



**Energy & Housing Services Department Memorandum**

**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Daniel Brennan, Director – Energy and Housing Services  
**Date:** January 26, 2016  
**Subject:** 2016 DOE State Plan  
Repeal and Replacement of the Weatherization Assistance Program Rule

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**2016 DOE State Plan**

As part of the annual application process, MaineHousing must submit to the Department of Energy (DOE) a State Plan application detailing how we will utilize the funds and conduct our weatherization program in accordance with DOE guidance. The 2016 DOE allocation is \$2,890,611, an increase of about \$300,000 from last year. MaineHousing anticipates carrying over approximately \$1.2 million from the 2015 grant for a total of \$4.1 million available. MaineHousing anticipates allocating approximately \$3.6 million of the total to the CAA's, retaining the balance for our administrative and training/technical assistance costs. There are several parts to the grant application:

- Budget Summary – details how the grant funds will be spent by the grantee (MaineHousing – MH) and the sub-grantees (the Community Action Agencies – CAA's).
- Annual File – describes changes to the program from the previous year's application
- Master File – a detailed plan of Maine's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) with descriptions of how Maine will meet the guidelines/requirements of the Department of Energy. This includes, but is not limited to: MH and CAA weatherization staff responsibilities, client eligibility, monitoring activities; audit procedures and tools; MH policies; and how MH and CAA's will adhere to DOE Health and Safety requirements.

For program year 2016 (April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017), MaineHousing will continue to administer, partnering with our sub-grantees, a quality weatherization program designed to make energy improvements to Maine's aging housing stock. These improvements assist households in reducing the overall energy consumption and costs of heating their homes. Priority households are HEAP eligible households with a high energy burden that include a household member who is elderly, a person with disabilities, or a child under 2 years old.

Normally, DOE announces its WAP annually. Through formal notices, DOE notifies states of funding levels and specific program guidance as to how Grantees will conduct their weatherization efforts. DOE's weatherization program is administered through a sub-grantee system; Maine utilizes the Community Action Agencies.

As noted above, there are no major program changes planned for 2016, however the minor updates are highlighted below:

1. Per DOE guidance, we will be adding wording to our subgrant agreements requiring compliance by each subgrantee and contractor with DOE's Standard Work Specifications as outlined in Weatherization Program Notice 15-4.
2. The program will be officially implementing the recently approved "Deck of Cards" Field Guide
3. MaineHousing will be reserving the right to re-allocate funding among CAA's based on actual performance and program need to ensure maximize utilization of the funding

### **Repeal and Replacement of Weatherization Assistance Program Rule**

In addition, MaineHousing intends to repeal and replace the Weatherization Assistance Program Rule to update the rule and to remove the LIHEAP weatherization program from the rule.

Highlights of the revisions to the rule are as follows:

1. Delinking the LIHEAP weatherization program from the DOE WAP requirements. WAP requirements are more restrictive than the LIHEAP weatherization program. The rule currently applies to both programs. The replacement rule will apply only to DOE WAP.
2. Updates to refer to revised federal regulations on administrative requirements, cost principles, and auditing requirements and to comport with federal guidance on household income calculations.
3. Revisions to the procedures for suspending or terminating a subgrantee: a formal hearing process is replaced with an informal review.
4. Addition of prior written approval requirement from MaineHousing to replace windows or doors.
5. Clarifications to the fair hearing process for applicants and for debarment of contractors.
6. Other minor technical revisions and updates.

### **Public Hearing and Comment Period:**

A public hearing, allowing interested parties an opportunity to comment on the 2016 DOE State Plan and the repeal and replacement of the Weatherization Assistance Program Rule will be held on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 9:30am. Written comments will be accepted until close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Friday, February 26. The hearing notice is attached. **A draft of the 2016 DOE State Plan and a draft of the revised Weatherization Assistance Program Rule are available on MaineHousing's website: [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org).**