



Broward County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-978, Version: 1

Broward County Commission Regular Meeting

Director's Name: Keith D. Bostick (Deputy Director)

Department: Human Services

Division: Family Success Administration

Information

Requested Action

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE County Administrator to execute Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program ("LIHEAP") Vendor Payment Agreement between Florida Power & Light Company ("FPL") and Broward County, subject to review for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney, effective retroactively from November 1, 2020 through October 31, 2025, to establish a procedure for processing payments to FPL on behalf of eligible LIHEAP clients; authorize the County Administrator to execute Amendments to the Agreement, subject to the review for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney; and authorize the County Administrator to take all necessary administrative and budgetary actions to implement the Agreement.

Why Action is Necessary

Agreements with external agencies require approval by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners ("Commission").

What Action Accomplishes

The Agreement establishes a payment processing procedure and satisfies the requirement that LIHEAP grant recipients maintain written vendor agreements with energy vendors.

Is this Action Goal Related

Yes

Previous Action Taken

None

Summary Explanation/Background

THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE FAMILY SUCCESS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE ABOVE MOTION.

This item supports the Commission's value of "approaching human services collaboratively and compassionately, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable," and the goal to "deliver evidence-based services to the public and connect customers and their family members to sustainable support, with special emphasis on financial supports." This Agreement satisfies the LIHEAP grant requirement to maintain written vendor agreements with energy vendors allowing Broward County to continue the provision of financial support and services to eligible residents in assisting with emergency energy needs.

As a designated Community Action Agency, Broward County administers federal funds from the LIHEAP grant awarded through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (“DEO”). LIHEAP funding assists households in Broward County at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines with electric bill payments to reduce the risk of health and safety problems that may arise from lack of energy or use of unsafe heating and cooling practices.

The LIHEAP grant agreement with DEO requires Broward County to maintain written vendor agreements with energy vendors and provides minimum guidelines. Required guidelines for the Agreement include a description of the process for making payments on behalf of clients, identifying portions of the energy bill eligible for payment, acknowledging that any remaining balance is the client’s responsibility, and assurances that clients will not be treated adversely or discriminated against because of such assistance. Retroactive approval is needed due to processing delays related to Covid-19.

FPL is the single provider of electrical energy for residents of Broward County and will be the sole recipient of these payments. The relationship with FPL is an integral component of LIHEAP and this Agreement provides the necessary structure for that relationship. FPL agrees to accept payments from Broward County under LIHEAP and charge the clients for any remaining balances. Except for the payments made on behalf of clients, no other fees or charges are paid to FPL as part of this Agreement.

The Agreement establishes the procedure for processing LIHEAP grant funded energy payments on behalf of eligible Broward County residents and will be reviewed for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney prior to approval and execution by the County Administrator.

Source of Additional Information

Ismael A. Martinez, Director, Family Success Administration Division, (954) 357-6367

Natalie M. Beasley, Assistant Director, Family Success Administration Division, (954) 357-6367

Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact/Cost Summary

There are no costs associated with this Agreement. Administrative and grant expenses associated with LIHEAP are paid through grant funds received under the LIHEAP grant agreement.