



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for
Human Services

February 12, 2021

Dear County Directors of Social Services

Attention: Energy Administrators, Managers & Supervisors

Subject: Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) Payment Agreements

Priority: Information & Action

With the Governor's Executive Order on utility moratoriums coming to an end, many utility providers are offering customer payment agreements. Even with these payment agreements, customers are still in need of help and will be applying for energy assistance. It is our understanding that some energy providers, such as Duke Energy, are currently not issuing past due or final notices if payment arrangements have been made. If households apply for CIP, policy guidelines must still be followed. Below are updated guidelines to address applications for households who have made payment agreements.

Steps to process CIP applications with vendor payment agreements:

- If the household or vendor can verify the household has entered into a payment agreement, this serves as verification that the customer has a past due or final notice, even though the household may or may not be meeting the payment agreement. Assess households on a case by case basis to determine if the household meets the life threatening or health related crisis criteria, if the household is in danger of service disconnection, and other policy guidelines. If eligibility requirements are met, an application for CIP services would be appropriate.
- The county will need to verify the terms of the agreement with the vendor and the amount needed to prevent disconnection of service.
- Counties will only be able to authorize the amount needed to alleviate the crisis up to the maximum benefit amount of \$600 per fiscal year.
- If the amount needed to alleviate the crisis is less than the maximum allowed, authorize the lesser amount.
- If the amount needed to alleviate the crisis is more than the maximum available amount, determine if the household has funds available and/or other community resources that can be used in conjunction with CIP, or try to negotiate with the vendor to alleviate the crisis for the maximum CIP payment amount available to the household.

Example: The household has a final or past due notice, the total amount due is \$900, and the household has made a payment agreement to pay \$200 per month on the past due amount.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603
MAILING ADDRESS: 2420 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6300 • FAX: 919-334-1265

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Household has not made any payments. Contact the provider to determine the amount needed to prevent disconnection. If the household needs \$600 to prevent the disconnection, authorize the amount available to the household if they meet all other eligibility criteria and the crisis can be alleviated. If the household only needs to pay the \$200 from the agreement to prevent disconnect, authorize the \$200. Only authorize the amount needed to alleviate the crisis.

If you are unable to alleviate the crisis based on policy defined in the Energy Manual, deny the application.

If you have any questions, please contact Jasmyne Simmons via email at Jasmyne.Simmons@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Locklear". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

David Locklear, Deputy Director

DL/js

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