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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### ***New Fresno EOC Program Can Help You Pay Overdue Water Bills***

***\*\*NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS\*\****

If you are having trouble paying your water bill, a new program at Fresno EOC can help. The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), operated by Fresno EOC is now accepting applications. The program can help families pay overdue water bills accumulated before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan was introduced to ensure families have access to safe drinking water and wastewater (sewer) services.

LIHWAP is designated for households that are in danger of losing or have already lost their water services. The maximum benefit amount is \$2,000, and it is a one-time payment that will be directly applied to the homeowner's utility bill. But it's temporary, so there is a limited window of time for people to apply and benefits will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. The one-time LIHWAP program will end in August, 2023.

According to data collected by the State Water Resources Control Board, around half a million Californians experienced water shutoffs in 2019 due to nonpayment, and hundreds of water providers charge rates that could be classified as unaffordable for low income households. LIHWAP Director Gilda Arreguin says, "With rising prices on everything from food to fuel, low income households in rural and urban Fresno County face barriers in paying their water and sewer (wastewater) bills. We want to help with that expense, so households can continue to purchase food and cover unexpected costs."

#### **Eligibility Requirements – [See website for full details](#)**

- Households must meet the definition of being low income.
- Households must have a past due balance on their bill, also known as an arrearage. Applicants must provide a water bill, wastewater bill, or property tax statement with a past due amount.
- Client's water or wastewater system must be enrolled in direct pay. Payments will go directly to owners and operators of water systems and cannot be paid to customers.
- Households must subscribe to a community water or wastewater treatment system. Those with private water wells and septic tanks are not eligible for assistance.

Below is the **current** list of participating water systems in Fresno County enrolled as of July 20. We will receive weekly updates from the state and update our website accordingly. At this



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time, Fresno EOC LIHWAP is only accepting applications from the residents in the cities that have been approved by the state. If your water system is not currently enrolled, please wait to sign up and contact your water system provider directly to enroll into the CSD LIHWAP direct payment program.

#### **PARTICIPATING WATER SYSTEMS**

1. Bakman Water Company
2. California Water Service
3. City of Clovis
4. City of Dos Palos
5. City of Kerman
6. City of Kingsburg
7. City of Mendota
8. City of Parlier
9. City of Sanger
10. Coalinga – City
11. Del Rey Community Services District
12. Laton Community Services District
13. City of Fresno

In Fresno County, the LIHWAP program is overseen by Fresno EOC Energy Services, which also administers the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

To apply for LIHWAP through Fresno EOC, [click here](#).

#### **[About Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission \(EOC\)](#)**

Established in 1965, Fresno EOC is a non-profit Community Action Agency that provides opportunities, strengthens self-sufficiency, and offers support for all people. We listen to the needs of the communities we serve to create effective programs and services. Fresno EOC is at the forefront, continuing the war on poverty with more than 35 programs dedicated to getting people the help they need to achieve their goals.

#### **[About Fresno EOC Energy Services](#)**

Fresno EOC Energy Services' goal is to make clients' homes energy-efficient, comfortable, and safe. Services include replacing or repairing non-operable appliances, home repairs, health and safety, insulation, and other energy/water/money-saving measures in addition to utility bill payment assistance. Programs include Weatherization, LIHEAP, and now LIHWAP.

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