Common Issues and Reminders for Completing the FY 2017 Household Report

LIHEAP Webinar hosted by the Office of Community Services (OCS) in the Administration for Families and Children (ACF) presented by APPRISE under contract to OCS

November 29, 2017

Welcome:
Leon Litow (OCS Staff)
Josephine Rago-Adia (OCS Staff)

Presenter:
Melissa Torgerson (Verve Associates)

Introduction & Welcome

- Welcome & Reminders

  - Leon Litow, OCS Staff
  - Josephine Rago-Adia, OCS Staff

- Reporting Requirements and Data Validation

  - Melissa Torgerson, Verve Associates

Presenter(s):
Leon Litow & Melissa Torgerson

Timeline and Liaisons

- Household Report Action Transmittal and Instructions: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/action-transmittal-2018-02-household-report-short-form-and-long-form-for-fy-2017

- Final FY 2017 Household Report is due in OLDC on **December 15, 2017**.

- Contact regional liaisons for guidance about program operations.

- Liaison Contact Information: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/division-of-energy-assistance-federal-staff

Presenter(s): Josephine Rago-Adia

Webinar Overview

- This webinar focuses on the LIHEAP Household Report **Long Form** *(the Long Form is required for States and Territories).*

- Final Household Report data is due in OLDC on December 15, 2017.

- A more in-depth Household Report webinar (providing a line-by-line report overview) was presented on November 15, 2017.

- This webinar focuses on common issues and reminders for completing the FY 2017 Household Report, including:
    - Household Report Rules (Consistency, Using the Notes Section)
    - Data Validations and Checks
    - Proactive Emails
    - "Check Before You Submit" Document
    - Common Reporting Issues
    - Grantee Resources

- Breaks for Q&A

Presenter(s):
Melissa Torgerson

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Household Report Rules
Consistent Reporting Across Grantees

- LIHEAP is a block grant, giving grantees the freedom to design unique and diverse programs.

- The Household Report is an OCS required report that all grantees must complete as part of their application for LIHEAP funds.

- OCS must report consistent information to Congress, even though grantees can have unique programs.

- The Household Report allows OCS to report uniform information across grantees.

Presenter(s): Melissa Torgerson

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Household Report Rules
Using the Notes Section

- If there is anything out of the ordinary with how your program is run or anything about your program operation that requires explanation, add a note in the Notes section.

- OCS uses these notes in tables and footnotes in the Report to Congress.

- Example on next slide

  - *Excerpt from FY 2014 Report to Congress: Table III-2. Number of LIHEAP assisted households, by type of assistance and state, as reported by states, FY 2014*

Presenter(s):
Melissa Torgerson

Household Report Rules
FY 2014 Report to Congress Example

LIHEAP Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2014: **Part III**. **Household Data**

Table III-2. Number of LIHEAP assisted households, by type of assistance and state, as reported by states, FY 2014[1]

State	Heating assistance	Cooling assistance	Winter / year-round crisis assistance	Summer crisis assistance	Weatherization assistance	Any type of assistance[2]
Total	5,739,562	672,586	1,577,183	162,550	83,274	NA
Alabama	58,010	52,877	13,118	13,465	116	89,251
Alaska[3]	10,425	0	1,185	0	0	10,425
Arizona[4]	9,282	17,237	2,374	4,409	468	NA
Arkansas	60,637	48,437	15,513	6,997	523	87,496
California[4 5 6 7]	136,526	--	74,367	0	14,739	219,178
Colorado[5]	90,005	0	14,741	0	747	90,066
Connecticut[7 8]	102,681	0	35,428	0	0	102,681
Delaware[5 7]	15,864	10,185	2,504	0	96	16,445
Dist. of Col.	8,624	231	3,561	58	221	12,493
Florida	41,029	49,505	46,880	50,659	1,860	148,926
Georgia[9]	122,861	0	38,945	0	NA	NA
Hawaii[4]	8,937	--	592	0	0	9,529
Idaho[5]	47,701	0	2,332	0	602	50,263
Illinois[5]	264,080	56,807	50,898	0	1,816	335,843

[7] The following states provided nominal benefits for SNAP households and reported the number of households assisted: California, 1,996,127 - $0.10 benefits; Connecticut, 100,000 $20.01 benefits; Delaware, 13,268 - $20.01 benefits; Maine, 1,073 - $5, $21, or $26 benefits; Massachusetts, 114,576 - $1 or $21; New Jersey, 259,116 - $1 benefits; Michigan, 809,649 - $1 benefits; Montana, 689 - $25 or 5% of the amount of a regular LIHEAP benefit; New York, 252,049 - $21 benefits; Oregon, 29,512 - $1 or $21 benefits; Pennsylvania, 449,664 - $1, $20.01, or $21 to $24 benefits; Rhode Island, 74,157 - $1 or $20.01 benefits; Vermont, 13,852 - $21 benefits; Washington, 713,116 - $1 benefits.

Data Validations and Checks
Data Review

- APPRISE checks data in the Household Report using the following:

  - **Internal consistency checks within the Household Report**

    - See "Step-by-Step Overview of the FY 2017 Household Report" Webinar for detailed reporting explanations and guidance.

