANDRY: Darrell, I think you can unmute yourself. There you go.


VERONICA: Hi, this is actually Veronica, but I'm registered under Darrell.
MS. ANDRY: Okay.

VERONICA: --CAP San Bernardino. I have a question. Will the water companies be advised of the new changes with now having the access to, you know, not only past due accounts but regular accounts?

MS. ANDRY: Yes, we intend to hold some information office hours with the utilities to answer their questions. We definitely made sure to inform the utilities enrolled of this program change and that they received the program Notice for today's public meeting. We do intend to have some sessions with them separately.

VERONICA: Okay, great. And then I have one more question. We had a scenario, so I want to make sure that I have the right information moving forward. We had a client who was eligible for the funding, and unfortunately had to close the account about 45 days after they were already approved. So, the question from the water company was, are we allowed to refund the remaining of the benefit to the client or should that money go back to CSD?

MS. ANDRY: I think I would need to have more specific details on that particular program question, because I don't know all the scenarios. If that's specific to -- if the account is closed, they can, you know, take care of whatever past due balance is owed at the time and then they return any remaining balance to CSD. I don't
VERONICA: Okay. Yes. So, if a partial payment was applied and they wanted to know the remaining. So, then it would be correct to tell them to send it back to the state. Correct?

MS. ANDRY: Yeah, that's correct. But if they have a direct question, they can then definitely reach out to CSD or Horn, our third-party disbursement partner to get that clarification.

VERONICA: Okay. Thank you

MS. HUNT: To your question. I did put the LIHWAP email address in the chat, and so any questions that you have that are specific about situations that are occurring with LIHWAP, you might want to just send to that email box, and we can address that with you directly.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay. The next individual with their hand up is Tulia Montes.

MS. MONTES: Hi there, this is Tulia Montes, thank you, from Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Just wanted to say thank you for the proposed change. Many of our customers who are in most need are-- actually pay their bill on time, so we appreciate this upcoming change.

Just had a quick question because obviously the goal is to try to get as many customers to apply who are eligible, but in regards to the processing of those
applications by the LSPs, what information is being given
to them? Because we're getting conflicting information
that the LIHEAP is being given priority on their end and
that's why there's a delay with the LIHWAP applications.

MS. ANDRY: I don't know if I can -- I can't
speak for the local service provider, but you know
definitely one of the things that we encourage with our
providers, and definitely provides efficiency, is that they
are leveraging the LIHEAP program to do dual enrollments.
So, if a customer has a need with their energy bill, then
they try to also enroll the customer for the LIHEAP
program. So, I don't -- I can’t speak for the local
service providers, but we definitely are encouraging that
we are serving customers as much as possible, you know,
given the fact that this program will be ending in August.

MS. MONTES: Okay, thank you. Just we're not
what we're hearing from our LSPs. But thank you for that.

MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: All right. Is there
any other questions? We don't have anybody with their hand
up, remem-- oh, we do. All right. There's one. Michael,
it’s your time.

MICHAEL: Thank you. I'm wondering if you can
speak a little more about the prioritization of arrearage
applicants versus non-arrearage. Given that it sounds like
applications will still be processed on a first come first serve basis, how would you prioritize within that?

MS. ANDRY: Thank you. Okay, so thank you for your question. So, certainly right now we have ample funding in most areas. So, we anticipate it will still continue to be first come, first served. However, obviously the customers coming in with past due or their services are not, you know, are disconnected already, they'll prioritize the application and review process at the local level. But we still would be issuing funding to both those who are past due and not past due. Where prioritization will become probably more critical is when funding does decrease. And then, really trying to ensure that, you know, funding is going towards those who are past due or need-- or services that are disconnected.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay, the next person with their hand up is Christiata.

MS. ANDRY: Christiata, if you can unmute yourself?

MS. BERRIGAN: Hi there, can you hear me?

MS. ANDRY: Yes.

MS. BERRIGAN: Okay. So actually, my name is Renee Berrigan. I'm with El Dorado Irrigation District in Placerville. Thank you so much for the presentation so far today. We are looking forward to being able to assist
people with non-arrearages, like you said. or somebody else had said. A lot of our low-income people will figure out a way to pay the bills. So, it's great that we're able to expand this and help people who are not past due.

My main question on the non-arrearage payment is, you know, we're going to be potentially getting a payment that causes a credit on the account, and that credit could stay there for a number of months just depending on the amount and the bills that come out. My main concern is if a tenant were to move out, or the property sells and we close the account, and then we are left with a credit which could be some months after we've received the payment. My concern is what we're supposed to do with that credit. So that's just a big part of this non-arrearage one. Creating a credit on the account is eventually if we need to give that credit back. Where would that go? Would be my concern.

