



# Notice of Instruction

8929 Brittany Way  
Tampa, FL 33619  
(813) 740-3888

## Notice of Instruction Number 012021: EHEAP Categorical Eligibility

**TO:** All PSA 6 EHEAP Providers

**FROM:** Abbie Walters, Senior Contract Manager

**DATE:** January 20, 2021

**SUBJECT:** EHEAP Categorical Financial Eligibility

---

### **Purpose and Objective:**

To expand the class of eligible clients to receive EHEAP services, EHEAP providers may now consider clients “categorically” eligible. Effective immediately, an applicant may be considered categorically eligible (also referred to as “automatically” income eligible) to receive EHEAP benefits if any member of their household is receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Social Security (SSI), or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Applicants under this class will be considered eligible to receive EHEAP services regardless if their household income exceeds 150% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG). The use of categorically eligible should only be used for applicant households whose income exceeds 150% of the FPG.

### **Background:**

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) submitted a request in the 2021 LIHEAP State Plan to allow categorically eligible class to receive EHEAP/LIHEAP benefits. Categorical Eligibility, defined in 2605(b)(2)(A) – Assurance 2, and 2605(c)(1)(A), 2605(b)(8A) – Assurance 8 is now an admissible class of eligible clients under the Florida EHEAP/LIHEAP assistance. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has approved the categorically eligible class for Florida EHEAP/LIHEAP and, unless notified, this expansion class category will remain effective for the future program years for EHEAP/LIHEAP assistance.

**CIRTS:**

The DOEA is modifying the CIRTS EHEAP screen to accommodate eligibility determinants for tracking and reporting purposes.

Once the DOEA modifies the CIRTS EHEAP screen, providers must go back into each applicant's record and update the eligibility section to reflect that the applicant was categorically eligible. SCC will provide notification once CIRTS has been updated.

**Documentation:**

Providers are still responsible for collecting all required documentation to process an EHEAP application. Applicants approved for EHEAP services under this authority are required to provide EHEAP intake workers with documentation of total household income and proof (such as an award letter) that TANF, SSI, and/or SNAP is received by a household member. This documentation must be maintained in the client file.

On the Client File Content Checklist, question number nine asks if "The household's total gross income is calculated correctly and is at or below 150% of the OMB Federal Poverty Level for the household size." For categorically eligible households, providers are to mark "NO" and write "categorically eligible" in the comments section.

Any needed modifications to EHEAP forms will be completed as needed and will most likely occur with the issuance of the 2020 contracts. If workarounds are needed in the meantime, they will be addressed.

Until CIRTS and EHEAP forms are updated, for applicant households who qualify and are awarded utility assistance through the categorically eligible method, providers must write, "Categorically Eligible" on the Eligibility Worksheet, in "Section Six: Income Eligibility Determination," in the space provided to show the income calculation (either with a calculator tape or hand-written). This will be in addition to the income calculations.

This notice is effective immediately. If you have any questions, please contact your contract manager. Thank you.