  - **Comparison of current year data to the Model Plan**

    - A report is flagged if Model Plan indicates the grantee will provide a particular type of assistance, but no households are reported in Household Report (and vice versa).

  - **Comparison of current year data to previous year data**

    - A report is flagged if households were served with a particular type of assistance in the previous year but no households were served in the current year (and vice versa) .

    - A report is flagged if the number of households served with a particular type of assistance in the current year is 10 times more or less than the previous year.

Data Validations and Checks
Warnings and Fatal Errors in OLDC

- Many of these validation checks are programmed into OLDC, and a warning or error message will appear if a check fails.

  - Warning Messages indicate data that may be correct, but require confirmation and additional explanation in the "Notes" section of the form.

  - Fatal Error Messages indicate inconsistent data that must be corrected before grantees are able to submit their Household Report in OLDC.

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Melissa Torgerson

Data Validations and Checks
Addressing Warnings and Fatal Errors

- If a warning message appears, but you have an explanation for the warning (and have confirmed that the data is correct), add a note addressing the warning.

- If a warning message appears and you do not know how to resolve it, contact APPRISE for assistance.

- If a fatal error occurs which will prevent you from submitting your report, contact APPRISE and we will work together to resolve the reporting issue.

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Questions

Grantee Questions regarding Rules for Reporting
or Data Validations and Checks?

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Melissa Torgerson

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Proactive Emails

- In November, APPRISE sent each grantee an email to remind them of issues identified during the FY 2016 Household Report review.

- Emails were customized for each grantee to draw attention to topics where follow-up was required last year.

- Grantees are encouraged to review their FY 2017 data to ensure that these issues are addressed prior to submitting their final FY 2017 Household Report.

  - This will minimize the time needed to revisit and revise your report after submission.

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Melissa Torgerson

"Check Before You Submit" Document
Overview

- The "Check Before You Submit" document is a new resource for LIHEAP grantees in FY 2017.

- This resource outlines many of the checks APPRISE uses during review of grantees' Households Reports.

- Grantees are strongly encouraged to use the "Check Before You Submit" resource to proactively identify and correct any reporting issues before submission.

  - *Using this tool will reduce follow-up from APPRISE and the need to substantially revise reports after submission.*

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Melissa Torgerson

"Check Before You Submit" Document
How to Use to Review Data

- Grantees should review all of the checks in the "Check Before You Submit" list. If grantees can answer "Yes" to all of the questions, they are ready to certify and submit the LIHEAP Household Report.

- More complicated checks have longer explanations

  - ***Be sure to review the explanations that accompany each check to make sure you cover all aspects of the check.***

- "Check Before You Submit" Document was emailed by APPRISE in November, and can also be found on the Performance Management website at: https://liheappm.acf.hhs.gov/important-links

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Melissa Torgerson

Common Reporting Issues
Top 3 Issues Identified in FY 2016

- Bill Payment Assistance Reporting

- Model Plan and Household Report Inconsistencies

- Confirmation or Assistance with Submission of Final Data

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Melissa Torgerson

Common Reporting Issues
Bill Payment Assistance Reporting

- **24 grantees faced problems reporting households served with bill payment assistance.**

  - Bill Payment Assisted Households are reported in Section I, Line 6 of the Household Report Long Form.

  - FY 2016 was the first year this data field was required.

  - Bill Payment Assistance includes households receiving heating, cooling, and/or crisis assistance benefits which pay a share of energy bill(s) or utility deposits.

  - Grantees are encouraged to reach out to APPRISE if there are any questions regarding this data field.

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Melissa Torgerson

Common Reporting Issues
Model Plan and Household Report Inconsistencies

- **17 grantees had inconsistencies between their LIHEAP Household Report and Model Plan.**

  - If a grantee indicated that it planned to provide a particular type of assistance in their FY 2017 Model Plan, we would expect to see households reported under that type of assistance in their FY 2017 Household Report.

  - We would expect grantees to only report households that fall within the gross income thresholds specified in their Model Plans for each type of assistance.

  - After confirming that their reported data is correct, grantees should add notes to explain any inconsistencies with their Model Plan.

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Common Reporting Issues
Submission of Final Data

- **12 grantees failed to confirm that they reported final data.**

  - The preliminary Household Report (due on September 1) may contain non-final or estimated data. However, the final Household Report (due December 15) must contain final data from grantee data tracking systems and program records.

  - **Once all data in the Household Report are final, grantees must:**

    - Select "no" in response to the question in the Instructions Section: *"Do the data below include estimated figures?"*

    - Uncheck any "estimated data" checkboxes in Sections I and IV.

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Questions

Grantee Questions regarding Proactive Emails,
the "Check Before You Submit" Document,
and Common Reporting Issues?

