

Q&A: COVID-19 and the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Q: We have our public hearing on the PY 2020 State WAP Plan scheduled in the next few weeks. Due to state declarations of emergency and associated bans on public gatherings, can we substitute a virtual hearing for the traditional in-person format?

A: DOE has communicated that virtual hearings conducted via webinar or video conferencing are acceptable, as long as the proper 10-day public notice (as required in 10 CFR 440) was observed, and there is a transcript of the hearing (as required in the grant guidance WPN 20-1). Include clear instructions to access the virtual hearing in the public notice, and consider including additional opportunities/methods for the public to comment on the state plan.

Q: Due to state declarations of emergency, we are concerned that state and local workers will soon be unable to enter into homes to perform monitoring or even weatherization work. Has DOE weighed in on WAP workers in homes at this time?

A: DOE has provided the following information: The determination on whether Grantee and Subgrantee staff should be working in client homes is not a DOE decision. Those are state authorities and local agency employment matters. Federal regulations state that in a shutdown or disaster employees can be paid out of federal funds if there are written leave policies approved by the governing board. However, direct costs for labor accrue to the ACPU and DOE has no authority, at this time, to waive those federal requirements.

This resource will be updated as more information becomes available.