MS. ANDRY: Yes, definitely. And the direct payment agreement that you have indicates to follow your normal processes when accounts are closed later. So, you can refer back to that agreement. Definitely when we have our focus sessions with the utilities, we can, you know, address those concerns.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay. The next individual with their hand up is Kierstyn Reed.
MS. REED: Hi, thank you. Kierstyn Reed with Butte Glen 211. I just had a question about -- you mentioned that the LIHWAP can cover money due to landlords where the costs are included in the rent. Is that currently a feature of LIHWAP, or is that going to be for just non-arrearage?

MS. ANDRY: No, that's currently a feature that is currently applicants or households with utilities included in rent are currently can apply for the program. They just have to provide additional documentation and they have to, you know, additional documentation to apply for the program.

MS. REED: Okay. And that's for LIHWAP and LIHEAP

MS. ANDRY: For the water assistance program, for the arrearage program, which is currently in place. And it'll be for the non-arrearage program that we're proposing.

MS. REED: Great, thank you.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURUEL: Alright, the next individual is Bob Beamont (Phonetic).

MR. BEAMONT: Hi, can you hear me?

MS. ANDRY: Yes.

MR. BEAMONT: Yeah. I'm just a customer here. So, am I the only one? I get the LIHEAP benefits. We get
those. Certainly, the water is really appreciated. I know how to do the LIHEAP application. Is this the same? Is this a different? I guess my question is when can we apply? And how do I go about doing it? I'm familiar with the LIHEAP system but not so much here.

MS. ANDRY: Sure. So, you would contact the local service provider, which -- do you mind if I ask what county you’re in?


MS. ANDRY: So, the local service provider in your area would be in obviously Los Angeles. You can go to our website. We have a customer facing website link here, you'll see here. And you can locate your provider. And in Los Angeles it would be by zip code, and then you would contact them and you would submit an application for services similar to how you apply for LIHEAP energy assistance.

MR. BEAMONT: There's something out in this area that's called oh, I can't think of it, that they kind of handle it for Long Beach.

MS. MONTES: Is it Long Beach CAP, LBCAP?

MR. BEAMONT: Yeah.

MS. MONTES: Okay. Yeah, they would be the same individual, the same organization you would go to.
MR. BEAMONT: Okay, perfect. Hey, appreciate it guys. Thanks so much.

MS. MONTES: You're welcome.

MS. ANDERSON: Thanks, Tulia.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay, next question is from Helen Chang

MS. CHANG: --community services, the LSP for Alameda County. My question is can you--

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Hi Helen, could you turn up your volume a little volume a little bit? It's a little hard to hear your question.

MS. CHANG: How's this? Is this any better? Is this any better?

MS. ANDRY: It's a little better, yes.

MS. CHANG: Okay. Sorry about that. I'd like to have a little bit more detail about the timing of the rollout of the expanded program. At what point can local service providers start accepting applications for current bill benefits? And I know this is still, again, this is not finalized yet. But I'd like to know at what point can we start accepting applications for current bill payment?

MS. ANDRY: So, I know that may vary locally. But I know we, again, to your point, we are in a program change and it's going to require us to finalize the program guidelines and get our systems ready. And we are targeting
trying to move aggressively to make this change by January. And when I say by January, where we'll be able to issue benefits to customers who are eligible with their -- to issue benefits to pay current bills. I don't have a definitive answer for you. But January will be here pretty quick. I would, you know, perhaps contact your local service provider and to find out when they may be accepting applications.

MS. CHENG: I am the local service provider.

MS. ANDRY: Oh, Helen.

MS. CHENG: Yes, with Spectrum.

MS. ANDRY: Okay, well I thought you were a customer, Helen, so my apologies. And so that would be at your discretion, as to when you would want to start accepting applications.

MS. CHANG: Would it be possible to start accepting applications now for current bill pay, you know, on the assumption that the program will be expanded?

MS. ANDRY: Well, CSD certainly will support that. I think we need to take that back to see if we need to offer any flexibilities. You know, definitely look at flexibilities for LSPs to start accepting those applications. We do support LSPs wanting to obtain those applications now.

MS. CHANG: Excellent. Thank you so much.
MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Alright. The next individual with their hand up is Ann Alva.

MS. ALVA: Hi, can you hear me?

