

# Assurance 16 Reporting

A Connecticut Case Study in Aligning LIHEAP & CSBG Reporting



**Presented by the Office of Community Services,  
Division of Program Oversight & Grant Administration**

**At the NEADA 2024 Annual Meeting**

**Monday • September 16, 2024**



**DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES**



- Welcome
- Overview of Agenda + Session Format
- Assurance 16 Overview
- Assurance 16 – “A Case Study”
- Lessons Learned/ Best Practices
- Questions

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**LIHEAP Assurance 16:** States may use up to 5% of LIHEAP funds to provide services that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance.

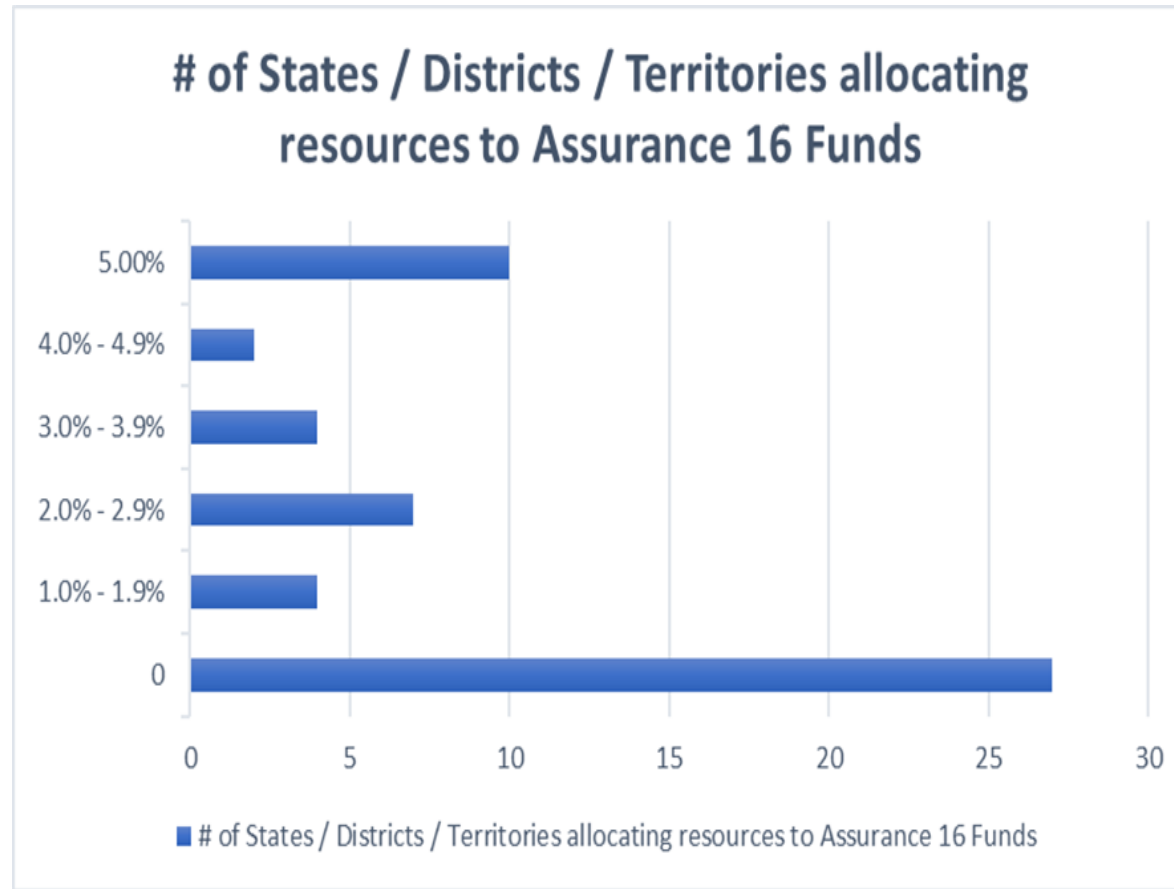
Examples of services include the following:

- Needs assessments,
- Counseling, and
- Assistance with energy vendors

States are required to report the impact of such activities on the following:

- Number of households served,
- The level of direct benefits provided to those households,
- and the number of households that remain unserved

