

**LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)**

**ABBREVIATED MODEL PLAN**

**PUBLIC LAW 97-35, AS AMENDED**

**FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2012**

**GRANTEE Michigan Department of Human Services for the State of Michigan**

**EIN: \_\_\_\_\_**

**ADDRESS 235 S. Grand Ave.**

**P.O. Box 30037**

**Lansing, MI 48909**

**NAME OF LIHEAP COORDINATOR Brian Rooney**

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**LAST DETAILED MODEL PLAN FILED: FY 2011**

**PLEASE CHECK ONE: TRIBE \_\_\_\_\_ STATE X INSULAR AREA \_\_\_\_\_**

**Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Community Services  
Washington, D.C. 20447**

**August 1987, revised 05/92, 02/95, 03/96, 12/98, 11/01  
OMB Approval No. 0970-0075, Expiration Date: 04/30/2014**

**THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13)**

Use of this model plan is optional. However, the information requested is required in order to receive a Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) grant in years in which a grantee is not required to use the detailed model plan. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Assurances

The Michigan Department of Human Services agrees to:  
(Grantee Name)

(1) use the funds available under this title to--

(A) conduct outreach activities and provide assistance to low income households in meeting their home energy costs, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, consistent with paragraph (5);

(B) intervene in energy crisis situations;

(C) provide low-cost residential weatherization and other cost-effective energy-related home repair; and

(D) plan, develop, and administer the State's program under this title including leveraging programs,

and the State agrees not to use such funds for any purposes other than those specified in this title;

(2) make payments under this title only with respect to--

(A) households in which one or more individuals are receiving--

(i) assistance under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act;

(ii) supplemental security income payments under title XVI of the Social Security Act;

(iii) food stamps under the Food Stamp Act of 1977; or

(iv) payments under section 415, 521, 541, or 542 of title 38, United States Code, or under section 306 of the Veterans' and Survivors' Pension Improvement Act of 1978; or

(B) households with incomes which do not exceed the greater of—

(i) an amount equal to 150 percent of the poverty level for such State; or

(ii) an amount equal to 60 percent of the State median income;

except that a State may not exclude a household from eligibility in a fiscal year solely on the basis of household income if such income is less than 110 percent of the poverty level for such State, but the State may give priority to those households with the highest home energy costs or needs in relation to household income.

(3) conduct outreach activities designed to assure that eligible households, especially households with elderly individuals or disabled individuals, or both, and households with high home energy burdens, are made aware of the assistance available under this title, and any similar energy-related assistance available under subtitle B of title VI (relating to community services block grant program) or under any other provision of law which carries out programs which were administered under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 before the date of the enactment of this Act;

(4) coordinate its activities under this title with similar and related programs administered by the Federal Government and such State, particularly low-income energy-related programs under subtitle B of title VI (relating to community services block grant program), under the supplemental security income program, under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, under title XX of the Social Security Act, under the low-income weatherization assistance program under title IV of the Energy Conservation and Production Act, or under any other provision of law which carries out programs which were administered under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 before the date of the enactment of this Act;

(5) provide, in a timely manner, that the highest level of assistance will be furnished to those households which have the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs or needs in relation to income, taking into account family size, except that the State may not differentiate in implementing this section between the households described in clauses 2(A) and 2(B) of this subsection;

(6) to the extent it is necessary to designate local administrative agencies in order to carry out the purposes of this title, to give special consideration, in the designation of such agencies, to any local public or private nonprofit agency which was receiving Federal funds under any low-income energy assistance program or weatherization program under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 or any other provision of law on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, except that--

(A) the State shall, before giving such special consideration, determine that the agency involved meets program and fiscal requirements established by the State; and

(B) if there is no such agency because of any change in the assistance furnished to programs for economically disadvantaged persons, then the State shall give special consideration in the designation of local administrative agencies to any successor agency which is operated in substantially the same manner as the predecessor agency which did receive funds for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made;

(7) if the State chooses to pay home energy suppliers directly, establish procedures to --

(A) notify each participating household of the amount of assistance paid on its behalf;

(B) assure that the home energy supplier will charge the eligible household, in the normal billing process, the difference between the actual cost of the home energy and the amount of the payment made by the State under this title;

(C) assure that the home energy supplier will provide assurances that any agreement entered into with a home energy supplier under this paragraph will contain provisions to

assure that no household receiving assistance under this title will be treated adversely because of such assistance under applicable provisions of State law or public regulatory requirements; and

(D) ensure that the provision of vendored payments remains at the option of the State in consultation with local grantees and may be contingent on unregulated vendors taking appropriate measures to alleviate the energy burdens of eligible households, including providing for agreements between suppliers and individuals eligible for benefits under this Act that seek to reduce home energy costs, minimize the risks of home energy crisis, and encourage regular payments by individuals receiving financial assistance for home energy costs;

(8) provide assurances that,

(A) the State will not exclude households described in clause (2)(B) of this subsection from receiving home energy assistance benefits under clause (2), and

(B) the State will treat owners and renters equitably under the program assisted under this title;

(9) provide that--

(A) the State may use for planning and administering the use of funds under this title an amount not to exceed 10 percent of the funds payable to such State under this title for a fiscal year and not transferred pursuant to section 2604(f) for use under another block grant; and

(B) the State will pay from non-Federal sources the remaining costs of planning and administering the program assisted under this title and will not use Federal funds for such remaining cost (except for the costs of the activities described in paragraph (16));

(10) provide that such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures will be established as may be necessary to assure the proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds paid to the State under this title, including procedures for monitoring the assistance provided under this title, and provide that the State will comply with the provisions of chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code (commonly known as the "Single Audit Act");

(11) permit and cooperate with Federal investigations undertaken in accordance with section 2608;

(12) provide for timely and meaningful public participation in the development of the plan described in subsection (c);

(13) provide an opportunity for a fair administrative hearing to individuals whose claims for assistance under the plan described in subsection (c) are denied or are not acted upon with reasonable promptness; and

(14) cooperate with the Secretary with respect to data collecting and reporting under section 2610.

(15)\* beginning in fiscal year 1992, provide, in addition to such services as may be offered by State Departments of Public Welfare at the local level, outreach and intake functions for crisis situations and heating and cooling assistance that is administered by additional State and local governmental entities or community-based organizations (such as community action agencies, area agencies on aging and not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations), and in States where such organizations do not administer functions as of September 30, 1991, preference in awarding grants or contracts for intake services shall be provided to those agencies that administer the low-income weatherization or energy crisis intervention programs.

**\* This assurance is applicable only to States, and to territories whose annual regular LIHEAP allotments exceed \$200,000. Territories with annual allotments of \$200,000 or less and Indian tribes/tribal organizations are not subject to Assurance 15.**

(16) use up to 5 percent of such funds, at its option, to provide services that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance, including needs assessments, counseling, and assistance with energy vendors, and report to the Secretary concerning the impact of such activities on the number of households served, the level of direct benefits provided to those households, and the number of households that remain unserved.

Certification to the Assurances: As Chief Executive Officer, I agree to comply with the sixteen assurances contained in Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, as amended.\* By signing these assurances, I also agree to abide by the standard assurances on lobbying, debarment and suspension, and a drug-free workplace.

Signature of the Tribal or Board Chairperson or Chief Executive Officer of the State or Territory.\*\*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**\* Indian tribes/tribal organizations, and territories with annual regular LIHEAP allotments of \$200,000 or less, are not subject to assurance 15, and thus must only certify to 15 assurances.**

**\*\* If a person other than the Chief Executive Officer of the State or territory, or Tribal Chairperson or Board Chairperson of a tribal organization, is signing the certification to the assurances, a letter must be submitted delegating such authority. (PLEASE ATTACH DELEGATION of AUTHORITY.) The delegation must include authority to sign the assurances, not just to administer the program.**

**\*\*\* HHS needs the EIN (Entity Identification Number) of the State, territory or Tribal agency that is to receive the grant funds before it can issue the grant.**

In the above assurances which are quoted from the law, "State" means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, an Indian Tribe or Tribal Organization, or a Territory; "title" of the Act refers to Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (OBRA), as amended, the "Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act"; "section" means Section 2605 of OBRA; and, "subsection" refers to Section 2605(b) of OBRA.

Changes made to FY2011 Detailed Plan

Page	Subject	Modification
8	Dates of Operation	Change heating assistance and \$1 LIHEAP Pilot Program to October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012
8	Available LIHEAP funds used for each component	heating assistance: 28% crisis assistance: 61.62% \$1 LIHEAP Pilot Program: .38%
11	Income Maximums for the alternate calculation for the Home Heating Credit	1 exemption - \$12,691 2 exemptions - \$17,078 3 exemptions - \$21,469 4 or more exemptions - \$22,782
11	Eligibility for Heating Assistance	Change “Most Home Heating Credit recipients do not file a state income tax return” to “Most Home Heating credit recipients file for the Home Heating Credit only.”
14	Eligibility requirements for Crisis Assistance	Change ‘Asset Test?’ to Yes
14-15	Crisis Intervention : Eligible Population/ Application Process	Please add the following:  LIHEAP applicants determined to be in fugitive felon status with the Michigan State Police are not eligible for LIHEAP assistance. Their presence disqualifies the group. This change includes an electronic data exchange between Michigan Department of Human Services and the Michigan State Police.  An Electronic Document Management (EDM) system has been implemented as a pilot program. This capability allows the pilot county to become paperless. All documents and verifications submitted to the DHS office are scanned and electronically stored in the case record.
22	Benefit levels for Home Heating Credit	Change the annual heating cost maximum from \$2,430 to \$2,506
22	Benefit levels for Home Heating Credit	Change the reduction factor from 65% to 52% so that the alternate

		calculation is multiplied by 52% to determine the final Home Heating Credit payment level.
24	Determination of benefits for Crisis Assistance: Payment Levels	Remove \$1,100 for households which are all-electric.
27	LIHEAP Weatherization	Replace “NEAT or the Priority List” with “the DOE approved audit”
30	HEATING ASSISTANCE (HOME HEATING CREDIT) & CRISIS ASSISTANCE	Change, “DHS has over 2,600 active energy suppliers enrolled in the program” to “DHS has over 2,800 active energy suppliers enrolled in the program.”
35	Timely and meaningful public participation	Change 2011 State Plan to 2012 State Plan.  Written comments were accepted July 18-July 31, 2011, this was also the public comment period.
35	Public hearings	Two public hearings were held during the public comment period on July 26, 2011 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm in Lansing) and July 28, 2011 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm in Detroit).
41	Leveraging: Michigan Public Service Commission	The Department of Human Services expected to receive \$35,000,000 in Public Service Commission Low Income Energy Efficiency Funds to supplement its crisis assistance program for FY2012. Due to recent legislation, these funds, most likely, will not be granted.

Please specify whether you are using calendar year 2011 poverty level **or** FY 2012 median income estimates in determining eligibility:

FY 2012 median income 60 %

Please describe how you obtained public participation in the development of your 2012 plan. (For States, please also provide information on your public hearings.):

Michigan published notices in five major newspapers announcing the availability of the State Plan for LIHEAP and soliciting public comment regarding plan provisions. The public comment period was from July 18 to July 31, 2011.

To facilitate a review and comment on the State Plan, copies were made available in all DHS local offices, to interested parties and on the state website: [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs). Two public hearings were held during the public comment period on July 26, 2011 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm in Lansing) and July 28, 2011 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm in Detroit). The department did not receive any comments at the hearings or during the public comment period.

Date Carryover and Reallotment Report submitted: July 28, 2011

## ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Attached are additional certifications required as follows:

- \* **Lobbying certification**, which must be filed by all States and territories. If applicable, Form LLL, which discloses lobbying payments, must be submitted. **(Tribes and tribal organizations are EXEMPT.)**
- \* **Debarment and suspension certification**, which must be filed by all grantees.
- \* **Drug-free workplace requirement certification**, which must be filed by all grantees, unless the grantee has filed a statewide certification with the Department of Health and Human Services. **STATES ONLY:** If you have filed a statewide certification for the drug-free workplace requirement, please check here: \_\_\_\_\_
- \* One of the requirements included in the 1994 reauthorization of the statute is that grantees must include in their annual application for funds a report on the number and income levels of households applying for and receiving LIHEAP assistance, and on the number of recipient households that have members who are elderly, disabled, or young children.  
  
**All Tribes and those territories with allotments of less than \$200,000** need only submit data on the number of households served by each component (heating, cooling, weatherization and crisis). The approval for the collection of information contained in the **LIHEAP Household Report** is covered by OMB approval number 0970-0060.
- \* Though not a part of this application, the report on funds to be carried over or available for reallocation as required by section 2607(a) for the preceding year must be submitted by August 1 of each year. A grant award for the current fiscal year may not be made until the carryover/reallocation report is received. The approval for the collection of information contained in the **LIHEAP Carryover and Reallocation Report** is covered by OMB approval number 0970-0106.

