

2026 Benefit Matrix

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Block Grant Maximum Income Eligibility based on 60% of the State Median Income:

| 60% | |
|-------------|------------|
| FAMILY SIZE | ANNUAL SMI |
| 1 | \$30,629 |
| 2 | \$40,054 |
| 3 | \$49,478 |
| 4 | \$58,903 |
| 5 | \$68,327 |
| 6 | \$77,751 |

Reference ACF HHS Policy Guidance for additional households: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/policy-guidance/liheap-im-2024-02-federal-poverty-guidelines-and-state-median-income-estimates>

Crisis Assistance Benefits (Electric and Non-electric Vendors)

| Maximum: | Vulnerable Household | Non-vulnerable Household |
|----------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 60% SMI | Up to \$1,000.00 | Up to \$1,000.00 |

Non-Emergency Benefits (Electric and Non-electric Vendors)

South Carolina's non-emergency LIHEAP benefit matrix is intended to provide vulnerable and high-burden households the highest non-emergency LIHEAP benefit to offset the cost of home heating/cooling expenses. Each eligible household receives a minimum non-emergency benefit of \$200. Additional benefits are awarded if the household/a member of the household is: elderly (\$75); disabled (\$50); household income 70% of the 60% SMI or less (\$175); child 5 years of age or younger (\$50); household energy burden is demonstrated ((20% or more of income used for utilities) \$175); heats with fuel (\$75); a veteran (\$50). The maximum non-emergency benefit during the heating season is \$850. The maximum non-emergency benefit during the cooling season is \$775 (no fuel benefit awarded May 1 – September 30).

| Maximum: | Description | Vulnerable Household | Non-Vulnerable Household |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 60% SMI | Minimum Benefit | \$200 | \$200 |
| 60% SMI | Child Age 5 or < | \$50 | - |
| 60% SMI | Energy Burden | \$175 | \$175 |
| 60% SMI | Elderly, Age 60+ | \$75 | - |
| 60% SMI | Disabled | \$50 | - |
| 60% SMI | Income <70% of 60% SMI | \$175 | - |
| 60% SMI | Fuel | \$75 | \$75 |
| 60% SMI | Veteran | \$50 | \$50 |
| Maximum Non-Emergency Heating Award: | | | \$850.00 |
| Maximum Non-Emergency Cooling Award: | | | \$775.00 |

VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS & NONEMERGENCY BENEFIT MATRIX DEFINED

(1) Elderly - Individuals aged 60 years or older.

(2) Disabled – Individuals must provide proof of disability. Proof of disability is to be provided from a current year's award letter or SSI report from the Social Security Administration (SSA) verifying disability, a current year's letter from Vocational Rehabilitation or the Veterans Administration, Disability Income Check, or an official handicapped sticker bearing the appropriate photograph. Disability may be either temporary or permanent. This medical documentation must be attached to the application on file.

(3) Income is at 70% of the 60% SMI or less - Total household income for the last 30 days, including the date of application must be at or below 70% of the 60% SMI. Reference the current program year's Federal Guidelines for State Median Income by Household Size.

(4) Household with Children Age 5< - One or more children living in household age 5 or younger.

(5) Energy Burden – An Energy Burden must be calculated using only the current month's home energy cost (ex., kWh or Therms). To determine the Energy Burden for electric households, multiply total monthly household income by 20% (.20) = PRODUCT. Because fuel expands, tanks and cylinders are never filled to the maximum size of the tank. Instead, tanks are only filled to about 80 to 85 percent of their capacity. **To determine the Energy Burden for fuel customers, multiply the cost to fill the customer's tank by 80%.** If the current energy bill is higher than the PRODUCT, then an energy burden has been demonstrated. The current home energy cost should exclude all non-utility and unallowable charges.

(6) Fuel – According to the LIHEAP Performance Measures, fuel is defined as Natural Gas, Fuel Oil/Kerosene, or Propane (LPG – liquefied petroleum gas). For an additional benefit, the household must heat with one of the fuels mentioned above. Proof of fuel service must be in the file.

(7) Veterans - Individuals must provide proof of veteran status. Documentation must be in the customer's file.