

Developing and Enhancing Your Benefit Matrix

Division of Energy Assistance
Office of Community Services
Administration for Children & Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Agenda

- Benefit Matrix Overview
- Factors to Consider
- Finding the Best Outcomes
- Open Discussion



Benefit Matrix Overview

This section explains the importance of developing and refining your benefit matrix to best serve those households in need.

Purpose

- **ASSURANCE 5:**
LIHEAP Statute Section 2605(b)(5)

“The grantee shall provide ... that the highest level of assistance will be furnished to households which have the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs or needs in relation to income, taking into account family size ...”



Purpose

- Your benefit matrix is used to determine the number of households that can be served with your available funds.
 - Your benefit matrix is used to calculate individual benefits.
 - Your benefit matrix can change every year to accommodate different household numbers.
 - Investigate several benefit levels to find the best way to serve the people in your community.
 - Make your benefit matrix available to the public at the beginning of the program.

Factors to Consider

This section identifies the factors that influence how well your benefit matrix accommodates households in need.

Benefit Matrix Factors

- According to the Statute, the following three factors are required to build your benefit matrix:
 1. Household Size
 2. Household Income
 3. Energy Costs or Needs



Assigning Values to Factors

- There are several ways to assign values to the factors you chose for your benefit matrix.
- Two of the most common ways are the following:
 - Point Value System
 - Monetary Value System
- There is no right or wrong way to assign values as long as you are consistent, fair, and have a good reason for assigning values with higher or lower point values than others.

Point Value System

- This matrix is based on relative costs assigned to each factor:
 - Income Calculation
 - Utility Cost Calculation
 - Categories and Factors Used
 - Points Assigned to Each Category and Factor
 - Dollar Rate Assigned Per Point
- BENEFIT MATRIX – Example 1: Energy-Related and Other Categories (Points System)
- BENEFIT MATRIX – Example 2: Energy Need (Points System)

Monetary Value System

- This matrix is similar to the Point Value System, except that monetary values are assigned instead of point values.
- BENEFIT MATRIX – Example 3: Monetary Value System

Finding the Best Outcomes

This section examines different ways to modify your benefit matrix to provide the best level of assistance to households in need.

Exploring Outcomes

- There are several ways to modify your benefit matrix to serve households in different ways.
- Change variables in your benefit matrix to see how you can serve more people with smaller benefits or serve less people with larger benefits.
 - Increase the number of households served.
 - Increase the benefits each household receives.
 - Consider this option when you are not serving as many households as are eligible.
 - Consider this option when you have funds left over after serving all eligible households.

Activity 1:

Increase Household Benefits

- You have \$10,000 of your LIHEAP funds left over after calculating the amount it will take to serve all 100 eligible households.
- Your current matrix counts each point as \$25.
- What are some ways you could best assign the extra funds?



Activity 2:

Increase Households Served

- Using your current benefit matrix, you will only be able to serve 100 of the 110 eligible households before you run out of your LIHEAP funds.
- The additional 10 households could really benefit from any level of assistance.
- What are some ways you could adjust your matrix to be able to serve these 10 households in need?





Open Discussion

This section allows you to analyze your own benefit matrix and participate in an open discussion.

Open Discussion

- Analyzing Your Benefit Matrix
 - Is your benefit matrix the best it can be?
- Open Question and Answer
 - How can we help you improve your benefit matrix?
- Resources
 - [LIHEAP Clearinghouse](#)
Visit this site for more resources on creating and developing your benefit matrix.

Thank You



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES