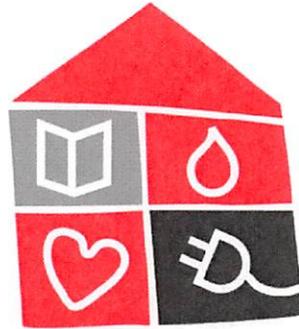


Exhibit D



Home Energy
Assistance Fund
Aid. Educate. Conserve.

**Arizona Community Action Association
Home Energy Assistance Fund
SFY-2016**

Policy Manual

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

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Mission

The Home Energy Assistance Fund develops and coordinates resources through education, advocacy, financial assistance and partnerships to help Arizona families meet their basic energy needs and move toward economic stability.

Purpose and Principles

The ACAA Home Energy Assistance Fund, also referred to as the “Fund”, has been established to provide assistance to Arizona households needing assistance in managing their energy burdens. The tenets of the program include:

- Crisis prevention – to guard against disconnection, to facilitate or to establish reconnection of natural gas, electric services, and other non regulated fuel sources;
- Be an adjunct to currently existing energy assistance resources;
- Be a “hand up” not a “hand out”;
- Empower administering agencies with the discretion to assist families as needed.

Household Eligibility

An Eligible Applicant

The applicant must be an adult household member. The applicant must provide verification of household membership. Verification includes but is not limited to: driver’s license with household address, a post office marked document, or an authorized statement from a third party such as a bank statement.

If the applicant is not a member of the household, in order to apply for assistance, s/he must show evidence of a Power of Attorney or a notarized statement, or any other acceptable document authorizing him/her to represent the household.

Relatives of Applicants

Intake workers are not permitted to complete applications for their own relatives to the first-cousin level including step and in-law relatives. Specifically parents, siblings, spouses, aunts, and uncles are to be interviewed by another intake worker, the Program Manager/Supervisor or Director. Upon request, and when possible, Home Energy Assistance Fund staff may provide application intake.

Agency Employees or Other Employees of Sub-Contracted Entity, as Applicants

Agency employees and/or other employees of the sub-contracted entity shall not be denied the right to apply for and receive services due to their employment with the sub-contracted entity.

These individuals or members of their households may apply for assistance. Application intake for an Agency employee must be conducted, eligibility determined, and authorized by the next level of supervision. Upon special request, and if available, a Home Energy Assistance Fund staff member may provide the intake of an application.

Services to Native Americans Living on Reservation

Agencies will provide Home Energy Assistance Fund bill assistance services to Native Americans living on tribal reservations. The amount of funding to be used to serve families living on reservation is to be no less than the proportion of all Native Americans living on reservation within their respective service territory. Agencies are responsible for managing the outreach and referral processes in order to serve this population.

Income Eligibility

Household income level will be limited to 200% FPIG¹. Refer to the **Determining Household Income** section of the Policy Manual for methods in determining the household income.

Utility Status

Applicants with a delinquent account², a disconnect notice or who are without utility service are eligible for assistance. Intake workers have the discretion to extend special consideration for assistance to households demonstrating hardship and have a past due notice or a large outstanding balance. Applicants are not required to be the customer or record but must provide verification of the relationship between the utility services address and the applicant residential address.

Definition of Crisis

It is the intake worker's responsibility to determine the crisis reason and its relationship to the client's current need for services. The crisis reason **may** be supported with the necessary documentation and/or verification when applicable.

Crisis Reasons³:

1. Loss or reduction of income or public assistance benefits or delay in receiving public assistance benefits.
2. Unexpected and/or unplanned expenses that caused lack of resources.
3. A condition that endangers the health and safety of the household.

Sincere Effort to Pay

Applicants are expected to have demonstrated an effort of payment over the prior 90 days, but it is not required. There is no minimum dollar amount required to demonstrate effort of payment.

Housing Status

Assistance may be provided for individual residential utility accounts. Assistance may also be granted if utilities are included with rent if proper verification is provided⁴.