**PROGRAM INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT SUPPLEMENT**  
 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

State, Tribe or Territory (and grant official): <b>MICHIGAN</b>			Date/Fiscal Year: <b>2012</b>
<b>RECENT AUDIT FINDINGS</b>			
Describe any audit findings of material weaknesses and reportable conditions, questioned costs and other findings cited in FY2011 or the prior three years, in annual audits, State monitoring assessments, Inspector General reviews, or other Government Agency reviews of LIHEAP agency finances.	Please describe whether the cited audit findings or relevant operations have been resolved or corrected. If not, please describe the plan and timeline for doing so in FY2012.	If there is no plan in place, please explain why not.	Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies

**Single Audit 10/1/2008-09/30/2010**  
**DHS Audit Reference Number 2010-062**

**Finding No. 10a(3) and Finding No. 10b(2): LIHEAP-State Plan Amendments**  
*Please note the finding description below may have been abbreviated from that provided by the auditor.*

- a(3) DHS' internal control did not ensure payments were in compliance Federal law 45 USC 8624 which requires that the State expend funds in accordance with the LIHEAP State Plan or in accordance with revisions applicable to such plan.
  - (a) DHS did not ensure the payment amount for energy related emergencies was the minimum amount necessary to prevent shut-off or restore service for 6 (17%) of 36 energy payments tested. The excess amount paid for these 6 payments totaled \$327. DHS indicated in the LIHEAP State Plan that when payment was necessary to resolve an energy related emergency, the payment would be the minimum amount necessary to prevent shut-off or restore service. However, during the period of November 2009 through September 2010, DHS revised its internal policy to allow for payment of current energy charges. Payment of current energy charges is not required to prevent shut-off or restore service.
  - (b) DHS did not ensure HHC payments were for a benefit type and level authorized in the LIHEAP State Plan. In September 2009, DHS authorized the Department of Treasury, through an amendment to its interagency agreement, to issue a special energy allowance. The special energy allowance was designed to provide all individuals who had previously applied for and received a 2008 tax year home heating credit, an additional energy supplement. However, the special energy allowance was not a benefit type and level authorized in the LIHEAP State Plan.

**For Findings in a(3)(a):**  
 Communication has been issued to the local offices which reiterates policy and clarifies that payment may not be issued for current charges.  
 DHS will submit a second amendment for fiscal year 2010. This amendment will include the temporary policy that allowed staff to pay current balances for FY 2010.

**For Findings in a(3)(b):**  
 A revised amendment will be submitted to include the language from the interagency agreement which allowed for the supplemental home heating credit.

N/A

*The timely and thorough resolution of weaknesses or reportable conditions as revealed by the audit.*

<p>(c) DHS did not ensure all payments issued through the Arrearage Payment Program were for benefit types and levels authorized in the LIHEAP State Plan. DHS indicated in the LIHEAP State Plan that the Arrearage Payment Program was designed to provide energy assistance to eligible households participating in a Winter Protection Plan. A Winter Protection Plan allows for eligible low income customers to make monthly payments of a specified percentage of their estimated annual bill, along with a portion of the past due amount, to avoid shut-off during winter months.</p> <p>In September 2010, DHS requested and received from energy providers, electronic files of customers with arrearage balances. However, the electronic files received from the providers were not limited to Winter Protection participants and instead all LIHEAP eligible households were considered for payment. The Arrearage Payment Program was not a type of assistance authorized in the State Plan for households not participating in the Winter Protection Plan</p> <p>b(2) DHS' internal control did not ensure payments were in compliance Federal law 45 USC 8624 which requires that the State expend funds in accordance with the LIHEAP State Plan or in accordance with revisions applicable to such plan.</p> <p>DHS did not ensure that all eligibility requirements of DHS's LIHEAP State Plan were met for 1 (20 percent) of 5 non-categorically eligible clients reviewed. If clients are not categorically eligible, the LIHEAP State Plan indicates that clients must demonstrate they made required payments towards their energy bill before qualifying for a federally funded benefit. In our review of 36 SER DHS did not ensure that all eligibility requirements of DHS's LIHEAP State Plan were met for 1 (20 percent) of 5 non-categorically eligible clients reviewed. If clients are not categorically eligible, the LIHEAP State Plan indicates that clients must demonstrate they made required payments towards their energy bill before qualifying for a federally funded benefit. In our review of 36 SER energy expenditures, 5 of the clients were not categorically eligible and should have been required to make required payments towards their energy costs or show good cause for not making the payments.</p>	<p><b>For Findings in a(3)(c):</b> A revised amendment will be submitted to include the language from the Arrearage Payment Program contract which allowed payments to be made to energy providers for low income clients, regardless of their participation with the Winter Protection Plan.</p> <p><b>For Findings in b(2):</b> Training and policy reminders have been reviewed with managers and caseworkers statewide to ensure that categorical eligibility is determined appropriately. Case reads will be conducted by the Program Policy office for FY 2012. Future trainings and reminders will be created and issued if this continues to be a problem area for staff.</p> <p>The changes cited in this audit were approved through the State Budget Office. Benefits were issued to eligible clients and in accordance with the</p>		
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<p>However, 1 of the 5 clients did not make the payments or show good cause for not making the payments and still received the federally funded benefit.</p> <p><b>Finding No. 10a(2)(a): LIHEAP-HHC Monitoring</b>  <i>Please note the finding description below may have been abbreviated from that provided by the auditor.</i></p> <p>DHS established an interagency agreement with the Department of Treasury that requires the Department of Treasury to develop the HHC claim form (MI-1040CR-7), process HHC claims, determine claimant eligibility, and issue HHC to eligible claimants in accordance with Section 206.527a of the <i>Michigan Compiled Laws</i>.</p> <p>The Department of Treasury did not correctly process 2 (7%) of 28 HHC claims reviewed. In both instances, the Department of Treasury did not correctly calculate the HHC.</p> <p>By establishing effective monitoring of the Department of Treasury's processing of HHC payments, DHS could ensure that the Department of Treasury obtains the necessary information to verify claimants' HHC claims and pays claimants the correct amount.</p>	<p>approved program changes. DHS does not agree with the questioned cost amount because benefits were provided to families in need of energy assistance. DHS acknowledges due to departmental oversight, the State Plan amendment did not include these changes. Based on clarification received by HHS, new amendments can and will be submitted to reflect changes to the LIHEAP State Plan(s).</p> <p><b>For Findings in 10a(2)(a):</b>  These systematic business rules and tolerances allow the department to efficiently and accurately process the credits filed within the current program funding levels. All credit claims that do not pass the business rules are identified and manually worked by department staff. The end result is that the department does spend the correct amount of money and importantly, because of the processing efficiencies created by the systematic business rules, the credit recipients receive their</p>		
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<p><b>Finding No. 10a(2)(b): LIHEAP-HHC Reconciliation</b>  <i>Please note the finding description below may have been abbreviated from that provided by the auditor.</i></p> <p>DHS had not implemented a process to periodically reconcile HHC claim detail information provided by the Department of Treasury in electronic format to the Department of Treasury's reimbursement billings and summary reports provided in paper format.</p> <p>DHS received reimbursement billings from the Department of Treasury with summary reports of claims processed and mailed by the Department of Treasury. DHS reconciled the reimbursement billing amounts to the summary reports prior to authorizing payment to the Department of Treasury. The Department of Treasury also provided DHS with an electronic file of the detailed claims processed and mailed by the Department of Treasury. DHS did not reconcile the electronic data to the summary data provided with the reimbursement billings.</p> <p>The detailed claim information in the electronic file did not support the Department of Treasury reimbursement billings for 4 (14%) of the 28 HHC processing runs reviewed. For these 28 HHC processing runs, the detailed information in the electronic file was \$31,480 less than the summary total paid.</p>	<p>heating assistance timely.</p> <p>The contract monitor and program manager will ensure that any necessary amended language required by the federal government, will be included in any future I/A's.</p> <p><b>For Findings in 10a(2)(b):</b>  DHS staff does reconcile Treasury data regularly. In addition, the written 222 reports should have been solely used by the Auditor rather than the electronic 290 reports. Had the 222 reports been used, there would be no findings. The 290 report was never intended to be used for reconciling purposes.</p> <p>The department will continue to reconcile the data on a monthly basis and follow up with Treasury on any inconsistencies.</p>		
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<b>COMPLIANCE MONITORING</b>			
<b>Describe the State's FY2011 strategies that will continue in FY2012 for monitoring compliance with State and Federal LIHEAP policies and procedures by the State and local administering agencies.</b>	<b>Please highlight any strategies for compliance monitoring from your plan which will be newly implemented as of FY2012.</b>	<b>If you don't have a firm compliance monitoring system in place for FY2011, please describe how the State is verifying that LIHEAP policy and procedures are being followed.</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p>DHS policy requires case reviews for all probationary employees. Eligibility cannot be certified and payments cannot be made until a supervisory review has been completed and the case transaction is approved in the Bridges application.</p> <p>The DHS 1271, State Emergency Relief/LIHEAP Case Read Form has been created and is accessible to local office staff. This form has been designed to follow the workflow of the Bridges computer system to enhance the case read process. This new form allows for the case reader to document if all required information has been verified and entered appropriately in the system. This will ensure that the proper issuances of LIHEAP benefits have been given.</p> <p>LIHEAP payments made by exception require local office management review, additional review by the program office and must be approved in the Bridges application prior to issuance.</p> <p>Fiscal staff must reconcile LIHEAP payments and the bills used to make the payments with their ES-440 accounting report. Any discrepancy is researched and rectified. Any overpayment is pursued for refund.</p> <p>The policy office takes immediate action to update policy and procedural requirements when required. There are several ways to communicate immediate changes to the field to ensure knowledge of procedural and policy changes. One method of correspondence which is regularly used by DHS is an L-letter, or directive to the field. L-Letters are available to all employees and are archived within the Michigan Department of Human Services Intranet for easy reference.</p>	<p>Michigan plans to issue updated notification to the field stressing the importance of accuracy and providing guidelines and requirements for LIHEAP case reading.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>A sound methodology, with a schedule for regular monitoring and a more effective monitoring tool to gather information.</i></p>