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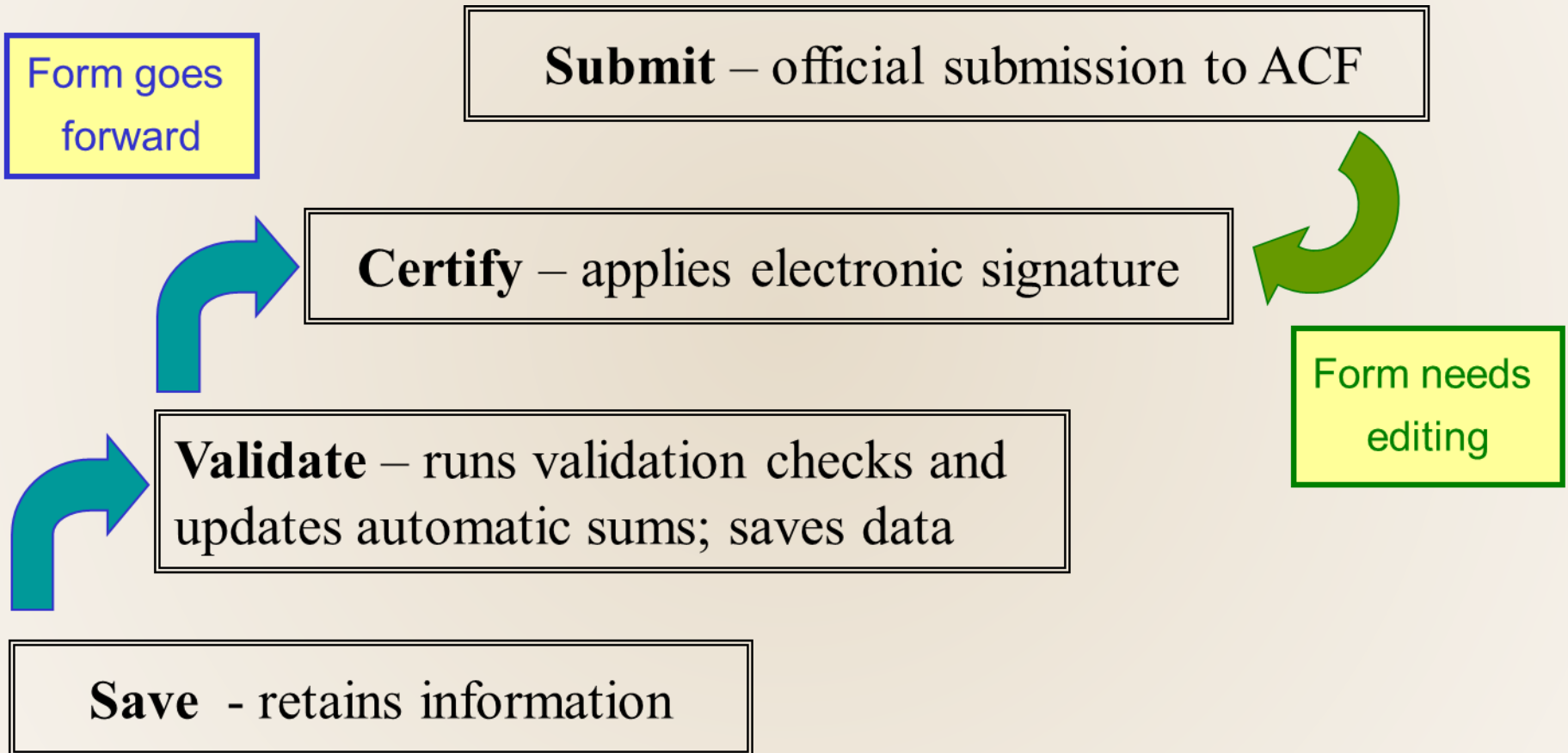
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Final Reminders
Reporting Deadlines

- The final Household Report is due in OLDC on **December 15, 2017**.

- The Household Report must be:

  - Entered in OLDC
  - Saved in OLDC
  - Certified by the appropriate person
  - Submitted by the appropriate person

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Final Reminders
Data Submission and Review

Form goes forward

Submit – official submission to ACF

Certify – applies electronic signature

Form needs editing

Validate – runs validation checks and updates automatic sums; saves data

Save - retains information

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Final Reminders
Household Report Resources

- **Household Report Action Transmittal and Instructions:**

  https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/action-transmittal-2018-02-household-report-short-form-and-long-form-for-fy-2017

- **"Check Before You Submit" Tool:**

  https://liheappm.acf.hhs.gov/important-links

- **Past Years' Household Report Data:**

  https://liheappm.acf.hhs.gov/data_warehouse/index.php?report=homepage

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Final Reminders
OLDC Resources

- OLDC is accessed through Grant Solutions.

- Log-in to Grant Solutions at https://www.grantsolutions.gov/gs

- Once logged in, click "OLDC" in the top taskbar to access the OLDC homepage.

- If you need assistance, please contact Grants Center Of Excellence Systems Help Desk:

  - (202) 401-5282 or (866) 577-0771

  - help@grantsolutions.gov

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Final Reminders
Support Resources

OCS liaisons

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/division-of-energy-assistance-federal-staff

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Grantee Questions

Final Grantee Questions?

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