¹ Applicants over the 200% FPIG income guideline could qualify based on demonstration of need

² An account that is one or more days past due and current charges are eligible

³ Refer to the Glossary of Terms for detailed examples of crisis reasons

HEAF Policies Procedures 5/2015

Energy Burden

The household Energy Burden will also be used to determine eligibility for a grant. The energy Burden is determined by dividing the household's one month utility costs by the last 30 days of income. Refer to the **Determining Energy Burden** section of the Policy Manual for a detailed process.

Grants Approvals

Grant Amounts

The total assistance possible is a maximum of \$500. Payment(s) may include current and past due amounts including late charges, deposits, and reestablishment fees.

M-Power® and Other Prepay Energy Sources

The energy burden for SRP M-Power® customers and other cash-based energy resources will be the same as described in the **Determining Energy Burden** section. **A history of purchases from the vendor will be required to show purchases made in the past 30 days.** The client also may be required to present any purchase receipts that might fall between the usage statement and the time of the application. Specific to SRP M-Power® customers, it will be important to identify if the client has any debt on the account and what percentage of the purchases made have been applied to the debt and applied to the forward balance to determine an accurate energy burden.

The use of the funds, not to exceed \$500, will be used to eliminate any debt on the account and then to alleviate the crisis. The intake worker may determine the amount needed to sustain the utility for the household until the next source of income or from an evaluation of the current energy burden⁵. The intake worker may also take into consideration other past usage and the weather at that time to determine the grant amount. It is important to communicate to the utility vendor what portion of the grant will be applied to the debt and what portion will be applied to the forward balance.

If the debt on the account exceeds \$500, the forward balance and amount to pay off the debt can be determined by working backwards. First determine the forward balance needed to alleviate the crisis and then the remaining money available will be applied to the debt.

⁴ Evidence may include a copy of the lease or a note from the landlord.

⁵ Forward balance cannot not exceed 150% of the current energy burden.

Example 1:

MPower customer

Back balance = \$150

30 day need = \$100

Payback percentage required by SRP: 40%

Total grant: \$250

The case log must note that \$150 is earmarked for balance payoff. Otherwise, the \$250 will automatically be posted with 60% going to purchase (\$150) and 40% going to payoff (\$100), leaving \$50 in arrears.

Example 2

Back balance = \$700

30 day need = \$120

Payback percentage: 40%

Total grant: \$500

Case log should note that \$120 goes to present purchase with remaining \$320 to be applied to back balance. Otherwise, the \$500 will automatically be posted with 60% going to purchase (\$300) and 40% going to payoff (\$200).

Grant Frequency

A grant may be awarded to an eligible household one time per a 12 month period. The 12 month period is based on the date of the last approved application. An applicant that was determined ineligible may reapply at a later date.

Assistance Available

The Fund will pay for heating and cooling sources of: electric, gas, propane, oil, wood, coal, and pellets. Assistance can also be provided to renters whose utilities are included in the rent and the failure to make the rent payment threatens utility service.

Multiple Accounts

If a crisis is presented with more than one utility, the grant may be split between the account(s) in crisis⁶.

Grants pay for:

Account arrearages

The grant amount cannot exceed the total amount owed on the account(s)⁷.

⁶ For example a gas and electric account

⁷ Exceptions may apply to clients with M-Power utility accounts

Security Deposit

Security deposits will be made only in the name of the adult in the household.

Current Account Charges

Late Fees

Service Establishment and Reconnect Fees

Decision Notice

The Agency will provide written notice to the applicant of approval and/or denial of assistance. The written notice may be hand delivered or mailed in English and/or Spanish. The notice will provide grant amount(s) and/or reason for denial.

Other Utility Assistance Programs

When possible, the agencies are encouraged to access other sources of funding to alleviate the crisis. The Fund also intends to reach households whose income falls outside of the boundaries of more income-restricted funds such as LIHEAP. If necessary, the Fund may be combined with other funding sources to prevent the crisis.