L-Letter L-08-166 was issued In an ongoing effort to resolve case discrepancies while ensuring accurate benefit amounts, various reports are sent to the field on a regular basis. These reports should be addressed timely to ensure that proper payments are being issued.

Local office staff is also notified by L-letter of case reading requirements. In addition, written policy includes instructions and criteria for case reading.

**DEPARTMENT POLICY FOR CASE READING REVIEWS**

Local office management resources should be invested in case reading activities. This includes:

- Selecting the case.
- Completing the review.
- Documenting and communicating the findings.
- Monitoring and following up.
- Planning corrective actions.

**Overview**

A process analysis approach to case reading focuses on systems, policy and procedures in an effort to prevent errors rather than just correct them.

Case readings collect information to improve the accuracy and efficiency of program management and the delivery of services. First and second-line managers, quality analysts, lead workers and other designated local office staff may conduct the readings.

**Case Review**

The case review may be either a **general, specific** or **targeted** read. A general read is a review of all eligibility factors for the program(s) read. A specific read is a review of a limited number of eligibility factors identified for a predetermined reason. A targeted read is a review of a limited number of eligibility factors identified by central office for a predetermined reason.

<p>The local office determines the need for evaluation and selects the cases for a general or specific read. Process analysis, accuracy of policy implementation, a special project, worker experience, or other reasons may prompt a review.</p> <p><b>Selection of Cases</b></p> <p>Depending on the reason for the review, cases are selected at random using one of the sources listed below. Cases are selected randomly by allowing each case an equal chance to be selected.</p> <p>Computer-generated reports - list cases with certain identifying characteristics</p> <p>Special Run Reports - used for special projects</p> <p>Case Actions - based on the experience of specialists</p> <p><b>How To Read a Case</b></p> <p>A case is reviewed by comparing the actions taken by the specialist to the verification and documentation in the record and determining whether policy was correctly applied in a timely manner.</p> <p>Use form DHS-4331, Assistance Payments Case Reading, to record and communicate the findings. Check the factors listed on the DHS-4331 to determine that all necessary actions were taken. Use the comment section to inform the specialist of any required action and the reason. Post a follow-up for any action to be completed. The comment section is also used to give positive feedback.</p> <p>For some actions, oral communication with the specialist promotes better understanding and offers an opportunity to solicit suggestions for improving systems and processes.</p> <p>Use the Case Reading Guide with the DHS-4331 for consistency in the way factors are reviewed. The guide asks questions for each factor listed on the DSS-4331. The case reading guide is intended to help achieve consistency in the way cases are read. The questions are designed to lead the reader to correct case reading results.</p>			
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<p>The case reading guide, along with the DHS-4331, Assistance Payments Case Reading, is a tool to help identify error-prone areas that might require further attention. It is not intended to cover all specific policy situations and exceptions. Likewise, all questions do not apply to every program.</p> <p>A secondary use of this guide is as a self-assessment tool. DHS specialists can use the guide to see whether required case actions were taken.</p> <p><b>Data Evaluation</b></p> <p>The information from case reading may be used to identify unmet needs in programs and areas of policy. Local office staff should decide whether policy clarification, policy revision, local office procedural changes or training is appropriate to pursue.</p> <p>General case reading data may also be compiled, summarized and reported upwards. However, a roll-up of case reading data cannot be assumed to be statistically valid due to issues such as lack of a random sample, managers using different selection criteria, and managers using different case reading methods. Targeted case readings may be designed to avoid these problems, through careful planning.</p> <p><b>Questions for SER Case Review</b></p> <p>Some of the questions listed below may be addressed on the reading form.</p> <p>The questions which are unique to SER are addressed here.</p> <p>Is there a current signed DHS-1514 and DHS-1171 in the case?</p> <p>Was the emergency request registered timely?</p> <p>Is the emergency a covered service?</p> <p>Were repeat request criteria and required payments correctly determined and documented?</p> <p>Will the payment resolve the emergency?</p>			
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<p>If the emergency was approved, did the case meet the asset limit?</p> <p>Was the need verified and documented?</p> <p>Was all projected income for the 30-day budget period used in doing the budget?</p> <p>Does the requested need meet the affordability criteria?</p> <p>If there were excess income and/or cash assets, did the client make the copayment?</p> <p>Were potential resources explored and necessary repay agreements signed?</p> <p>Was the amount authorized within the maximum allowed?</p> <p>If an exception was granted, is the necessary documentation in the case?</p> <p>Was the client sent a DHS-1419, Decision Notice?</p>			
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<b>FRAUD REPORTING MECHANISMS</b>			
<p>For FY2011 activities continuing in FY2012, please describe all (a) mechanisms available to the public for reporting cases of suspected LIHEAP fraud, waste or abuse? [These may include telephone hotlines, websites, email addresses, etc.] (b) strategies for advertising these resources.</p>	<p>Please highlight any tools or mechanisms from your plan which will be newly implemented in FY2012, and the timeline for that implementation.</p>	<p>If you don't have any tools or mechanisms available to the public to prevent fraud or improper payments, please describe your plan for involving all citizens and stakeholders involved with your program in detecting fraud.</p>	<p>Necessary outcomes of these strategies and systems</p>
<p>DHS currently has over 2600 active energy providers. DHS maintains a close relationship with providers and has regular contact with many of them. The department relies on the information shared by the providers regarding possible fraud and/or overissuances by our mutual costumers.</p> <p>Providers give information which can be useful in clarifying discrepant information reported by clients, offer information on overpayments and share information on a clients' living arrangement, including address changes that may not be known to the department. The information provided may prevent incorrect issuance of benefits or be used by the department to recover over-issued benefits, including those received fraudulently.</p> <p>The Emergency Relief Manual (ERM), Bridges Administrative Manual (BAM), and the Accounting Manual (ACM), provide guidance and policy to DHS staff.</p> <p>ERM 401 states: An SER overpayment is an amount of assistance issued that the SER group was not eligible to receive. The Department attempts to obtain repayment from the SER group of all SER overpayments.</p> <p>SER overpayments are recouped only by requesting the SER group or provider to repay the amount overpaid in cash (cash recoupment).</p> <p>Inform the local office fiscal unit when an SER overpayment is discovered.</p>	<p>If payment is not returned upon request by the local fiscal unit, overissuance referrals will be sent to recoupment specialists, after eligibility specialists determine if the overissuance is due to agency or client error. The recoupment specialists will review and process all overissuances. They will pursue repayments of any misissued funds and maintain recoupment reports.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>Clear lines of communication for citizens, grantees, clients, and employees to use in pointing out potential cases of fraud or improper payments to State administrators.</i></p>

