

Wyoming Department of Family Services

Programs Serving Low-Income Populations

September 2021

The Wyoming Department of Family Services' (DFS) administers a variety of community-based programs to assist low-income families and children with basic necessities essential to family stability.

Burial Program

DFS' burial program assists families with the cost of burial or cremation for a deceased individual who was receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance (aka Personal Opportunities with Employment Opportunities (POWER)), Medicaid, or Social Security Income at time of death and did not have sufficient assets to provide for burial or cremation. Funding derives from a 2021 Wyoming legislative increase in death certificate fees. Pursuant to statute, DFS will receive these funds annually, keep a portion for program expenses, and pass designated funds to the Wyoming County Commissioners Association for distribution to counties. See *Table 1* for Burial Program recipient and expenditure information.

TANF Cash Assistance - POWER Program

Cash assistance is provided through POWER, which is a pay-after-performance program that promotes self-sufficiency and improves family stability through employment and training, child support cooperation, and other resources. Eligibility criteria includes income, household composition and size, assets, residence, identity, social security number, citizenship/immigrant status, relationship, living with a relative, participation/cooperation requirements, and program time limits. See *Table 2* for POWER participant and expenditure information.

Child Care Assistance

Child care assistance provides access to child care for low-income families by providing payments directly to child care providers on behalf of parents so parents can work, attend job training, or receive education. Child care assistance is funded by state general funds and federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds. Child care assistance eligibility criteria includes income, household composition and size, age, residence, identity, citizenship/immigrant status, relationship, and participation/cooperation requirements. See *Table 3* for child care assistance participation and expenditure information.

Child Support

Child support services are provided via contract across Wyoming in the nine (9) judicial districts by publicly and privately managed field offices. Those services include: location of non-custodial parents; establishment of paternity; establishment and enforcement of child support orders; modification of child support orders; and the collection of child support payments. A variety of enforcement tools are used to help get child support payments to children and families, including: wage garnishment, federal income tax return interception, passport denial, driver's license suspension, and suspension of Game and Fish sportsman licenses. To assist in making payments accessible, payments may be made by credit card, bank account, or at certain retail stores. Child support payments are received by DFS' State Disbursement Unit (SDU), which then, along with several District Court Clerks around Wyoming, distributes the child support payments through electronic funds transfer (EFT), debit card, or paper check. See *Table 4* for child support collection and expenditure information.

All child support payments, whether they are from families that are a part of the IV-D caseload or those that are from private child support cases (aka Non-IV-D cases), are required by federal and state law to be processed by

the SDU. *Table 3* depicts the collection of child support for families on the IV-D caseload, as well as the expenditures related to those collection efforts.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) works to improve the nutrition of low-income individuals and families by increasing their ability to buy quality food products, with the intent of improving the overall health, safety, and stability of families. Eligible families receive an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card to purchase food products directly. Household eligibility for SNAP is based on an income at or less than 130% of the federal poverty level, residency, identity, social security number requirement, citizenship/immigrant status, and participation/cooperation requirements. See *Table 5* for SNAP households served and expenditure information.

Homelessness

DFS' Homelessness program includes the management and administration of the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) as well as the Continuum of Care (COC) Planning Grant, both administered from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

DFS receives an average of \$647,502 per state fiscal biennium for the ESG grant and passes funds to subrecipients to provide activities and supportive services to homeless and/or at-risk of becoming homeless individuals and families. DFS receives an average of \$64,000 per state fiscal biennium from the COC grant, which is passed through to the Wyoming Homeless Collaborative, a collaborative partnership among housing providers, human service agencies, and other community partners.

Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is funded through a federal block grant and helps low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled with current or unpaid utility bills. Payments are made directly to the utility vendor on behalf of the family. LIEAP eligibility criteria includes income, household size, citizenship, residence, and fuel type. See *Table 6* for LIEAP households served and expenditure information.

Special Projects

DFS engages in and administers special projects when opportunities and necessity arise. Special projects are tied to one-time funding and are not part of DFS' ongoing standard budget.

DFS, in partnership with the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS), is administering the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and the Homeowners Assistance Fund (HAF). Both are federal initiatives expanded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. ERAP pays landlords and broadband and utility companies on behalf of Wyoming renters who are unable to pay rent, internet, and/or utility payments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which keeps children and families safely in their homes, and also provides income to landlords and companies who rely on payments from renters to support their own families. The HAF will provide mortgage and other relief on behalf of borrowers who are delinquent on their mortgage payments or at risk of foreclosure.

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a federal program created by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 and expanded by ARPA. LIHWAP helps residents pay their water bills, avoid shutoffs, and support household water system reconnections related to non-payment. LIHWAP payments are made to the water utility vendors on behalf of the resident.

Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF) Community-Based Services Grants

TANF is a federal funding source that provides states with flexibility in operating programs designed to help low-income families with children achieve self-sufficiency. DFS provides TANF funds for cash assistance to low-income families with children and provides services that meet one or more of the four federal purposes of TANF, including but not limited to:

- 1) Home Visitation: Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant, which DFS has applied for, which supports the Parents as Teachers home visiting program;
- 2) TANF preschools: DFS TANF funds are contracted annually to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) to administer the TANF Preschool program;
- 3) Work Training: Funded through TANF and SNAP Employment and Training, DFS partners with multiple agencies and organizations to support and utilize work training programs for parents to assist in gaining skills and finding careers that create a pathway out of poverty for the parent and their children.

