



# Broward County

## Legislation Text

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File #: 22-875, Version: 1

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### **Broward County Commission Regular Meeting**

**Director's Name:** Tara Gaudin

**Department:** Human Services

**Division:** Family Success Administration

### **Information**

#### **Requested Action**

**MOTION TO APPROVE** Modification One of Agreement between the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and Broward County, increasing the estimated amount by \$6,500,000 for a total estimated amount of \$38,000,000, effective from the date of full execution through September 30, 2023, to add the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Grant; authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute same; authorize the County Administrator to execute amendments and modifications to the subgrant Agreement, subject to review for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney, that do not impose additional financial obligations on the County; and authorize the County Administrator to take all necessary administrative and budgetary actions to implement the subgrant Agreement.

#### **Why Action is Necessary**

Section 20.31(b)(3), Broward County Administrative Code, requires that the Broward County Board of County Commissioners ("Commission") approves all state and federal grant agreements.

#### **What Action Accomplishes**

Approval of Modification One adds the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program ("LIHWAP") to the programs available through Broward County's Community Action Agency. LIHWAP will provide water and wastewater assistance to households in Broward County that meet eligibility guidelines.

#### **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 action supports the Commission's value of "approaching human services collaboratively and compassionately, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable," and the goal to "effectively advocate for and acquire municipal, state, and federal financial support to equitably address health and human services needs of the entire community, through a truly coordinated system of care." The

addition of LIHWAP allows Broward County to provide expanded financial support to eligible residents with emergency economic needs.

LIHWAP is a federally funded program that helps income-qualified households with water and wastewater costs. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (“DEO”) has received approximately \$75 million from the United States Department of Health and Human Services through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to implement LIHWAP in the state of Florida through September 30, 2023. Eighty-five percent of Florida’s \$75 million in funding will be distributed through the state’s network of Community Action Agencies (“CAA”)

LIHWAP will provide relief to income-qualified households that spend a high proportion of their household income on water utility services. Assistance to households will be accomplished by providing funds to owners or operators of public water systems or treatment works to reduce arrearages of and rates charged to these households. The primary goal of LIHWAP is to retain continuity of water services to eligible households in Florida with an emphasis on preventing disconnection and restoring water services to households whose water services were previously disconnected.

LIHWAP will closely model the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (“LIHEAP”), utilizing the existing Community Action Network as well as current LIHEAP policies, processes, and procedures.

Broward County’s CAA, administered through the Family Success Administration Division, currently receives federal funds through DEO for the Community Services Block Grant and LIHEAP programs. The addition of LIHWAP will expand services for income-qualified residents of Broward County and increase opportunities to move from poverty to economic stability.

Modification One adds Attachment A-3 for the LIHWAP Scope of Work and updates certain standard terms in the Umbrella Agreement. The Umbrella Agreement provides the standard terms and conditions for grants awarded by DEO in one document rather than having separate documents for each grant. The Umbrella Agreement does not specify a funding amount but authorizes the use of Notice of Funding Awards to obligate and release funds for each grant.

DEO has notified staff that Broward County will receive an estimated \$6,500,000 for this program. This will increase the total estimated three-year Umbrella Agreement amount to \$38,000,000. It is DEO’s past practice to release funds annually and make at least one mid-year adjustment.

Modification One has been reviewed and approved for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney.

### **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**

LIHWAP is 100% federally funded through two one-time COVID recovery acts, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. No Broward County match is required. The program will be administered simultaneously with LIHEAP by the same staff. Grant-funded temporary staff will be utilized to assist with the additional temporary workload.