States/Districts/Territories allocating resources to Assurance 16 Funds	% of Funds	# of States / Districts / Territories allocating resources to Assurance 16 Funds
Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin	0	27
Connecticut, Maine, Ohio and Wyoming	1.0% - 1.9%	4
Delaware, <b>District of Columbia</b> , Louisiana, <b>Mariana Islands</b> , Rhode Island, South Dakota and Tennessee	2.0% - 2.9%	7
Iowa, Massachusetts, Montana and Washington	3.0% - 3.9%	4
Idaho and Maryland	4.0% - 4.9%	2
<b>American Samoa</b> , Arizona, Arkansas, California, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Oregon and <b>Puerto Rico</b>	5.00%	10



## Assurance 16 Activities

1. Case management
2. Client counseling
3. Client advocacy
4. Energy conservation education
5. Budgeting education provided to LIHEAP recipients



**2. Assurance 16 Activities:**

- a. The Contractor shall provide Assurance 16 Activities as defined above that encourage and enable households to reduce their home energy assistance needs aimed at reducing reliance on CEAP funds. Assurance 16 Activities shall include but not be limited to the following:
  - i. Assistance with arrearage reduction,
  - ii. Accessing non-CEAP funded fuel banks,
  - iii. financial literacy,
  - iv. energy conservation, and
  - v. vendor mediation.
  
- b. The Contractor shall comply with Department issued guidance related to Assurance 16 Activities. Said guidance includes but is not limited to definitions, eligible households, types of services, reporting requirements, due date and submission methods.

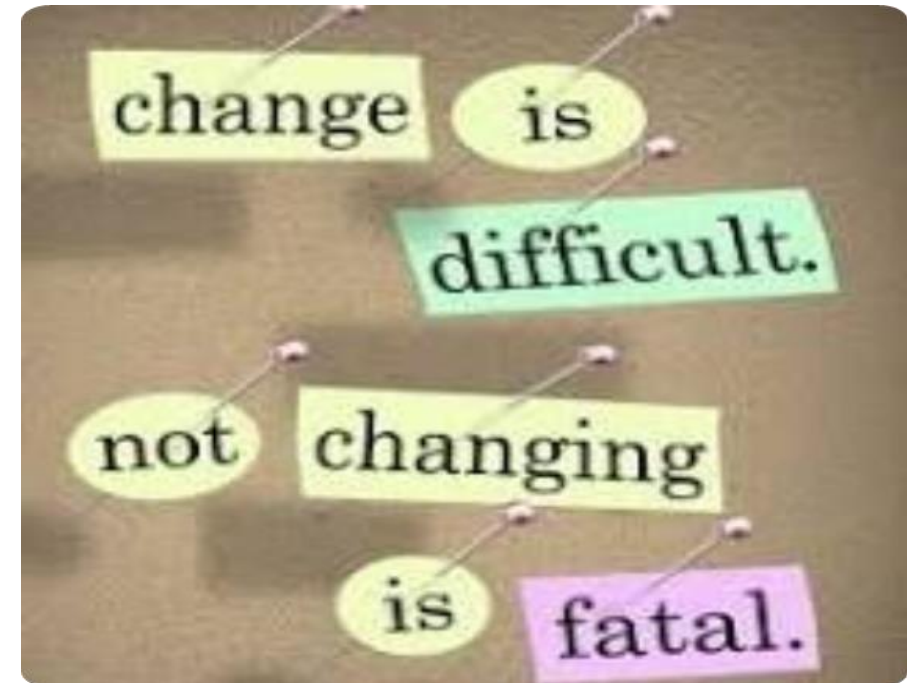


4. Assurance 16 Activities	90% of households enrolled in Assurance 16 activities receive additional services: assistance with arrearage reduction, accessing non-CEAP funded fuel banks, financial literacy, energy conservation and vendor mediation services.
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In FFY 2018, staff within Connecticut's Office of Community Services (OCS) committed to working collaboratively to reduce administrative burdens on nonprofits, while improving service delivery systems.