<p>Provide the fiscal unit with the amount of the overpayment and the date the overpayment was issued. The fiscal unit collects receipts and records cash payments from the SER group. No other local office staff collects or accepts any cash payments.</p> <p>The Accounting Manual outlines the process for establishing an account receivable record for repayment when an overissuance is identified. Local office fiscal staff must also follow procedures in the Accounting Manual for cash recoupment on inactive cases.</p> <p>Fiscal staff must reconcile LIHEAP payments and the bills used to make the payments with their ES-440 accounting report. Any discrepancy is researched and rectified. Any overpayment is pursued for refund.</p> <p>BAM 700 provides policy and procedures for handling benefit overissuances. It includes the following Fraud Hotline procedures:</p> <p><b>WELFARE FRAUD HOTLINE REFERRAL PROCEDURES</b></p> <p>A toll-free hotline number (1-800-222-8558) is provided to the public for use in filing complaints regarding all programs where possible fraudulent activities may be occurring. The Customer Service Unit located in central office receives these calls. An electronic database is now available to refer, monitor and dispose of fraud referrals.</p> <p>Hotlines, including Fraud Reporting are available at this link;  <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-8994-17514--,00.html">http://www.michigan.gov/dhs/0,1607,7-124-8994-17514--,00.html</a></p> <p>L-Letter 07-071 was issued regarding the DHS Fraud Hotline Referral System. Beginning June 1, 2007, Fraud Hotline Referrals are entered into an electronic database. This database was developed to respond to audit findings that have indicated that DHS provides fraud referrals to the local offices but does not have a way to centrally monitor the disposition of the referrals. Fraud referrals that come through the toll free fraud number or Web site will go to a designated fraud coordinator in each local office via email. The coordinator will send the fraud referral to the appropriate worker and their FIM for investigation. The investigation findings will be reported back to the fraud coordinator electronically and then back to central office for monitoring</p>			
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<p>purposes. The referrals will appear on the contact manager’s main screen when they log into the referral system. It is the contact manager’s responsibility to periodically log into the system and see the referrals that are assigned to their county.</p> <p>BAM 700 also includes the following policy:</p> <p><b>DEPARTMENT POLICY</b></p> <p><b>All Programs</b></p> <p>When a client group receives more benefits than they are entitled to receive, DHS must attempt to recoup the overissuance (OI). This item explains OI types and standards of promptness (SOP).</p> <p>A client or provider may voluntarily repay any program benefits even when there is no overissuance. These situations are referred to the local office fiscal unit.</p> <p><b>PREVENTION OF OVERISSUANCES</b></p> <p>DHS must inform clients of their reporting responsibilities and act on the information reported within the SOP.</p> <p>During eligibility determination and while the case is active, clients are repeatedly reminded of reporting responsibilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgments on the application form.</li> <li>• Explanation at application/redetermination interviews.</li> <li>• Client notices and program pamphlets.</li> </ul> <p>DHS must prevent OI by informing the client or authorized representative (AR) of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants and recipients are required by law to give complete and accurate information about their circumstances.</li> </ul>			
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants and recipients are required by law to promptly notify DHS of all non-income changes in circumstances within 10 days. Income related changes must be reported within 10 days of receiving their first payment.</li> <li>• Incorrect, late reported or omitted information causing an OI can result in cash repayment or benefit reduction.</li> </ul> <p>The client’s comments and/or questions about the above responsibilities must be recorded on the application.</p> <p><b>DISCOVERY OF SUSPECTED OVERISSUANCES</b></p> <p>An OI may be discovered through normal casework or by one of the following:</p> <p>Case readings.  Computer cross-matches.  Quality Control audit findings.  Welfare Fraud Hotline referrals.  Non-honored repay agreements.  State Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules.</p> <p><b>Client Suspected Intentional Program Violation</b></p> <p>Suspected IPV means an OI exists for which all three of the following conditions exist:</p> <p>The client intentionally failed to report information <b>or</b> intentionally gave incomplete or inaccurate information needed to make a correct benefit determination.</p> <p>The client was clearly instructed regarding his or her reporting responsibilities.</p> <p>The client has no apparent physical or mental impairment that limits his or her understanding or ability to fulfill his reporting responsibilities.</p> <p>IPV is suspected when there is clear and convincing evidence that the client has <b>intentionally</b> withheld or misrepresented information for the <b>purpose</b> of establishing, maintaining, increasing or preventing reduction of program</p>			
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<p>benefits or eligibility.</p> <p><b>OIG Referral</b></p> <p>Suspected IPV OIs are referred to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) on the DHS-834, Fraud Investigation Request. Evidence for the OI and suspected IPV must be attached to the DHS-834.</p> <p>Prudent judgment should be used in evaluating an OI for suspected IPV. Consider the following questions when reviewing the case:</p> <p>Does the record show that department staff advised the client of their rights and responsibilities?</p> <p>Does the record show the client’s acknowledgment of these rights and responsibilities?</p> <p>Did the client neglect to report timely when required to do so?</p> <p>Did the client make false or misleading statements?</p> <p>Does the client error meet suspected IPV criteria?</p> <p>Does the OI amount meet the OIG threshold (see below)?</p> <p>Suspected IPV’s are referred to OIG when:</p> <p>From preliminary review, it appears that the OI falls within the definition of suspected IPV found in this item, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total OI amount for all programs combined is \$500 or more, or</li> <li>• The total OI amount for all programs combined is less than \$500, and</li> <li>• The group has a previous IPV, or</li> <li>• The OI involves concurrent receipt of assistance. Or</li> </ul>			
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The alleged fraud is committed by a state government employee.</li></ul> <p>OIG or the Recoupment Specialist (RS) will inform the local fiscal unit when an account needs to be established for cash collections.</p>			
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<b>VERIFYING APPLICANT IDENTITIES</b>			
<b>Describe all FY2011 State policies continuing in FY2012 for how identities of applicants and household members are verified.</b>	<b>Please highlight any policy or strategy from your plan which will be newly implemented in FY2012.</b>	<b>If you don't have a system in place for verifying applicant's identities, please explain why and how the State is ensuring that only authentic and eligible applicants are receiving benefits.</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p>ERM 103 policy states:</p> <p><b>VERIFICATION</b></p> <p>Clients must be informed of all verifications that are required and where to return verifications. The due date is eight calendar days beginning with the date of application. If the application is not processed on the application date the deadline to return verification is eight calendar days from the date verification is requested. This does not change the standard of promptness date.</p> <p>The client must make a reasonable effort to obtain required verifications. The specialist must assist if the applicant needs and requests help. If neither the client nor the specialist can obtain the verifications despite a reasonable effort, use the best available information. If no evidence is available, the specialist must use their best judgment.</p> <p><b>Identity</b></p> <p>The client's identity must be verified. If an authorized representative (AR) applies on behalf of a group, the AR must verify his own <b>and</b> the client's identity.</p> <p>Documents used to verify identity may be originals or copies of the original document. Facsimiles or emails are <b>not</b> acceptable documents for identity.</p>	N/A	N/A	<i>Income and energy supplier data that allow program benefits to be provided to eligible individuals.</i>

