

LIHWAP Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to many commonly asked questions about the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) can be found in this section.

What are LIHWAP benefits?

LIHWAP is a federally-funded program with the purpose to assist low income households that spend a high proportion of their income on water and sewer services. LIHWAP benefits can assist households who have past due bills for water and/or sewer services.

How will I receive LIHWAP benefits for my household?

Benefits are paid directly to the household's water and/or sewer vendor(s) that supplies the household's water and/or sewer.

How much will I receive in LIHWAP benefits?

LIHWAP benefits are based on the actual amount of current water and/or sewer arrears, up to a maximum of \$2,500 per water or sewer provider, or \$5,000 if water and sewer services are combined, per applicant household.

Will I need to pay back my LIHWAP benefits?

No. Households who receive LIHWAP benefits will not have to pay back the benefits.

The only instance that would require repayment would be if there is a determination that the application submitted was fraudulent and the application should not have been approved.

When will I receive LIHWAP benefits?

You will receive a LIHWAP Notice of Eligibility Decision advising you whether or not your application has been approved or denied within 30 business days from the day your signed and completed application is received. If you are missing information your application may be pended for up to 10 business days which is not included in the application processing time.

If approved, please allow at least 90 days for your vendor to credit your water and/or sewer account with your LIHWAP benefit.

What if I disagree with my LIHWAP Notice of Eligibility Decision or I have not received a LIHWAP Notice of Eligibility Decision within thirty (30) business days?

If you disagree with your LIHWAP Notice of Eligibility Decision or if it has been more than thirty (30) business days since OTDA received your signed and completed application and you have not been told of the eligibility decision, an appeal may be requested. Incomplete applications may be pended for up to ten (10) business days and the pending period is not counted in the thirty (30) business day timeframe for providing notification. Applicants who are denied or disagree with the amount of assistance for which they were approved have sixty (60) days after receiving their determination to request an appeal. Appeals may be requested by:

Email:

NYSLIHWAP.appeals@otda.ny.gov

Telephone:

(833) 690-0208

Writing:

NYS LIHWAP
PO Box 1789
Albany, NY 12201

Are there other benefits or programs besides LIHWAP that can help my family?

Yes. You can prescreen for eligibility and apply for other programs and services by visiting mybenefits.ny.gov.

What if I already receive assistance from a program through my water and/or sewer provider?

You may still be eligible for LIHWAP benefits.

My water and/or sewer arrears have been levied to my property tax bill. Am I still eligible to apply?

Yes. You may submit a copy of your tax bill with your application.

What is considered a past due bill?

Any water and/or sewer bill that is twenty (20) days past due.

Can LIHWAP help with my broken pipes or leaky faucets?

No. LIHWAP funds are only available for water and/or sewer bill assistance. There may be other programs available to assist you. You may apply for [Temporary Assistance](#) online at myBenefits.ny.gov or fill out the [application form](#) and file it at your [Local Department of Social Services](#).

You may also contact your [Local Department of Social Services](#) online, or by calling the toll-free OTDA Hotline at 1-800-342-3009.

Where do I go if I have questions about LIHWAP benefits?

For more information about LIHWAP please call the NYS LIHWAP Call Center at 1-833-690-0208 or call the toll-free OTDA Hotline at 1-800-342-3009. You may also email LIHWAP at: NYSLIHWAP@otda.ny.gov.

Who should complete and sign the application?

The application should be completed by the person who has primary and direct responsibility for payment of the water, sewer, or combined water and sewer bill.

What address should I list?

You must list your permanent, primary residence.