Payments Made to Ineligible Households

If assistance has been provided to an ineligible household due to; intake worker error, no funds available when grant was promised, or the client was found ineligible after payment, the payment guarantee will be honored and the intake agency will be responsible for repaying the award from its agency funds other than Home Energy Assistance Fund monies. The Agency has the right to appeal repayment to ACAA.

Fraudulent Information

If a client has been found to be fraudulent in his/her application and the payment has not been sent to the utility, the payment will be stopped and the client appropriately informed.

Determining Household Income

Countable Income

All countable income for each household member will be considered in determining eligibility for the Fund. The gross amount of countable income prior to deductions will be counted unless otherwise specified. Income will be counted for the month that it was intended⁸. Income will be included from the 30 days prior to the date of application.

Sources of countable income:

- A. Earned Income: employment, self employment⁹
- B. Benefit income: SSA, SSI, TANF-CA, VA, UI, GA,

⁸ A SSI check received on May 30 that is intended for the month of April will be counted as income in April.

⁹ Net income will be counted (Gross income less business related expenses)

- C. Pensions
- D. Worker's Compensation
- E. Child Support
- F. Work Study
- G. Other Unearned Income: rental income, and endowments or legal settlements.
- H. Indian Gaming Commissions

Excluded Income

- A. Food Stamps
- B. Medicare
- C. WIC
- D. AmeriCorps Stipend
- E. Earned income of a child that is 16 or 17 years of age and is a full time student
- F. Earned income of a child under 16 years of age
- G. Cash gifts
- H. Insurance Payments
- I. IDA Accounts

Individuals Whose Income Must Be Counted

Any income of a household member age 18 and older will be counted, including ineligible household members. Income for all persons ages 16 and 17, **who do not attend school full time**, will be counted.

Individuals Whose Income Will Not Be Counted

- A. Income for persons ages 16 and 17 who attend school full time is not counted.
- B. In cases of domestic violence, the income and resources of the abuser are not counted as long as the client does not have access to his/her income and resources, or the abuser's income and resources.

Household Members

Each person living in the home is considered a household member. Income and eligibility will be determined based on the entire household. Exceptions to household members are "boarders"¹⁰. Roommates' income is treated as one household entity ¹¹. Refer to the Glossary for detail explanations of 'boarders' and 'roommates'.

¹⁰ Boarders are one or more persons living in the same house paying rent to the owner of the home who also lives in the same house. Income of the owner of the home and the boarder is not treated as one household. Boarders cannot be related by blood or law.

¹¹ Roommates are one or more persons living in the same house paying rent to the landlord outside of the home. Income for each roommate is included as the household income as one entity.

2015– 2016 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines

Effective July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Federal Poverty Income Guidelines - Monthly Allowable Household Income		
Percent of Poverty	150%	200%
Household size		
1	\$1,471	\$1,962
2	\$1,991	\$2,655
3	\$2,511	\$3,348
4	\$3,031	\$4,042
5	\$3,551	\$4,735
6	\$4,071	\$5,428
7	\$4,591	\$6,122
8	\$5,111	\$6,815
For each additional member add:	\$520	\$693

Determining Household Energy Burdens

Energy Burden is determined by dividing the household's one-month utility costs by the last 30 days of income.

Example:

Past 30 days of household income: \$1,000

One-month current electric bill: \$45, one-month current gas bill: \$50 = \$95

$$\$95/\$1,000 = 9.5\% \text{ Energy Burden}$$

If the applicant has more than one utility source, all utility source costs will be combined to determine the energy burden even though the applicant may only present a crisis on one account. In case the current utility cost cannot be obtained, a standard cost of \$200 will be substituted in determining the energy burden. For electric and gas, a current one month bill can be obtained by calling the utility company.