<p>The following are examples of acceptable verification of identity:</p> <p>Driver's license.</p> <p>State-issued identification.</p> <p>School-issued identification.</p> <p>Document indicating a client's receipt of benefits under a program which requires verification of identity (SSI, RSDI).</p> <p>Identification for health benefits.</p> <p>Voter registration card.</p> <p>Birth certificate/record.</p> <p>U.S. military card or draft record.</p> <p>U.S. passport.</p> <p>Certificate of Naturalization (Department of Homeland Security (DHS) forms N-550 or N-570).</p> <p>Certificate of U.S. citizenship (DHS forms N-560 or N-561).</p> <p>Military dependent's identification card.</p> <p>Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood, or other U.S. American Indian/Alaska native tribal document.</p> <p>U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner card.</p>			
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<b>SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUESTS</b>			
<b>Describe the State's FY2012 policy in regards to requiring Social Security Numbers from applicants and/or household members applying for LIHEAP benefits.</b>	<b>Please describe whether the State's policy for requiring or not requiring Social Security numbers is new as of FY2012, or remaining the same.</b>	<b>If the State is not requiring Social Security Numbers of LIHEAP applicants and/or household members, please explain what supplementary measures are being employed to prevent fraud.</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p>Policy in Bridges Eligibility Manual (BEM) 223 states:</p> <p><b>DEPARTMENT POLICY</b></p> <p><b>SER</b></p> <p><b>SSN</b> refers to a Social Security number.</p> <p><b>SSA</b> refers to the Social Security Administration.</p> <p>Policy has been updated to include the following:</p> <p>Verify the SSN of each household member as well as the status of each person identified as an alien; see BEM 225 for acceptable verification sources.</p> <p>The data match with SSA is sufficient verification of citizenship.</p> <p>When an individual does not have a SSN, provide an SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card, or refer them to <a href="http://ssa.gov/ssnumber/">http://ssa.gov/ssnumber/</a> for application instructions.</p> <p>SSNs are checked with SSA for accuracy. A check in the Validated by SSA box on Bridges means SSA has verified that SSN for that individual. If SSA is unable to confirm the SSN, the specialist will receive a Bridges enumeration</p>	<p>Policy will remain the same for FY2012</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>All valid household members are reported for correct benefit determination.</i></p>

<p>task that requires action. The client must cooperate in resolving any errors.</p> <p><b>MORE THAN ONE SSN</b></p> <p>Procedures are in place to reconcile more than one SSN for a person.</p> <p><b>VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS</b></p> <p>Record the SSN verification source in Bridges for each SSN for which the Validated by SSA box is not checked. If an individual's SSN is not verified or the source is not valid for the individual's program(s), Bridges will list verification of SSN is needed on a DHS-3503, Verification Checklist, for each individual who's SSN must be verified.</p> <p><b>All Programs</b></p> <p>Verify cooperation in obtaining an SSN at application and when adding a member.</p> <p>File a photocopy of the client's verification of SSN application or SS-5 in the physical case record.</p> <p>Verification of an SSN may be needed to resolve an enumeration task or when two people claim the same SSN.</p> <p><b>Verification Sources</b></p> <p>The following sources in the SSN Application Verification field in Bridges are valid verification of an SSN application.</p> <p>SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card.</p> <p>SSA-5028, Receipt for Application for a Social Security number (allowed only for refugees for FIP, SDA, RAP, MA or AMP; allowed for all individuals for FAP).</p> <p>DHS-4557, Information About Your Baby's Social Security Card.</p> <p>SSA-2853, Information About When You Will Receive Your Baby's Social</p>			
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<p>Security Card.</p> <p>Michigan birth certificate with box 10b marked that an SSN and card were requested.</p> <p>Modified birth document that includes the minimum required information</p> <p>The minimum required information on a modified birth document is:</p> <p>Child's name.</p> <p>Child's date of birth.</p> <p>Parent(s) name(s).</p> <p>Name of hospital where child was born.</p> <p>Signature of hospital representative.</p> <p>Dated and check-marked annotation that SSN was requested.</p>			
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**CROSS-CHECKING SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS AGAINST GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS/DATABASES**