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Yes.

MS. ALVA: Okay. Hi, I'm with the City of Santa Fe Springs Water Department and I have just a couple of questions. I was thinking that when we were talking about non-arrearage it was about having an amount due, but that it was not yet past due. And someone else mentioned about having no amount due at that moment still requesting assistance. Is that what this change is? They don't have to have an amount due at all.

MS. ANDRY: Well, it’s money owed for – some background noise I’m getting.

MS. ALVA: I apologize. Ok, I can mute it while you answer.

MS. ANDRY: Okay.

MS. ALVA: But--

MS. ANDRY: So, it's an amount owed for their-- it's an amount that they owe on their bill. So, they're just, they're not past due and they could be eligible for a benefit if they--

MS. ALVA: And that would be, that benefit could possibly be more than they owe on the current bill?
MS. ANDRY: Yes, exactly.

MS. ALVA: Okay, so that's how a credit comes into play.

MS. ANDRY: Yes.

MS. ALVA: Okay. And then you guys mentioned about funds being available in January, maybe February, for benefit payments? But I understood that -- is that just for the new facet to this? Or is that just in general? Because I thought once the customer gets approved that we would get the funds a couple of weeks after that?

MS. ANDRY: Yes. So let me just really clarify. Funding is available now. It's just that it's limited to customers with a past due balance. We're just wanting to expand customer access to this program to customers who don't have a past due, but struggling. And so that change will -- we're looking at January, no later than February. So once that change is made, now customers who are current can submit an application and if they meet all the other eligibility requirements can receive a benefit.

MS. ALVA: Oh, okay. So then when it comes to being past due, is it just a matter of if they're current and then by next month they're going to be past due? The current bill will past due, but they have all this other past due amount that still have not been paid. So as soon as they become in the delinquent status, that's when they
can apply as a past due? And/or someone that's in arrearage? And then they can get a higher benefit than those that apply when they're not past due?

MS. ANDRY: So just to make sure I'm tracking -- so if they're past due they can apply now and we will pay up to the amount of the past due plus current charges, late fees, et cetera. So that's currently in place.

So, if someone comes in and their current, the benefit structure is different. And so, it's not based on what their current charges are, it's a fixed amount that we've established by-- for each county, which is a requirement of the program. And so, they can come in and if they, you know, whatever income level and household size they fall into, they would get that benefit amount.

MS. ALVA: And so that would -- and you mentioned the 200 to 1,030, that was the range for a non-delinquent account?

MS. ANDRY: It's a range and so I don't know if you had an opportunity to look at the payment tables that's linked into the program guidelines. So, there's benefit amounts established for each county. So that doesn't mean that you can go up to 1,030. That just means from all the counties in the state, the range can be from $200 to 1,030.

MS. ALVA: Okay, so--

MS. ANDRY: So, for example, Sacramento County
has its own payment table and the range for Sacramento County could be 200 to 500. And again, it's based on the formula that we just walked through for the, you know, the high utility costs allowance that we have for each county is different.

MS. ALVA: Okay. So, another question. Thank you. Another question real quick, is when it comes to closing accounts, a customer is in the process, someone mentioned that, and then they have to close the account, they're in the process of applying. Or even if they're not in the process of applying, someone owed a large amount, they had to move out, and now there's this bill that they have. Can they apply for assistance with a newly closed account?

MS. ANDRY: So, if they apply for assistance, the account would be active at that time. And so, we would issue a benefit. And by the time the benefit hits the account, the account is closed, you can use whatever money is needed to resolve the past due account and then you have to return the credit.

MS. ALVA: If the account closes before they apply, they're not allowed to apply on a closed account. Is that correct?

MS. ANDRY: Correct.

MS. ALVA: And one last question. I understand
that this is a forum for the changes and this new situation. Is there-- where is the best place to get a contact other than the local provider that I can get some questions answered because I'm having trouble?

MS. ANDRY: Yes, if you can reach out to us. And I'm going to look into your question a little bit more and I know we'll answer that question through the Q&A. But if you have direct questions like these, please send them to the LIHWAP inbox. You see the contact there? LIHWAP@csd.ca.gov. We monitor the inbox daily.

MS. ALVA: The one that's says slash water bill?

MS. HUNT: Yes.

MS. ALVA: Or not the water bill?

MS. HUNT: That's the website.

MS. ANDRY: That's the website.

MS. HUNT: I'll put the LIHWAP inbox in the chat again.

