

Policy Clarification

LIHEAP - All

PLA15552678

Submitted: 11/02/10

Agency: CAOs

Citations:

Subject: How to Verify Heating Responsibility and Heating Provider

Some LIHEAP vendors have set up websites or hotlines for CAOs to call in order to verify that a household applying for LIHEAP Cash is indeed a customer and has a heating responsibility. Can a CAO use these sources as verification that a household has a heating responsibility and that the vendor provides service for the household? How should the CAO narrate when using these sources?

Response By: Division of Federal Programs/LIHEAP

Date: 11/16/10

CAOs can use websites, hotlines and other collateral contacts to verify a household's heating responsibility or that a vendor has provided or will provide service to a household. If the vendor uses these forms of collateral contact they must thoroughly narrate:

- The name of the Vendor
- The fuel type
- Whether it is a Primary or Secondary Heating Source
- The date and time they spoke to the vendor
- The name of the person they spoke to or the website and web address or hotline they used.
- Any other important case details arising from the collateral contact.

Provided the CAO **properly documents** the third party verification it is an acceptable source of documentation of heating responsibility.

Example 1:

CAO receives a LIHEAP application from a household and lists Tim's Fuel as their vendor for fuel oil and fuel oil as their primary source of heat. The household has provided all verification except for any verification that Tim is their vendor, such as a delivery ticket or letter from the vendor.

The CAO can call Tim's Fuel and verify they service the household and the household's main heating source. They would write in the narrative:

The name of the Vendor: **Tim's Fuel**

The fuel type: **Fuel Oil**

Whether it is a Primary or Secondary Heating Source: **Primary Heating Source**

The Date and time they spoke to the vendor: **November 8, 2010 3pm**

The name of the person they spoke to or the website or hotline they used: **Tim Jones; Owner**

Any other important case details arising from the collateral contact: **Tim Jones indicated that the household has bought fuel oil from him in the past and their furnace runs on fuel oil.**

The collateral contact is acceptable because the CAO has correctly documented the collateral contact in the narrative.

Example 2:

CAO receives a LIHEAP application from a household and lists Nature's Gas as their vendor for natural gas and natural gas as their primary source of heat. The household has provided all verification except for any verification that Nature's Gas is their vendor, such as a utility bill. Nature's Gas has a website where you can enter a client's social security # and the site (naturesgascustomer.com) will verify the client is a customer and the account number.

The CAO can use the website and verify the vendor services the household and is the household's main heating source. They would write in the narrative:

The name of the Vendor: **Nature's Gas**

The fuel type: **Natural Gas**

Whether it is a Primary or Secondary Heating Source: **Primary Heating Source**

The Date and time they spoke to the vendor: **November 15, 2010 1pm**

The name of the person they spoke to or the website or hotline they used:
naturesgascustomer.com ; website

Any other important case details arising from the collateral contact: **Website indicated that the household is a customer and their furnace runs on natural gas.**

The collateral contact is acceptable because the CAO has correctly documented the collateral contact in the narrative.

This policy clarification obsoletes PLA 14989678, Copy of Heating Bill Required with LIHEAP Application.