



The Community Services Programs under Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Inc.'s Low- Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Is announcing the:

***Low- Income Home Water Assistance Program LIHWAP***

February 16, 2022

Dear Water Vendor,

Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Inc. is in your county presently providing Energy Assistance to Low-Income households, and has been serving folks through many programs since 1965 when we formed. Douglas-Cherokee is a non-profit Community Action Agency that was formed in 1965 after Lyndon Johnson declared the "War on Poverty" in 1962. Through the years, Douglas-Cherokee has become a beacon of light to citizens in need of self-sufficiency tools with many other services including energy assistance, but also Education services, Head Start, FAFSA Assistance, and Housing and much more. We have a Neighborhood Service Center in each of the 6 counties that our Community Services Programs serves. Some of you already partner with us now for water payments on a very small scale. We provide households with many services such as, Energy, Water, Medical, Dental, Rental/Mortgage assistance, Food, Necessity items, and much more. We already help people with water on a small scale now. The new LIHWAP water assistance program is on a much larger scale, and is being designed after the LIHEAP Program in which anyone that has had their water shut-off, in arrears, or is in jeopardy of having their water shut off is eligible for this new program IF you choose to be a part of this program.

Congress met and created this program to help clients with their water needs, and also to help Water companies to not be left having to "write-off" accounts, and be left with never retrieving those funds. The Tennessee Housing Development Agency is who received the funding for this program Our 6- county area will be receiving over 1 million dollars to serve the citizens in these communities. These are your communities as well. There will be a lot more information coming concerning this water program. We have received the Vendor Agreement for Water Vendors to complete if they are interested in enrolling in the program. I have attached the Vendor Agreement for you to look at and go over with your Board if applicable. If you already partner

with us, and know you will be participating in this program, please complete the Vendor agreement in the highlighted areas and have the appropriate personnel at your agency sign this agreement. I did not complete the beginning date on the Vendor Agreements as I do not have a date the program is officially starting for certain. You can put the date you complete the form, or leave it blank and we can put the date when the program actually starts. I also have attached the ONLY information we have received to date regarding the specific details on this program. We don't have many details yet. Three agencies across the state are "soft-launching" the program in March, and then we all follow afterwards sometime in March or early April. Please feel free to call me to discuss this further if you have concerns or questions. I will do my best to answer or find out an answer.

I sincerely hope that will consider being a partner, and working with Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Inc. on this super exciting initiative. This program is scheduled to run through September 30, 2023, but has been rumored to be in existence for good by Congress. This program is being started in every state across America! Please join us to partner up and work together to change the quality of life for most vulnerable citizens to help them have access to an essential part of living through helping these folks with their water bills.

Please call me at 423-748-5454 if you have any questions or concerns. I will also be glad to come and talk about this in person as well if needed. There will be more information to follow in a few weeks. If you choose to be a part of this program, please complete the Vendor Agreement enclosed and mail back to us to:

**LIHWAP at DCEA Attention: Yvette Chambers**  
**PO Box 1218**  
**Morristown TN 37816**

Or you can email it to: [ychambers@douglascherokee.org](mailto:y Chambers@douglascherokee.org)

Thank you so much for your consideration!

Changing Lives!



*Kim Paxton - Community Services Program Director*

423-748-5454

[kpaxton@douglascherokee.org](mailto:kpaxton@douglascherokee.org)

**VENDOR (BENEFIT CHECK/VOUCHER) AGREEMENT  
FOR PARTICIPATION IN  
LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHWAP) BETWEEN**

[Redacted]

(Printed Name of Water Vendor/Supplier or Public Housing Authority ("Vendor"))

AND

[Redacted]

(Printed Name of Local LIHWAP Agency ("LIHWAP Agency"))

**THIS AGREEMENT** is by and between Vendor and LIHWAP Agency for the provision of water and/or wastewater assistance to low-income households. In consideration of the mutual promises herein contained, the parties have agreed and do hereby enter into this agreement according to the provisions set out herein:

**A. Vendor type.**

- Independent
- Municipality
- Cooperative
- Public Housing Authority
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Vendor agrees to the following conditions and terms:**

1. To participate in the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) in accordance with the approved LIHWAP State Plan and Federal regulations.
2. To accept benefit checks and vouchers on behalf of eligible households for the purpose of providing LIHWAP services.
3. To apply benefit check or voucher amounts to the water related accounts of eligible and certified households.
4. To not discriminate against the eligible households in offering deferred payment or level payment plans or in the other conditions of sale, credit, or price to the household.

practices of Vendor or LIHWAP Agency. Such employment practices may include, but are not limited to, recruitment, recruitment advertising, hiring, layoff or termination, promotion, demotion, transfer, rate of pay, training and participation in upward mobility programs, or other forms of compensation and use of facilities. Both parties shall, upon request, show proof of such nondiscrimination and shall post in conspicuous places, available to all employees and applicants, notices of nondiscrimination.

2. Either party may terminate this agreement by giving a written fifteen (15) day notice.
3. LIHWAP Agency may terminate this agreement with written notice if Vendor fails to comply with the terms and provisions of this agreement.
4. The beginning date of this agreement is \_\_\_\_\_, and the ending date shall be \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The execution of this Agreement by Vendor to participate in LIHWAP is not to be interpreted as a "waiver" of any right, term, or condition obtained by Vendor pursuant to customer service under an agreement outside of this agreement, except to the extent such right, term or condition is in conflict with the provision of the Agreement or State or Federal law.
6. This Agreement may only be amended by written modification and/or additional terms, which are mutually acceptable to the parties.

**D. Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters**

*(1) Vendor certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntary excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.*

*(2) Where Vendor is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such shall attach an explanation to this proposal.*

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties have by their duly authorized representatives set their signatures.

**[SIGNATURE PAGES TO FOLLOW]**