MS. ALVA: Okay, I appreciate that because I'm just really concerned that I've not been able get any payments whatsoever sent to us and -- I need to get the payments in and there's nothing that's been in so far and so I'm having trouble with that. Thank you.

MS. ANDRY: Please reach out to us.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay. The next individual with their hand up is Michael Nelson.
MR. NELSON: Yeah. Hi. Thanks everybody, Kathy. for the presentation today and for the program. We've been participating in it. I'm with the Castro Valley Sanitary District since April. I'm just -- and I see Helen is the Alameda LSP. So, it's good to see her on here.

I'm just -- I'm looking for a little bit of clarity cause I'm hearing two different things. One, I'm hearing that our local LSP can begin to accept applications for this, kind of, expanded customer base now. But then you're saying the program won't roll out to the expanded base till January or February. So, I'm just, I'm a little confused. I'm hearing two different things. One, like our customers can start applying now but then they should wait till February when the change is made. So, I'm just looking for a little bit of clarity on when we can notify our customers that this change has been made. Thank you.

MS. ANDRY: No, thank you Michael. I know that can be a little confusing. And really, it's at the discretion of each of our local service providers as to when they begin accepting these applications. So you know, it all really hinges -- their decision hinges on when we finalize our program guidelines and that we get everything implemented into our system. We have to make some system changes to modify the program.

We are targeting to have everything finalized in
January. I know that there's going to be a need to develop some outreach materials to customers so that they're aware that they can start applying. So, timing of doing that outreach can be different at the local level. I know we're going to be hosting some sessions with the utilities and we can get into more conversations about, you know, what's good timing for the utilities to notify customers. I think we need to be coordinated because again, it is contingent on when the local service providers will begin as well.

MR. NELSON: Thank you.

MS. ANDRY: You're welcome.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay, there's no questions at this time or hands up.

MS. ANDRY: We still have a whole hour so I guess we can go to the chat. Or did you guys answer everything in the chat?

MS. HUNT: We did not. There's a lot of questions.

MS. ANDRY: Okay. Well, I'm going to -- so how do you want to manage the chat questions?

MS. HUNT: We can just start at the top, see the ones that we didn't get a chance to--

MS. ANDRY: To answer.

MS. HUNT: -- to answer. Answered that, customers and close counts. We already discussed the
closed accounts situation, so that's been answered. We answered the public water system. This question was, “Does LIHWAP and/or LIHEAP application approval affect those that utilize ACP already?” And ACP was defined as Affordable Connectivity Program.

Maria, I'm not sure if you want to unmute and ask your question.

MS. PEREZ: Yeah, hi. Thank you. This was for me as a customer who applied for LIHEAP over the summer. And I had received the Affordable Connectivity Program for my cell phone service. However, because of the LSP that helped me I was now signed up with them, which took away the ACP through my cell phone, which made my, you know, the bill to go higher. And I went through a lot of going back and forth through the ACP and Metro PCS, which is the cell phone provider, to find out what's going on.

But they said it's me, it's my address. We thought it was someone who stole my identity. You know, we would just try to figure it out. And now for the past few months I have been paying the full cellphone amount, not getting the ACP credit any longer. And I'm still signed up as through the LSP. And so, I thought perhaps that is something that was affected. Does that make any sense?

MS. HUNT: Yeah, that shouldn't impact that. But if you can send us an email through the LIHWAP inbox, we
can try to help you offline and connect you with the LSP, kind of figure out what happened there. But that doesn't have anything to do with the LIHWAP or the LIHEAP program in general.


MS. HUNT: Absolutely. Let's see what messages.

MS. PEREZ: I un-muted myself again. I did have a second question and that's when you guys had said please keep it specific to the revision that are being changed.

MS. HUNT: Yes, please.

MS. PEREZ: But I was wondering if it would be okay to just ask it anyhow. This is for my question. It is professionally for families who don't have a social security number, if that's something that you guys were changing. And that was one of the main reasons for me wanting to attend this to see if that was a change for those families that were not eligible before because of that.

MS. ANDRY: We're not modifying that program requirement.

MS. PEREZ: Okay. Okay. ‘Cuz on the application it does ask for a social, and they were not being accepted through the LSP without a number being provided. But if a customer who doesn't have one, they're not able to get the
LIHWAP or the LIHEAP benefit. So that's what -- something I was hoping for but thank you for answering my question.

MS. ANDRY: Okay, thank you Maria

MS. HUNT: I think, Kathy, you already addressed this question on what it means for arrearage applicants to be prioritized over non arrearage, if it's first come first serve. There's a question from Debbie Mackey that you just asked. “If you could explain in more detail how the rent aspect you covered?” I'm not sure what that question is.