<p>Describe if and how the State used existing government systems and databases to verify applicant or household member identities in FY2011 and continuing in FY2012. (Social Security Administration Enumeration Verification System, prisoner databases, Government death records, etc.)</p>	<p>Please highlight which, if any, policies or strategies for using existing government databases will be newly implemented in FY2012.</p>	<p>If the State won't be cross checking Social Security Numbers and ID information with existing government databases, please describe how the State will supplement this fraud prevention strategy.</p>	<p>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</p>
<p>BAM 800 STATES:</p> <p><b>DEPARTMENT POLICY</b></p> <p>The Department of Human Services (DHS) routinely matches recipient and applicant data with other public and private agencies through computer data exchanges. Acknowledgments in DHS applications inform clients of the data matching process.</p> <p>Data exchanges assist in the verification of income, assets and other eligibility factors for DHS recipients and applicants.</p> <p>Data exchange reports must be reconciled with information contained in DHS case records.</p> <p><b>DATA EXCHANGES</b></p> <p>Data is currently exchanged with the following agencies:</p> <p>Social Security Administration (SSA).            Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA).            Michigan Department of Treasury (DOT).            Internal Revenue Services (IRS).            Michigan Department of Corrections (DOC).</p>	<p>In FY2012, Michigan plans to enhance the use of the verification systems to include a data match with the Michigan State Police to identify fugitive felons. This data match will include LIHEAP applicants and household members.</p> <p>Policy manuals will be revised with updated information on how data matches are received and used.</p>	<p>Until Michigan is able to complete computer enhancements for database matching, policy will be updated to require that eligibility specialists verify SSNs and ensure that LIHEAP applicants and household members are not deceased, in prison or in a long term care facility.</p>	<p><i>Use of all available database systems to make sound eligibility determination.</i></p>

<p>Specialists receive this information through the Consolidated Inquiry tool in Bridges that incorporates both earned and unearned income and through Bridges alerts called Task/Reminder.</p> <p><b>DATA EXCHANGE RECONCILIATION</b></p> <p>Information received from any computer data exchange must be reviewed and compared with the recipient's DHS record. Any discrepancies must be clarified.</p> <p>The standard of promptness for resolving information received from a computer match is 45 calendar days. Wage match information must be resolved within 30 days. The standard of promptness for resolving information received from new hires is <b>21 calendar days</b>.</p>			
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<b>VERIFYING APPLICANT INCOME</b>			
<b>Describe how the State or designee used State Directories of new hires or similar systems to confirm income eligibility in FY2011 and continuing in FY2012.</b>	<b>Please highlight any policies or strategies for using new hire directories which will be newly implemented in FY2012.</b>	<b>If the State won't be using new hire directories to verify applicant and household member incomes how will the State be verifying the that information?</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p>BAM 802 STATES:</p> <p><b>DEPARTMENT POLICY</b></p> <p>The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) regularly matches recipient employment data with the Michigan Department of Labor &amp; Economic Growth Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) through computer data exchange processes. Acknowledgments in DHS applications (DHS-1171, -4575, -4574B, DCH-373) inform clients of the data exchange process. These data exchanges assist in the verification of potential current employment, past employment history, and unemployment benefits.</p> <p><b>Department of Treasury Data Exchange</b></p> <p>The only data exchange with Treasury is New Hires. This process cross matches active DHS recipients with Treasury files established from W-4 records submitted by employers for new employees.</p> <p><b>Consolidated Inquiry</b></p> <p>Eligibility specialists are required to use the consolidated inquiry in Bridges to verify earned and unearned income that is made available through data exchange. Verification of social security benefits, unemployment benefits and child support payments is valid through this inquiry.</p>	<p>In FY2012, Michigan plans to enhance the use of the verification systems in place for the FIP, SDA, CDC, MA and FAP programs to include LIHEAP-only applicants.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>Effective income determination achieved through coordination across program lines.</i></p>

<p><b>TALX Work Number</b></p> <p>A contract for the TALX Work Number has been in effect for employment verification purposes since spring of 2008. This system offers real time access to employment records by allowing staff to search the employer database by the client's Social Security number.</p> <p>L-Letter L-10-020 was issued in an ongoing effort to ensure accurate income is being used to determine eligibility whenever a recipient or applicant reports earned income at the time of application.</p>			
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**PRIVACY-PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

<p>Describe the financial and operating controls in place in FY2011 that will continue in FY2012 to protect client information against improper use or disclosure.</p>	<p>Please highlight any controls or strategies from your plan which will be newly implemented as of FY2012.</p>	<p>If you don't have relevant physical or operational controls in place to ensure the security and confidentiality of private information disclosed by applicants, please explain why.</p>	<p>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</p>
<p><b>DEPARTMENT POLICY</b></p> <p>Information contained in all program case records is confidential and may be released <b>only</b> under limited circumstances for five general purposes: program administration, other government officials' access, charitable organization access, general public access, and client access.</p> <p>You must <b>not</b> discuss with unauthorized persons, either during or after working hours, information about individual clients that you learn through your employment.</p> <p>A signed application for assistance provides consent for purposes of program administration. No other written consent is required.</p> <p>If you are <b>not</b> sure the requested information is necessary to administer programs, <b>inform the client</b> of the request and obtain a <b>signed consent</b> before making the information available.</p> <p><b>Encryption of Private Information and Social Security Numbers</b></p> <p>The encryption of private information, particularly social security numbers is required when emails are sent to an email account outside state government. Emails sent through government networks are automatically encrypted.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>Clear and secure methods that maintain confidentiality and safeguard the private information of applicants.</i></p>

<p>Emails sent outside state government are at a much higher security risk than those sent through government emails. Identity theft is a problematic issue. The Department of Human Services has an obligation to protect private information and social security numbers.</p> <p>Below is information from the Department of Information Technology regarding the secure transfer methods for sensitive information and in particular client social security numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a State of Michigan email account for the intended recipient. (The State of Michigan email system is maintained in an encrypted format).</li><li>• Use WinZip encryption feature to encrypt the file. Send the encrypted file as an attachment to an email message. The recipient will need to use WinZip to read the file. Send a separate email containing the password to the recipient. The WinZip encryption process is attached.</li></ul>			
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<b>LIHEAP BENEFITS POLICY</b>			
<b>Describe FY2011 State policies continuing in FY2012 for protecting against fraud when making payments, or providing benefits to energy vendors on behalf of clients.</b>	<b>Please highlight any fraud prevention efforts relating to making payments or providing benefits which will be newly implemented in FY2012.</b>	<b>If the State doesn't have policy in place to protect against improper payments when making payments or providing benefits on behalf of clients, what supplementary steps is the State taking to ensure program integrity.</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p>Michigan establishes yearly limits for each LIHEAP service. The limit is also referred to as the yearly issuance cap. This cap is the maximum amount that can be paid for a particular service. Payments are applied to the cap of the client. Client means the applicant for or recipient of SER and includes all group members. So every individual in the group, who benefits from the payment, including minor children, will have payments applied to their individual cap. The payments made to cap follow the individual even if they move from one household to another. The individuals can receive assistance more than once in a fiscal year but only up to the yearly cap amount. To ensure that duplicate benefits are not issued, Bridges tracks all energy service authorizations and cap limits for each individual. This policy is supported by State Administrative Rules and is also located in the SER Business Process document which is available to all staff. There are edits built into the computer system to prevent issuances that exceed the cap. Any payments made that exceed the cap must be approved by the program office as an exception.</p>	<p>Local offices are not allowed to pay energy bills using local office funds. All payments to energy providers must be made through Bridges. Both state policy and Bridges supports centralized payments to providers. Policy also identifies the procedure for collecting any overpayment or incorrect issuance to a provider.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>Authorized energy vendors are receiving payments on behalf of LIHEAP eligible clients.</i></p>