An energy burden for non-regulated fuel sources such as wood, oil, coal and pellets can be determined by figuring the cost of the fuel from two consecutive purchase receipts. The 30 day fuel cost can be determined by dividing the total cost of the first purchase by the number of days between the first and the second purchases. If the fuel cost cannot be obtained, a standard cost of \$200 may be substituted.

Example:

Propane receipt 1 dated 1/10/07

Cost: \$300

Quantity: 100 gallons

Propane receipt 2 dated 4/10/07

Cost: \$250

Quantity: 100 gallons

Date of Application: 7/10/07

Cost per day = \$300 / 90 days = \$3.33

30 day energy cost = \$3.33 * 30 = \$99.99

Household income: \$1,000

30 day energy cost: \$99.99

$\$99.99/\$1,000 = 9.9\%$ Energy Burden

When an applicant's rent includes the utility cost and that cost is not specified in the lease agreement, a \$200 standard cost will be used in determining the energy burden. To demonstrate crisis, the renter must provide evidence of delinquent rent through a notice from the landlord. The intake worker must receive assurance from the landlord that the renter will not be evicted and that the grant will be applied appropriately to the renter's account.

Verification and Documentation

The applicant has the primary responsibility for providing all required verification. In situations where it is difficult for the applicant to obtain verification needed to complete the eligibility determination, the partnering agency will offer assistance in obtaining the verification.

Depending on funding source, there may be different eligibility guidelines.

For the Home Energy Assistance Fund Program and the Utility, Repair, Replacement, and Deposit Program only, please utilize the following exhibit (attached to your contract): Verifying Citizenship and Non-Citizen Legal Permanent Resident Status. This is attached for further guidance on determining applicant's citizen and non-citizen status.

Maintaining Client Records

The partnering agency is required to maintain supporting financial records, documentation and statistical records for three (3) years.

Policy Changes and Clarifications

Revisions to any policies and procedures will be reviewed and approved by the ACAA Home Energy Assistance Fund Advisory Board and the ACAA Board of Directors. All revisions will be sent to administering agencies to update their manuals. As revisions are received it will be the staff's responsibility to update their copy of the Home Energy Assistance Fund Policy Manual. Issues regarding policy and/or procedures must be submitted in writing.

Monitoring Process

The Agency will be responsible for ensuring that the Fund policies and procedures are being followed. The Home Energy Assistance Fund staff will conduct application and case file reviews during monitoring visits.

Cooperation

Applicants must cooperate in all aspects of the application process. Applicants must provide requested information or verification and complete and sign an application. If the applicant refuses, the application will be denied. The partnering agency should document the lack of cooperation by the applicant for proper notation in refusal of assistance.

Confidentiality

Public law and federal regulations place restrictions on the release of confidential information, and set guidelines for the disclosure of non-confidential materials. All applications, records, files and communications of the Fund and its partners, relating to specific applicants for assistance and recipients of services funded by the Fund, are confidential records.

All information, regarding an applicant or recipient, is confidential and may be disclosed only for purposes of determining eligibility, providing services, or investigating suspected fraud in connection with the program. Applicants authorize access to their records by signing the application. Anyone not authorized on the application must have the applicant's written approval to access information.

Information that can be exchanged must pertain to the eligibility of the applicant, and excludes items that do not address eligibility, i.e., personal details. Inappropriate disclosure of information can result in severe disciplinary action, or could result in the suspension of the partnering agreement.

Access to information by inappropriate, unauthorized individuals or parties shall be considered a violation of the individual's right to confidentiality. Care should be taken to secure all files in the office so that unauthorized personnel do not have access to them. All records shall be open to any and all federal, state, and contractor auditors and/or examiners in the course of their regular audits.

General information, policy statements, or statistical materials which cannot be directly identified with any individual or family are not considered confidential. They may be given to, or provided by: agencies, helping organizations, or contracted parties, unless restricted by Arizona statutes, federal regulations, or court orders.