MS. ANDRY: So yeah, for customers with utilities included in rent they can certainly apply. They just have to provide additional documentation, and they have to have a landlord agreement where the landlord confirms the amount that's past due as part of the rent, et cetera. So those details of those requirements are in the program guidelines.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay Kathy, we got one question directly to the Energy Division through chat. The question was, “Will we receive an updated outreach kit to let our customers know of this change?”

And the second question is, “Also, is there a way to see the number of our customers who have participated in the program so far locally?” And this was from Michael Nelson.

MS. ANDRY: Okay. Yes. We actually have a
updated social media toolkit on deck that we'll be releasing soon as part of this program change. And I think the next question is, you're wanting to know the number of customers that have been served by your utility? If that's your question, I'm not sure if it is or not, but if you could send us that inquiry through the LIHWAP inbox so we can look to see what data we have.

UNDENTIFIED SPEAKER FEMALE: Kathy, this is just a quick question. That new deck will be in both English and Spanish as well?

MS. ANDRY: I believe our last -- yes, I think we did that both in English and Spanish the last time. So yes, we will make that available in Spanish.

UNDENTIFIED SPEAKER FEMALE: Thank you.

MS. HUNT: There is a question. “Why is the additional household member allowance of $11 applied after the multiplier? Wouldn't it make more sense to calculate the full household benefit and then multiply?”

MS. ANDRY: Not sure if I'm tracking. But the full household benefit, we determine the base benefit, again, by the allowance times of poverty coefficient, which is, you know, either three months, two and a half months. And then we're adding on additional household amount per household member after two. So that's how we've structured it. I don't know if I don't understand what the
recommendation is. If they want to speak up?

MS. HUNT: Michael Perlstein, that was your question. Kind of seems like that is how it was done. It was calculated and then it was add-- then we are just adding an $11 per person.

The next question is, Jackie Gibson asked how they apply with Rowland Water). I'm not sure, do you work for Rowland Water or are you currently a customer with Rowland Water? I'm not sure. If you're a customer, then you would apply through your local service provider. If you work with Rowland Water, then you would have to sign up through our third-party funds disbursement partner, Horn. And you could send us an email to the LIHWAP inbox and we can help you with that sign up.

Let's see. Just looking to see which ones haven't been answered.

Michael Perlstein again says, “This question isn't about a specific eligibility change, but about the challenge of using up 78 million before August. It seems clear that the primary challenge causing low program utilization is not a lack of customers as there are still so many outstanding accounts, but a difficult application and burdensome level of documentation required. Has there been any conversation about how to improve that process to make it easier for customers to access assistance without
making enrollment easier? It seems the increasing -- that increasing the number of eligible customers will only have a limited impact towards increasing program utilization.”

We're really hopeful that through the dual application of LIHEAP and LIHWAP that customers will be able to sign up and get both benefits, especially once the current bills start getting paid. So, hopefully that will lessen that burden on customers applying for these services.

Let's see, “The website's not working. Did not open for me this morning. I'm not sure which website was it? CSD’s website?” Oswald Tello. I have the website open now, so I'm not sure if there was just an issue this morning or if you're talking about another website.

The next question, “Will there be a link to the meeting's recording? If so, where will it be located?” Yes, we will be linking to the recording, doing a link to this meeting's recording. Kathy, do you know where that is posted? Does that go to our public site?

MS. ANDRY: Public site.

MS. HUNT: Public site. So, it will be on the public site. Not a hundred percent sure yet where exactly, but it should be on the public site in the next few days.

“When and where are we going to be able to look at the calculation by household benefit table by county?”
Kathy, was that sent out with the public announcement?

MS. ANDRY: Yeah. There's a footnote in the revised program guidelines, and you'll see a link to the payment tables. Now, that payment table, it shows the payment amount for each group for-- you'll have to take a look. It's for household size one. You'll see that by county.

MS. HUNT: Question, “How often is the LSP allocation calculated? I ask because our city will be implementing a 10.75 percent increase that will become effective in January.” The allocations are out to the LSPs and that's where they're at right now.

MS. ANDRY: Yeah, we have issued-- all of the funds for this federal program have been allocated.

MS. HUNT: Question, “Will we prioritize shutoffs over past due bills like LIHEAP? Or is it first come first serve when it comes to past due bills?”