We:

- Reviewed existing contracts with the Community Action Agency (CAA) Network to identify potentially duplicative efforts/practices
- Utilized the expertise of internal staff expertise to enhance service delivery models
- LIHEAP experts reviewed Assurance 16 Reports and determined that the reports consisted of narratives gathered from across the various CAAs
- CSBG experts used the Result-Oriented Management & Accountability (ROMA) cycle to examine Assurance 16 operations

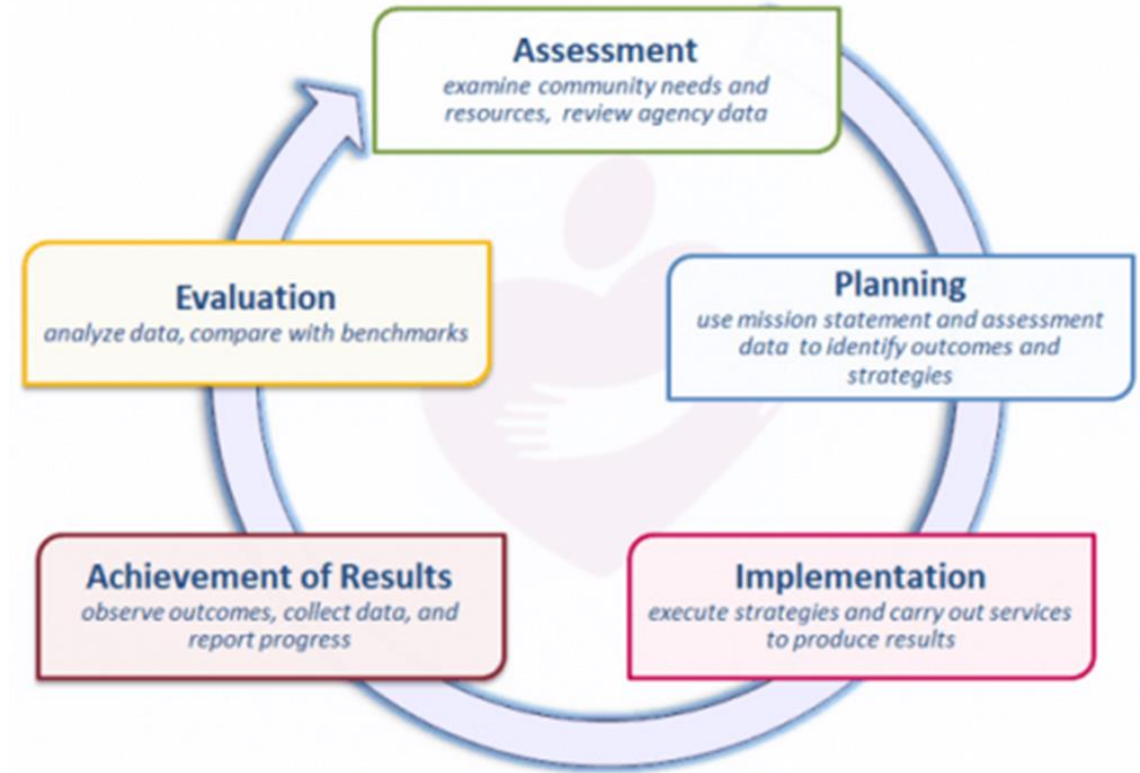




OCS convened a Data User Workgroup to discuss programmatic reporting elements for LIHEAP and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funded programs.

Each CAA identified two members. The workgroup included:

- State staff (CSBG & LIHEAP)
- Energy Directors
- Planners
- Quality Assurance/Compliance Officers
- IT/systems staff



# BREAK

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Name of Community Action Agency: [enter Name of CAA]  
 Reporting Period: October 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

## Section 1: Assisted Members/Household Characteristics

1. Unduplicated Activity Counts			
a. Total unduplicated number of assisted members who were active during the reporting period?			
b. Total unduplicated number of assisted households who were active during the reporting period?			
2. Gender	# of Assisted Members	7. Source of Household Income	# of Assisted Households
a. Self Identified Male		a. Unduplicated # of Families reporting one or more source of income	
b. Self Identified Female		b. Unduplicated # of Families reporting zero income	
c. Other		c. Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)	
d. Unknown/not reported		d. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	
<b>TOTAL (Auto Calculated)</b>	0	e. Social Security	
3. Age	# of Assisted Members	f. Pension	
a. 0 - 5		g. SAGA Assistance	
b. 6 - 11		h. Unemployment	



