



Maryland Department of Human Services Encourages Low-Income Households to Tap into Maryland's New Water Assistance Program

By successfully securing federal grant, the Department will further ensure that low-income Marylanders have access to affordable, clean, and safe drinking water and wastewater services

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This week, the Department of Human Services announced it has launched a new program designed to help Marylanders offset the costs of water and wastewater bills. The federally-funded Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) offers eligible households up to \$2,000 in assistance, focusing on those Maryland households whose drinking water and wastewater bills are 30 days or more past due.

"No family or child should go without access to water because of challenges paying bills," said Department of Human Services Secretary, Lourdes R. Padilla. "With the launch of the new water assistance program, Maryland is expanding access to more affordable water for low-income households."

Administered by the Department's Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP), the program will help low-income households pay their water and wastewater bills, avoid shutoffs, and support household water system reconnections related to non-payment. Funding is limited and applications will be accepted on a first come, first served basis, and will continue until federal funds are exhausted. Depending on income and specific needs, applicants may qualify for the following assistance:

- **Reconnect Household Water/Wastewater Services** – If the household's water/wastewater services have been disconnected because of past due water bills, grant funds may be available to pay off the balance, including fees to reconnect household water services.
- **Prevent Disconnection of Household Water/Wastewater Services** – If the household has received a notice that your water/wastewater services will be disconnected due to a past overdue balance, grant funds may be available to pay all or part of your bill.
- **Reduce Current Household Water/Wastewater Past Due Balance** – If the household is struggling to afford your current water bills and meet other household needs, the household may qualify for temporary assistance to pay some or all of your current water bills.

Maryland residents can learn more about the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program at the [Department of Human Services website](#) and may apply for assistance safely and conveniently online using the **myMDTHINK** consumer portal at mymdthink.maryland.gov. If applying online isn't feasible, individuals may request that an application be mailed to them by calling the Department's [Local Home Energy Program Office](#). A printable paper application can also be found on the [Department of Human Services' website](#).

"We are grateful for this funding and the opportunity it will provide to struggling constituents," asserts Lauren Molineaux, Director of the Department of Human Services' Office of Home Energy Programs. "We hope that this water assistance program will help allay, to an extent, one more stressor that they might have recently encountered."

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) is the state's primary social service provider, annually reaching more than one million people. Through its 24 local departments of social services, the agency pursues opportunities to assist people in economic need, provide preventive services, and protect vulnerable children and adults in each of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City. Additional information may be found at dhs.maryland.gov.

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