

DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC SERVICES NO. 2-2007, Crisis Intervention Program Benefit Level Amendment (October 4, 2007)

(Energy)

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: LIEAP and CIP Supervisors

DATE: October 4, 2007

SUBJECT: **Crisis Intervention Program Benefit Level Amendment**

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 1, 2007

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

On January 10, 2007, the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services met to discuss issues and concerns regarding the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) policies and procedures. During this meeting, the Directors gave a recommendation to amend the current maximum allowable assistance payment of \$300 per state fiscal year. The recommendation would provide counties the option to set an annual minimum allowable assistance amount of \$300 up to a maximum allowable assistance payment amount of \$600 per state fiscal year, depending upon local needs and requirements of their county. This would remove the exception language that increases the maximum yearly assistance amount, upon receipt of emergency contingency funds released at the federal level. The request to amend current policy was submitted to North Carolina's Rules Commission for approval and implementation. On September 19, 2007, the NC Rules Commission approved the amendment, thereby allowing counties to authorize from \$300 up to \$600 in a state fiscal year to alleviate a heating or cooling crisis, effective November 1, 2007. The purpose of this letter is to provide instructions for implementing the option to revise the maximum CIP payments authorized annually.

II. POLICY PROCEDURES

- A. Each county may elect to set the maximum allowable assistance amount that can be authorized to a household between \$300 and \$600 per state fiscal year.
- B. To revise the annual maximum allowable CIP to an amount other than the current \$300, submit the attached addendum to amend the Low Income Energy Assistance Business Plan. The amount may be any dollar amount between \$300 and \$600.
- C. The CIP System will be revised to reflect the maximum allowable assistance amount for each county.
- D. Maximum allowable assistance guidelines established by energy companies who contribute to the State's crisis program such as Progress Energy, Wake Electric, North Carolina Natural Gas (NCNG), and Haywood Electric, are not affected by this change in policy.

- E. The Low Income Energy Assistance Business Plan may be amended at any time during the course of the state fiscal year to change the maximum allowable assistance amount or to change other optional eligibility requirements.

Example: Alamance County submits its Low Income Energy Assistance Business Plan with a maximum allowable assistance amount of \$300 per state fiscal year. Several months later, the county submits an amended plan to increase the maximum allowable assistance amount to \$600 for the balance of the plan year.

- F. The Low Income Energy Assistance Business Plan (Figure 200-2 in Section 200.04 of the Energy Assistance Manual) will be revised to include a question to define the maximum allowable assistance amount.
- G. Counties can allow an annual maximum assistance amount of up to \$600 per state fiscal year. Receipt of emergency contingency funds from the federal level will not increase the maximum allowable assistance amount designated by County Directors.
- H. The maximum allowable assistance amount per CIP application can be up to \$600. The maximum allowable assistance amount designated by the County Director will also be the maximum allowable assistance amount per application for that county.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

These changes are effective with CIP applications taken or processed on or after November 1, 2007, based on submission of a revised Low Income Energy Assistance Business Plan. Submit the attached Addendum no later than October 26, 2007, by fax to Joseph Scott at (919) 733-0645. This will allow time to update the maximum allowable assistance amount indicated on the amended Business Plan by each county in the CIP system.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact your Food and Nutrition & Energy Programs Representative.

Sincerely,

/S/

Adonica Hampton, Assistant Chief
Economic Services Section

Attachment

AH:jcs

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