MS. ANDRY: Well prioritization right now -- I know a lot of providers still have ample funding, so it's definitely first come first serve for both programs. However, if you do have customers coming in that have -- you know, are disconnected or are almost going to be disconnected that those applications are processed first over the non-arrearage applications, or those customers who are not past due.
MS. HUNT: “What is the status of CSD’s pursuit of getting third party billing entities enrolled? We have a very large customer base who are renters with utilities included in rent. But in reality, they pay for those utilities to a third-party billing entity such as Conservice. Our hands are tied in serving these clients because the third-party billing entities are not enrolled.”

Absolutely. Linda, we have been doing all that we can to enroll as many third-party billing entities as possible. They're absolutely—those that are eligible and those that are interested in enrolling. Unfortunately, if they are not interested in enrolling those customers unfortunately would not be able to be served. I think you're finding that in your service territory, unfortunately, with some of the systems that are in there that don't appear to be interested in participating.

Kathy, anything else on that?

MS. ANDRY: No, we are -- we're doing all that we can to try to outreach to those types of services to get them enrolled. We do acknowledge that that is a challenge for those who do receive services through these billing entities and cannot access the LIHWAP program to provide assistance.

MS. HUNT: Question, “Can you explain what you mean by dual application for LIHWAP and LIHEAP?” I just
meant more of a dual enrollment. So as customers come in
and apply for LIHEAP or LIHWAP, the same information is
asked for and requested for both. So, the same information
can be used to apply for both of the programs if they can
apply for them at the same time.

Let's see. “Before the LIHWAP application was
not available in Spanish, is it now?” I believe that all--
they've been translated into several languages. I can
double check that while we're going through the rest of
these questions. But yeah, they should be available in
Spanish and some other languages.

Alfonso Chavez asked a question regarding multi-
family water bill, “Please advise, are we able to provide
service?” Again that-- I apologize, I probably just
responded to Alfonso directly, but if the question was
about -- I'm trying to get back to it. “What if multiple
families live at a property with a single water account?
For example, a three-unit property with three different
tenants, but the account is only in the owner's name. The
owner charges the tenants for water, then can each family
apply for the arrearage or non-arrearage program?”

My response was if the utilities are included in
rent and they're charged that way, then absolutely they
would just need to fill out the paperwork. The landlord
would fill out some paperwork to provide information so
that the cust-- for the applicants to apply for benefits as utilities included in rent.

    MS. ANDRY: And just to clarify, add on to that, the utility still needs to be enrolled in the LIHWAP directly--

    MS. HUNT: Yeah.

    MS. ANDRY: --as well. So that's a requirement of the program for the customer to receive benefits.

    MS. HUNT: There's a question, “Is there a way for us to access a list of participating third party billing entities?” Looks like this is Kiersten Reed. Are you LSP?

    MS. ANDRY: Well, we do have--go ahead.

    MS. HUNT: No, no, no, go ahead.

    MS. ANDRY: We do have posted on our public page and customer facing page, a list of the water systems who are enrolled in LIHWAP direct pay. So, you can find out if they're not listed on there, then they're not participating. So that includes all of the water systems, wastewater systems, and any billing entities.

    MS. REED: Great, thank you. Yeah, I do. I'm with 211, so we get callers looking for--

    MS. ANDRY: Gotcha.

    MS. REED: --billing and rental assistance. So, I just wanted to make sure that we have the right
information to let them know if their third-party billing
entity is cooperating or not.

MS. HUNT: Okay.

MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

MS. HUNT: Let's see. “When I fill out an
application, where do I get water, waste and sewer store
water figure?”

MS. ANDRY: When you apply for services, you're
required to-- if you're a customer, the process would be
that you would have to provide a copy of your bill. So,
the-- whatever bill you wanted paid, and then the local
service provider will determine the amount that is owed in
looking at all of those costs on your bill. I'm not sure
if you're a customer, Jackie.

MS. HUNT: There is a question from an LSP asking
if they can get additional funds once they spend out. As
Kathy stated earlier, at this point everything is allocated
out. The local service provider funding is allocated out.

MS. ANDRY: We can reach out to you, to LSPs that
I know were trying to ensure there's continued funding
until we are able to implement our state funding program,
which will be next year. And we will be working with LSPs
to see how much additional funding they may need.

I'm not seeing anything else coming through, but
we'll hang out for a little bit.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: I apologize. I'm looking for the inbox still and I know someone said they going to put on the chat, but I'm not sure.

MS. ANDRY: Oh, the LIHWAP@csd.ca.gov?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Right. So, I'm there at that site. And then there's a lot of information, there's a lot of headings of programs, find assistance, news search, contact us. So, in contact us there's an inbox?

MS. ANDRY: Yeah, it's the LIHWAP@csd.ca.gov. It's on this -- you'll see it on this presentation.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Okay, so I am there. I am at that website.

MS. ANDRY: Okay. It's at the website. Are you wanting to email us? You wanna send us an email?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Yes. I mean don't have to. If I have-- if there's a phone number I can contact? And I know this is a specific individual situation and I apologize, but I'm at a loss. I see the call center and so forth. I just want the best number to call because I was not the original contact pursuant to process payments and so forth. But the person that was heading this left us in September. So now I'm doing this, and I need to know how do I get signed up as the person to contact and process payments.

MS. ANDRY: So, if you could send us an email,
the LIHWAP@CSD.ca.gov, let us know that you want us to contact you and then give us your phone number and we can give you a call.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Okay. So that's the email address. LIHWAP@csd.ca.gov?

MS. ANDRY: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Ok. Alright.

MS. ANDRY: Mm-hmm

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Thank you.

MS. ANDRY: I see Doreen, you have your hand up. Yep.

MS. SANCHEZ: Yes. Thank you. I was wondering if the public was going to be invited to some of the outreach meetings you were indicating or in service? I'm not sure the meetings you were going to have, you're referring to?

MS. ANDRY: Well, we're holding this public meeting to make a change to this program. And any future meetings, the public will definitely be invited. If you're signed up through our listserv, you will see-- receive notifications of any future public meetings similar to this one.

MS. SANCHEZ: Thank you.

MS. HUNT: There is a question. “If a customer is billed through a separate entity for wastewater and has
already received an arrearage funding through their water agency, would they be eligible to receive funding for a current wastewater bill?”

At this time the answer is no. This is a one-time funding program. Again, similar to LIHEAP it's one time.

The last date to submit comments is Friday, December 2nd, at five o'clock.

MS. MONTES: So, sorry, I just wanna clarify that last question. If it is not LIHWAP funding, they are still eligible for it? Correct. So, they didn't state that funding was from LIHWAP they just said it was from their entity, their agency.

MS. HUNT: So yes, LIHWAP funding is only available at one-- one time. So, if they received that through another funding source, then yeah, that-- it wouldn't impact LIHWAP. But if they received that through LIHWAP, then yes. That-- they're only eligible for It one time.

MS. ANDRY: Does that clarify? In other words, if they receive financial assistance from other programs that are not LIHWAP, that doesn't impact their ability to apply for LIHWAP.

MS. MONTES: This is Tulia, yes, that's clear. Hopefully that is what Greg was asking.
MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

MS. HUNT: Question. “I work at an LSP. Just curious as to what the feedback is from the water companies, if any, in regards to why they're choosing not to sign-- or why they are not choosing to sign up for LIHWAP?”

MS. ANDRY: I know some of the feedback that we're getting is they do not have the staffing resources to support the program. Seems to be the primary reason that we're getting feedback as to not participating. We are also seeing some water companies who originally said they're not participating, but now they're signing up. So, we are seeing an uptick in water systems that are enrolling in wastewater.

MS. HUNT: And just to confirm that the LIHWAP intake form is translated into I think 11 languages, including Spanish.

I don't see any new questions in the chat.

Kathy, Sarah, is there any hands raised?

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Nope. No hands raised at this time.

MS. ANDRY: Okay.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Well--

MS. PEREZ: I have a question. You guys were looking on the website and I'm so sorry, I stepped away.
But to see if you have the LIHWAP application available in Spanish and other languages now?

MS. HUNT: Maria, yeah it is available in, like, 11 languages including Spanish.

MS. PEREZ: I appreciate that. And that'll be on the website you gave earlier, correct?

MS. HUNT: It is on the agency website. And the local service providers can make that available to customers.

MS. PEREZ: That's great. I'll appreciate-- I appreciate that. Yeah, I will check their website as well, because I remember they have a lot of useful information on their website. But like I had also said in my chat I didn't check in the past couple of months and so it's possible it was updated. So, I wanted to just be forthcoming in that. Thank you so much.

MS. HUNT: Absolutely. Yeah, no worries. And if there's a problem, again, you can send us a message in the LIHWAP email box, and we can help you access that.

MS. PEREZ: I appreciate that. Yeah, I think I'll direct my other question to you. Just it's me advocating for families because, you know, in these hard economic times, we're really appreciative for all the programs you guys are providing. So, I just want to say thank you.
MS. HUNT: Thank you. Appreciate that. Okay,

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: There's one question
one hand raised, April Scott.

