



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM NOTICE 25-4
EFFECTIVE DATE: December 30, 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Weatherization Program Notice 25-4 announces the following updates to program guidance:

- As of December 2024, WAP has categorical eligibility with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs which are means-tested at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) or below.
- WAP is providing an updated USDA Eligible Building List which includes buildings identified to be categorically eligible for WAP.

SUBJECT: Expansion of Client Eligibility to Select U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Programs

INTENDED AUDIENCE: Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Grantee Program Managers, WAP Subgrantee Managers

PURPOSE: Transmit information to the WAP network which expands client eligibility to select USDA means-tested programs at 80% AMI or below and provide an updated USDA eligible buildings list to be used to identify eligible multifamily buildings.

In 2024, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) expanded WAP's categorical income eligibility to include USDA means-tested low-income programs that accept households using percentages of Area Median Income (AMI) of 80% AMI or below, depending on specific program parameters.

SUPERSEDES: Weatherization Memorandum 099: Eligible Buildings - US Department of Agriculture Lists

RELATED GUIDANCE: Weatherization Program Notice 22-5: Expansion of Client Eligibility in the Weatherization Assistance Program, Weatherization Program Notice 22-12 Multifamily Weatherization

LEGAL AUTHORITY: Title IV, Energy Conservation and Production Act (ECPA), as amended, authorizes the DOE to administer WAP (42 U.S.C. § 6861, *et. seq.*). All grant awards made under this Program shall comply with applicable law and regulations including, but not limited to, WAP regulations contained in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at [10 CFR 440](#) and Uniform

Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at [2 CFR 200](#).

SCOPE: Following DOE's inclusion of HUD-qualified clients of means-tested program 80% AMI or below, as outlined in [Weatherization Program Notice \(WPN\) 22-5: Expansion of Client Eligibility in the Weatherization Assistance Program](#) as categorically eligibility for WAP, DOE is providing guidance for the same action with USDA qualified clients of 80% AMI or below.

BACKGROUND: During fiscal year 2022, the ongoing interagency program-level meetings between WAP, HHS's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and various HUD programs were further expanded to include representation from USDA's Rural Development Office. After review of USDA's means-tested eligibility requirements, WAP determined these programs align with the expanded income eligibility requirements already defined in WPN 22-5.

Collectively, these Federal programs all serve low-income families across the U.S., however, each agency uses varying income eligibility requirements to determine whether a household qualifies to receive the services. DOE, HHS, HUD, and USDA have collaborated on how to better support interagency coordination,¹ specifically in client eligibility. Each of the agencies serves households with lower incomes, using varying income eligibility requirements. Current income eligibility guidelines for DOE and USDA include²:

- DOE WAP accepts households using up to 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).
- USDA's means-tested low-income programs accept households using 80% AMI or below, depending on specific program parameters. USDA utilizes HUD's AMIs, although uses a hold-harmless clause that results in income limits never going down and are banded, therefore creating separate income eligibility limits for USDA [programs](#).

GUIDANCE: After consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture and the Director of the Community Services Block Grant Program from HHS, as required in 42 U.S.C. § 6862(7), on May 11, 2024, the Secretary of Energy approved WAP to extend categorical income eligibility to USDA means-tested low-income programs of 80% AMI or below.

NOTE: The Director of Community Services Administration, identified in statute, through reorganization of government offices, is now the Director of Community Services Block Grant Program in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

¹ Congress identified the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) as a potential partner; however, upon further review was determined to have no income-based eligibility programs to align with this purpose and is therefore not included in the scope of this expanded definition of income eligibility.

² As discussed in WPN 22-5, HHS LIHEAP accepts households using 150% of FPG, or states may elect to use 60% of State Median Income, whichever is greater for their respective state. HUD's means-tested programs accept households ranging from 30% AMI to 80% AMI, depending on specific program parameters.

DOE believes categorical income eligibility is essential to expand the program's reach and simplify the application and verification process for low-income households. Consequently, DOE expanded categorical income eligibility to include low-income households that are served by USDA programs. Eligible programs are those that USDA accepts for households with 80 percent AMI or below, depending on specific program parameters.

WAP Grantees and Subgrantees may certify that applicants have met the income requirements of USDA means-tested programs and are eligible for weatherization services through programs including, but not limited to:

- Section 521 Rental Assistance
- Section 502 Direct Home Purchase Program
- Section 533 Housing Preservation Grant Program
- Section 504 Home Repair Program

Grantees and Subgrantees are reminded that applicants applying for weatherization must have their eligibility documentation recertified within 12 months of service per [WPN 25-1, Application Instructions](#).

Property List

The USDA identifies and updates current buildings on a monthly basis, which are posted on the [USDA website](#). DOE has taken the list and identified buildings that meet the requirements of [10 CFR 440.22\(b\)\(2\)](#) by assessing that no less than 66% of the units are eligible based on receiving a rental subsidy for a USDA or HUD means-tested low-income program (Attachment 1-USDA Eligible Building List). DOE advises Grantees who identify USDA buildings not on this list to consult with their Project Officer to determine if the building is categorically eligible or if the Subgrantee will need to further verify the income eligibility of the households in the building through criteria outlined in [WPN 22-12 Multifamily Weatherization](#).

Extending WAP categorical eligibility to clients who meet USDA's income eligibility requirements benefits low-income families and individuals. DOE will continue the interagency work to reduce barriers to income qualifying USDA subsidized properties and income eligible households.

Also, per [10 CFR 440.22\(b\)\(2\)](#): *A Subgrantee may weatherize a building containing rental dwelling units using financial assistance for dwelling units eligible for weatherization assistance under paragraph (a) of this section, where:*

(2) Not less than 66 percent (50 percent for duplexes and four-unit buildings, and certain eligible types of large multi-family buildings) of the dwelling units in the building:

(i) Are eligible dwelling units, or

(ii) Will become eligible dwelling units within 180 days under a Federal, State, or local government program for rehabilitating the building or making similar improvements to the building.”

If the WAP provider wishes to income qualify more than 66% of a building’s units (more than 50% of the units in 2–4-unit buildings) the provider must determine the percentage of income eligible residences by either contacting the building owner/manager to obtain such income records or by individually verifying with residents.

The certification procedures outlined in this Guidance do not apply to LIHTC properties, or for properties with USDA guaranteed loans. WAP providers should follow standard procedures for verifying individual resident incomes for USDA guaranteed loans and LIHTC properties.

Provided property list is based on income eligibility only. All other eligibility requirements that must be met for multifamily buildings can be found in [WPN 22-12 Multifamily Weatherization](#).

CONCLUSION: Expanding WAP categorical income eligibility to applicants who meet USDA’s income eligibility requirements further facilitates referral services for low-income households, reducing burden on both intake agencies and impacted households trying to obtain services. This action will also provide for better coordination and alignment to encourage leveraging of multiple funding sources, reduce complexity, and result in further energy efficiency upgrades and savings for low-income households.

DOE acknowledges the Grantees, or local WAP service providers, retain the authority to set priorities for the use of WAP funds in their service areas. Funding for individual projects remains a function of Grantee or local program priorities and funding availability.

If you have any questions on the USDA categorical eligibility or property list including how to use the list, please contact your respective DOE Project Officer or wapta@hq.doe.gov.

DAVID
GIPSON

Digitally signed by DAVID
GIPSON
Date: 2024.12.30
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David Gipson
WAP Deputy Director
Office of State and Community Energy Programs

Attachment 1: USDA Eligible Building List