TANF additionally contributes payments towards Wyoming's crisis centers which allows access to crisis beds, and contributes payments towards direct services provided in child protective services cases.

Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is funded through a federal award and provides a one-time benefit of weatherization services for homes in need of energy efficiency improvements to reduce reliance on LIEAP assistance and to reduce the energy cost burdens on low-income families. Energy efficiency services include insulation, air sealing, and energy related health and safety measures such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. All weatherization efficiency measures installed are recommended per a comprehensive energy audit. Through a competitive bid process, DFS contracts with two non-profit agencies to provide statewide weatherization services which have weatherized 6,492 homes from Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2010-2020. WAP eligibility criteria includes income, household size, citizenship, and residence. See *Table 7* for households served and expenditure information.

Table 1: Burial Program Recipients and Expenditures; State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2012 through 2021*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of recipients	308	349	312	332	288	252	227	217	174	112
State General Funds**	\$298,476	\$341,252	\$300,648	\$315,479	\$273,638	\$141,437	\$112,080	\$105,861	\$86,998	\$55,034

* There were no expenditures of federal or other funds during this time period.

** Rounded down to the nearest dollar. Expenditures are paid for by state general funds through SFY 2021, and paid for by other funds beginning SFY 2022.

Table 2: POWER Households Served and Expenditures; FFYs 2012 through 2021*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021**
Average monthly Households served	352	398	400	375	462	528	538	515	498	483
State General Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$1,688,069	\$2,023,342	\$2,056,030	\$1,973,707	\$2,491,751	\$2,895,459	\$2,978,082	\$2,815,896	\$2,875,520	\$2,380,622

* There were no expenditures of other funds during the time period.

** Data includes October 2020 - July 2021.

Table 3: Child Care Assistance Households Served and Expenditures; FFYs 2012 through 2021*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021**
Average Monthly Households served	2894	2388	2171	1895	1778	1781	1802	1745	1567	1415
Estimated State General Funds	\$8,450,393	\$12,069,288	\$8,599,151	\$7,143,887	\$6,147,458	\$6,341,637	\$6,604,105	\$3,463,354	\$3,741,048	\$2,012,681
Estimated Federal Funds	\$7,340,330	\$2,611,537	\$5,514,621	\$4,683,972	\$5,202,034	\$5,961,551	\$5,696,476	\$8,466,431	\$8,605,455	\$7,794,412

* Rounded down to the nearest dollar. There were no expenditures of other funds during the time period.

** Data includes October 2020 - July 2021.

Table 4: Child Support IV-D Collections and Expenditures; FFYs 2012 through 2021

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Total Collections	\$71,828,086	\$72,120,120	\$73,431,008	\$72,807,141	\$69,462,483	\$67,631,091	\$70,003,685	\$70,405,244	\$76,376,657	\$69,237,380
Total Expenditures	\$9,231,218	\$8,240,733	\$8,960,092	\$10,090,021	\$9,312,038	\$7,405,995	\$8,948,744	\$9,766,955	\$10,227,703	\$6,996,631
SGF Portion of Expenditures	\$2,665,891	\$2,818,197	\$3,066,323	\$3,450,184	\$3,184,216	\$2,558,621	\$3,298,437	\$3,711,217	\$3,617,530	\$2,588,373
Average FFY Collections	\$71,330,289									
Average FFY Total Expenditures	\$8,918,013									
Average FFY SGF Expenditures	\$3,095,899									

* Data includes October 2020 - July 2021

Table 5: SNAP Households Served and Expenditures; FFYs 2012 through 2021*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021**
Average Monthly Households served	15333	16522	15476	13868	14396	14102	12989	11879	12029	13564
State General Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$52,115,867	\$57,319,843	\$49,720,884	\$46,778,167	\$48,794,879	\$47,046,653	\$40,972,262	\$36,598,852	\$47,959,465***	\$62,590,122***

* There were no expenditures of other funds during the time period.

** Data includes October 2020 - July 2021.

***Payments include COVID payments (FFY 2020 = \$6,745,349.00, FFY 2021 = \$26,183,936.78)

Table 6: LIEAP Households Served and Expenditures; FFYs 2012 through 2021*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021**
Seasonal Households served	11410	10125	9871	9455	9402	9675	9010	8092	9328	9760
State General Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$5,836,01	\$5,126,135	\$6,420,146	\$6,121,800	\$5,140,597	\$4,921,064	\$4,724,364	\$4,461,481	\$5,629,173	\$5,530,892

* There were no expenditures of other funds during the time period.

** Data includes October 2020 - July 2021.

Table 7: WAP Households Served and Expenditures; FFYs 2012 through 2021*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021**
Yearly Households served	1394	1825	896	890	881	851	822	825	867	838
State General Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$5,146,113	\$3,854,623	\$5,698,623	\$4,042,524	\$4,871,786	\$4,451,053	\$3,637,997	\$4,622,944	\$5,151,888	\$4,479,964

* There were no expenditures of other funds during the time period.

** Data includes October 2020 - July 2021.