MS. SCOTT: Hi. Thank you. I know that you
reiterated a few times that it is a one-time program. Do
you think that since the program ends in 2023, August, that
if funding is still readily available, it's not being
utilized, that that may change in the spring? I mean, we
have some customers that applied for the program that may
be used two or $300 of the available $2,000 because that
was their need at the time. And maybe in June, suddenly
they need assistance again but the program's no longer
available because they received that funding previously.

MS. ANDRY: Thank you, April, for the question.
This program is funded by US Department of Health and Human
Services, and it will end in August.

MS. SCOTT: Right.

MS. ANDRY: Yeah, there's not an opportunity to
extend it. However, we do have a-- it's still federally
funded, but it's a state program that will be for-- to
continue to provide water assistance that will be starting
up late summer next year or late sort of mid-summer next
year. So please look out for information about that
program. So, for example, if a customer received a benefit
under this program, they can then, once that program, the
next program becomes available, they can apply for services under that program.

MS. SCOTT: Okay, perfect. And I just want to say, I saw somebody's post said that they felt it was ludicrous that water agencies do not participate. And I will have to say, as a customer service manager of a water agency and managing the program for the agency, it is actually quite simple. It's not that time consuming that I agree it really should be -- agencies need to sign up because it's-- you make it very easy for us to assist our customers.

MS. ANDRY: I appreciate that feedback from your perspective. We're trying to get, you know, as many systems enrolled as possible, and we continue to do enrollments and do some outreaching as well.

MS. SCOTT: Yeah, I think the application's a little cumbersome for some of the customers, but as far as on our end, once they do apply, it's quite easy to manage the process.

MS. ANDRY: Thank you.

MS. NOWSHIRAVAN-BURRUEL: Okay, the next question is from Fabiola Lopez.

MS. LOPEZ: Hello. Thank you. I think it might be similar to the previous comment. I work -- we-- the city of Greenfield, we have our water system here. And
so, we've been working with, for example, the ERAP, Emergency Rental Assistance program and we still have some funding for utilities through that. And I wonder if in the future with the other program, possible funding that you mentioned, if for example, we would be able to apply as the agency distributing these funds for, you know, not only Greenfield but also agencies near-- cities nearby. I just wonder if that would be something where us as a city could apply for funds like that to be this local service provider.

MS. ANDRY: The way the program will be set up is to essentially replicate the current model, and we would be working through our existing local service providers as we are now for the program for the next round of funding.

MS. LOPEZ: I see, thank you.

MS. ANDRY: You're welcome.

MS. HUNT: Question, “Is there a guide on how to determine poverty groups by state or county?”

MS. ANDRY: You're referring to, and I know Doreen doesn't like this term, and I agree, but how we are terming it is “poverty groups,” and we're defining those by their income levels. So, it's federal poverty income levels. So, it would be a hundred percent federal poverty income, 125 percent for the group two, and group three is 150 percent. So, it's just the income level. And that
would be by state, it's not by county.

So, for example, the hundred percent, you know it would be at current-- we're currently using the 2022 federal poverty levels. It would be a $1,000-- and 1,073 is-- you know, that's what that income threshold would be.

MS. HUNT: And Kathy, just -- the income is also some of the income -- it's not by the poverty groups, but the income levels are listed on the CSD website as well.

MS. ANDRY: And just to really be clear to-- you know, the income eligibility for the program is 60 percent state median income. And you can find that information on the customer facing page if you go there, or you can just go to our website and you can just click on “Need Assistance for Water.” You just click on that button, it'll take you there. And we have the income guidelines on our website.

MS. HUNT: I don't see any additional questions in the chat.

MS. ANDRY: Okay. It is 2:30, so we can end this. We can give you guys-- we can do like one more minute just to see if there's anything else. And then we can wrap up the public meeting.

Well, we certainly thank you all for attending. This was a very well attended public meeting, and really appreciate the input and insights that you bring to the
table. And we look forward to continuing to serve Californians, and really help them, you know, offset their water bills.

People are struggling. It's very real. And I appreciate those of you who are customers here and the utilities and other public members who joined us today to provide your perspective. Very much welcome that, and again, we look forward to implementing this change coming up. And I think that just wraps it up. And I just really want to thank everyone. And I think we're going to sign off. And you guys have wonderful holiday season.

(Whereupon the meeting was adjourned)
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

December 28, 2022