5. Race	# of Assisted Members
a. American Indian or Alaska Native	
b. Asian	
c. Black or African American	
d. Middle Eastern and North African	
e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
f. White	
g. Multi-race (two or more of the above)	
h. Other	
i. Unknown/not reported	
<b>TOTAL (Auto Calculated)</b>	<b>0</b>
6. Owner/Renter Status	# of Assisted Households
a. Own	
b. Rent with utilities billed separately	
c. Rent with utilities in rental fee	
d. Other	
e. Unknown/Not Reported	
<b>TOTAL (Auto Calculated)</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Section 2: Assurance 16 Services</b>			
<b>1. Assurance 16 Related Activity</b>	<b>CEAP assisted households who applied for services</b>	<b>CEAP assisted households who received services</b>	<b>SRV (data point for CSBG Annual Report only)</b>
a. NewStart			SRV 4k Utility Arrears Payments, Assistance in covering cooling, heating, water, and other utility arrears. Assistance may be provided directly to the utility company or the individual.
b. Operation Fuel & Other Fuel Banks			SRV4i Utility Payments (LIHEAP-includes Emergency Utility Payments) Assistance in covering cooling and heating energy costs, as well as other utilities such as water and electricity. Assistance may be provided directly to the utility company or the individual.
c. Matching Payment Program (MPP)			SRV 4k Utility Arrears Payments, Assistance in covering cooling, heating, water, and other utility arrears. Assistance may be provided directly to the utility company or the individual.
d. Heating System Replacement (non-DSS CEAP)			SRV 4q Home Repairs (e.g. structural, appliance, heating systems. etc.) (Including Emergency Home Repairs) Provision of home repair and residential rehabilitation services to low-income households. Can include home maintenance workshops.
e. Low Income Discount Rate (LIDR)			SRV 3b Financial Coaching/Counseling, On going individualized consultation and guidance to low-income individuals and families on preparing and implementing household budgets, personal credit, and general consumer education issues.
<b>TOTAL</b>			



4. Vendor Mediation	CEAP assisted households who applied for services	CEAP assisted households who received services	SRV (data point for CSBG Annual Report only)
a. Deliverable Fuel Vendor Mediation / Negotiation			SRV 7 Mediation/Customer Advocacy Interventions, Court consumer, or other mediations and/or advocacy services. This service is intended to obtain outcomes.
b. Utility Mediation / Negotiation			SRV 7 Mediation/Customer Advocacy Interventions, Court consumer, or other mediations and/or advocacy services. This service is intended to obtain outcomes.
<b>TOTAL</b>			

1. Make sure your message is clear and don't assume that all participants are at the same level. We shared the below video during one of our initial Data Users Workgroup meetings:

[Rotary Phone Stumps Two Teenage Boys in Hilarious Bet \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



2. Nothing is ever easy when you are talking about change – Embrace the challenge and grow from it
3. Leverage SMEs within your State, don't reinvent the wheel
4. Manage expectations specific to timeframe and deliverables
5. Create messaging that acknowledges the new processes, and its consideration of lessons learned in the past
6. Every voice should be heard
7. Give your team space to grapple with changes to the process
8. Teamwork makes the dream work

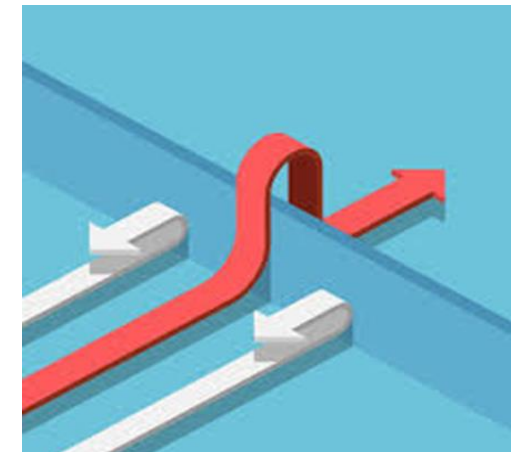


## Successes

- Established uniform tools (definitions, guidance and forms)
- Convened Data User Workgroup
- Cross-trained CAA staff
- Improved customer service
- Improved relationships with utility vendors, deliverable fuel vendors and community-based partners
- Improved communication between Department of Social Services (DSS) and CAA Network

## Lessons Learned

- Two (2) Energy assistance source systems
- Four (4) Case Management source systems
- Training staff
- Outdated report format



- Continuous quality improvement
- Create a state report that can be generated from the source systems
- Leverage information from the utility companies to help tell the story of Assurance 16 impact
- Reinforce messages for the CAAs around self-advocacy and telling their Assurance 16 story on the local level





# Thank You!

# Q & A