<b>PROCEDURES FOR UNREGULATED ENERGY VENDORS</b>			
<b>Describe the State's FY2011 procedures continuing in FY2012 for averting fraud and improper payments when dealing with bulk fuel dealers of heating oil, propane, wood and other un-regulated energy utilities.</b>	<b>Please highlight any strategies policy in this area which will be newly implemented in FY2012.</b>	<b>If you don't have a firm plan for averting fraud when dealing with unregulated energy vendors, please describe how the State is ensuring program integrity.</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p><b>PROVIDERS</b></p> <p>Energy providers are enrolled in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). All LIHEAP providers are enrolled in Bridges by Central Office.</p> <p><b>PROVIDER ENROLLMENT</b></p> <p>All provider enrollments will be made in Bridges and is called the Provider Management System. Provider numbers will be assigned by Provider Management. Payments will continue to be made through the Bridges payroll system.</p> <p>A file clearance using the provider inquiry format must be done to determine if a provider is already enrolled, and to obtain the provider ID number used in making payments to that particular provider.</p> <p>When a provider is initially enrolled, the provider's name, address, telephone number, tax identification number and eligibility type. Bridges Provider Management now stores the user ID of the person who enrolls or maintains the provider. This is an internal control measure.</p> <p><b>CHANGES TO PROVIDER ENROLLMENT</b></p> <p>The provider must request changes to the Provider Management System (e.g., name, address) in writing. The request should include the new information, the provider's tax identification number &amp; provider ID</p>	<p>The provider enrollment form (DHS-355) will be revised to require the provider to supply their date of birth (DOB) if they are using their Social Security Number (SSN). A work request will be submitted to upgrade Bridges to allow for a monthly death match which will close the provider if there is a match. The DOB is needed in order to complete the death match.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>Participating vendors are thoroughly researched and inspected before benefits are issued.</i></p>

<p>number.</p> <p>Changes to name, address, telephone number or tax identification number information for LIHEAP providers may only be made by central office.</p> <p><b>Provider Enrollment Terminations - Central Office</b></p> <p>Local offices cannot delete or end date the LIHEAP providers. When action is needed, the provider must notify DHS in writing and send the notification to DHS central office.</p> <p><b><u>UNREGULATED VENDORS</u></b></p> <p>Complaints about unregulated vendors are made directly to the Department of Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. Once the complaint is filed, the AG's Consumer Protection Division contacts the vendor to resolve the complaint.</p>			
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**VERIFYING THE AUTHENTICITY OF ENERGY VENDORS**

Describe State FY2011 policies continuing in FY2012 for verifying the authenticity of energy vendors being paid under LIHEAP, as part of the State's procedure for averting fraud.	Please highlight any policies for verifying vendor authenticity which will be newly implemented in FY2012.	If you don't have a system in place for verifying vendor authenticity, please describe how the State can ensure that funds are being distributed through valid intermediaries?	Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies
<p>When a provider is initially enrolled, the provider's name, address, telephone number, tax identification number, eligibility type are entered on the Provider Management System.</p> <p>A file clearance using the provider inquiry format must be done to determine if a provider is already enrolled on the Provider Management System and to obtain the provider ID number.</p> <p>The LIHEAP provider must request changes to the MPS provider file information (e.g., name, address) in writing. The request should include the new information, the provider's tax identification number and the provider ID number. Provider information may be updated ONLY by central office.</p>	<p>The provider enrollment form (DHS-355) will be revised to require the provider to supply their date of birth if they are using their SSN. Bridges will do a monthly death match and will close the provider if there is a match. The DOB is needed in order to do this match.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>An effective process that effectively confirms the existence of entities receiving federal funds.</i></p>

<b>TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE</b>			
<p>In regards to fraud prevention, please describe elements of your FY2011 plan continuing in FY2012 for training and providing technical assistance to (a) employees, (b) non-governmental staff involved in the eligibility process, (c) clients, and (d) energy vendors</p>	<p>Please highlight specific elements of your training regimen and technical assistance resources from your plan which will represent newly implemented in FY2012.</p>	<p>If you don't have a system in place for anti-fraud training or technical assistance for employees, clients or energy vendors, please describe your strategy for ensuring all employees understand what is expected of them and what tactics they are permitted to employ.</p>	<p>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</p>
<p>DHS employees received extensive training prior to the roll-out of our new computer system - Bridges. Continued computer-based training is also available for all employees to enhance their skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Training was provided for Self Service Processing Center staff in conjunction with the implementation of electronic LIHEAP applications.</p> <p>Meetings with participating energy providers, including technical staff, are held to ensure accuracy of data exchanged through a web service used for electronic applications.</p> <p>DHS provides training as requested for interested parties (legislative staff, Administrative Law Judges, energy providers, etc.) to explain LIHEAP and eligibility requirements.</p> <p>Bridges provides help screens and wizards for technical assistance. A Bridges wizard is an online tool that provides step-by-step instructions on how to complete a specific, common task within</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>The timely and thorough resolution of weaknesses or reportable conditions as revealed by the audit.</i></p>

<p>Bridges. Help screens are also provided for clients who opt to submit their LIHEAP application through the online process.</p> <p>The DHS public website provides forms and instructions for LIHEAP applications. In addition, the SER eligibility manual is available for viewing online. The manual provides eligibility and verification requirements that must be met in order to receive a crisis payment.</p>			
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<b>AUDITS OF LOCAL ADMINISTERING AGENCIES</b>			
<b>Please describe the annual audit requirements in place for local administering agencies in FY2011 that will continue into FY 2012.</b>	<b>Please describe new policies or strategies to be implemented in FY2012.</b>	<b>If you don't have specific audit requirements for local administering agencies, please explain how the Grantee will ensure that LIHEAP funds are properly audited under the Single Audit Act requirements.</b>	<b>Necessary outcomes from these systems and strategies</b>
<p><b>WEATHERIZATION MONITORING</b>  <u>Community Action Agencies and Limited Purpose Agencies:</u>            Program and fiscal operations of sub-grantees are monitored using the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracts with Weatherization and crisis assistance sub-grantees require compliance with mutually agreed upon budgets and established accounting procedures.</li> <li>• DHS staff conducts on-site visits to each sub-grantee reviewing application processes, eligibility documentation, payment systems, accounting procedures, service delivery, compliance with technical weatherization requirements and other contractual responsibilities.</li> <li>• DHS Office of Internal Audit review of sub-grantee A-133 Audit reports.</li> <li>• Staff review of regularly submitted sub-grantee reports.</li> <li>• Routine staff telephone contact with sub-grantees to answer questions regarding program operation.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A	<i>Reduce improper payments, maintain local agency integrity, and benefits awarded to eligible households.</i>

**Additional Information**

Please attach further information that describes the Grantee's Program Integrity Policies, including supporting documentation from program manuals, including pages/sections from established LIHEAP policies and procedures.