Non Discrimination Policy

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12250, no individual in Arizona shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits or subjected to

discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal funds, because of: race, color, national origin, handicap, religion, or sex.

In compliance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, no individual shall be denied services or participation or be subjected to discrimination in any of its programs or activities on the basis of age.

Appeals Policy

The client/agency has the right to appeal a denial of assistance or an awarded grant amount. Appeals by the client will follow the policies of the intake partner agency and will be addressed by the Home Energy Assistance Fund administrative staff.

Complaints regarding the service of the administering agency, discrimination or other issues directly related with the administering agency and staff must be addressed to the office where the application was made.

Glossary of Terms

Standard Cost

The default cost associated with the utility consumption when the actual cost is not feasible.

Boarder

Boarders are one or more persons living in the same house paying rent to the owner of the home who also lives in the house or one who lives and pays rent in a commercial boarding house. Income of neither the owner of the home nor other boarders is not counted jointly. Boarders cannot be related by blood or law to the owner of the home.

Example:

Susan and Jane live in the house that Susan owns. There is no blood or law relationship. Susan is renting a room to Jane and her two children. Jane and her two children are the boarders. Susan and Jane's income will be counted separately.

Crisis Reasons

1. **Loss of income, public assistance benefits or delay in receiving public assistance.** Examples may include but are not limited to: loss of employment, theft of income, serious illness which causes a loss of income, divorce, abandonment or death of wage earner, reduction of benefits or public assistance monies.
2. **Unexpected or unplanned expenses.** Examples may include by are not limited to: car repairs, medical bills, natural or man-made disasters, death in immediate family, court fines of a minor child.
3. **A condition that endangers the health and safety of the household.** Examples may include but are not limited to: lead poisoning, condemned property, infestation, domestic violence, asbestos, medical condition that require utility service to operate life-saving equipment such as oxygen machines, heart monitors, breathing machines, etc.

Customer of Record

The name of the person on the utility account.

Delinquent Account

An account that is one or more days past due.

Household

Consists of each person living in the home at the time of application.

Late Fees

Charges imposed by the utility company to the account due to a tardy payment to the account.

Power of Attorney

A legal document authorizing one person to act on behalf of another.

Roommates

Roommates are one or more persons living in the same house paying rent to a landlord living outside of the home. The income for each roommate is counted as the household income.

Examples:

Linda and Donna are roommates. Donna pays rent to Linda, who has a rental agreement with a landlord living outside the home. They will be considered roommates and their income will be counted jointly.

Jane and her new baby live with her Aunt Betty. Jane no longer receives child support and cannot pay her Aunt any rent money for the month of June. Because they are related, Jane is considered a roommate. Jane and Betty's income will be counted jointly.

Service Reestablishment Fees and Reconnection Fees

Charges assessed by the utility company to reestablish/reconnect service following a service disconnection due to nonpayment.

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUND (HEAF) PROGRAM SUMMARY

CAN PAY:	Utility bills (current and past due amount), and deposits. Late fees and service establishment and reconnect fees may also be paid.
MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT:	\$500.00 (No credit can be given on an account).
SERVICE CODES:	UTA/UDE
PROGRAM YEAR:	A household may be assisted only once in a 12-month period.
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:	<p>HEAF requires the applicant to be a U.S. Citizen or Legal Immigrant Status.</p> <p>Household income for the most recent 30 days, including the date of application, must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.</p> <p>All income (within the past 30 days, including the date of application) must be verified.</p>
CRISIS:	An acceptable crisis reason must be documented on the application.
CRISIS REASON:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Loss of Income2. Unexpected expense3. Health and Safety
CLIENT FILES MUST CONTAIN:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Application for benefits2. Most recent utility bill(s)3. Income verification for the most recent 30 days including application date4. Verification of all social security numbers of all household members5. Verification of applicant's U.S. Citizenship or legal immigration status7. Notice of approval/denial for services

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUND (HEAF) PROGRAM SUMMARY

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