

EAP Advisory Board
7/24/20 Meeting Minutes

Participants: Jeanne Agri, (BMCA), Shannon Nolin (BMCA), Kristen Lapanne (BMCA), Steve Tower (NHLA), Ray Burke (NHLA), Pradip Chattopadhyay (OCA), Janice Johnson (Eversource), Sue Corson (Unitil), Jessica Arnold (Liberty), Lisa Sheehy (NHEC), Karen Emis-Williams (NHMWDA), Amanda Noonan (NHPUC), Eileen Smigowski (OSI)

Discussion

- 1) Review of April 24, 2020 minutes- Minutes approved –following misspelling of Karen Emis-Williams’ name.
- 2) Introduction-Kristen LaPanne –will replace Shannon Nolin as EAP Director upon her retirement effective 7/31. Kristen brings both front line and managerial experience at Strafford Community Action Partnership to EAP.
- 3) 2019-2020 Compliance review report –Shannon-
 - No customary on site review conducted due to restrictions imposed by COVID 19. Evaluation conducted on program applications focusing on those denied enrollment and the reason for the denial.
 - Changes to the income guidelines did not result in any significant increase in program enrollment.
 - Potential changes to enhanced unemployment benefits could impact/increase number of new applications.
 - CAPs do routinely advise applicants to reapply to the program, if they experience a reduction in income.
 - CAPs are not currently removing any program participants even if they fail to complete the recertification process. CAPs are contacting participants by phone & mail to encourage recertification. CAPs have ability to regress an application & recertify eligibility.
 - Data/number of denied applications could be transmitted weekly together with data/number of current enrollments.
- 4) Town Square PR proposal –Shannon
 - Consensus agreement that outreach about EAP & FAP is critical especially due to the pandemic and media campaign is a sensible approach to increase program awareness.
 - Costs for the campaign may be shared by both EAP & FAP.
 - Cost represents a small portion of overall program budget and even if EAP is fully subscribed, CAPs can screen applicants for other assistance programs.
 - Campaign costs will be included in CAP budget due 8/1.
- 5) EAP projections – Amanda
 - a. Utility actual kWh –utilities
 - b. Utility kWh projections –utilities
 - Projections reviewed-general discussion that additional information from utilities may be helpful to understand trends in total kWh sales and the impact on EAP fund balance in the treasury. Utilities to provide data (monthly consumption & weather normalized consumption monthly from January to July, if available and also compare 2019 to

2020 data by tier by 8/7.

6) Data collection review

a. Enrollment –Shannon

- Weekly enrollment figures continue to be circulated. No recent increase in new enrollments since the change to include those at 60% of state median income has been noted. Customers are not currently being removed from the program. There may be a drop in enrollment when re-certification for enrollment resume. Anticipating changes/impact on enrollments when disconnections resume.
- Utilities agreed to undertake a phone and letter campaign to send targeted messages to EAP customers, encouraging them to contact the CAA to recertify and/or review the discount level.
- Agreed that CAA will review the denial letters and make changes as necessary to ensure customers are adequately informed that they can provide supplemental information following receipt of the denial letter and be reconsidered for EAP.

7) Utility disconnections – Shannon, utilities

- Currently suspended.
- Tabled as more information will be available after 8/4 & contingent on COVID docket

8) New business-Shannon-

- Proposed exploration of a web based application for both EAP & FAP for PY 21/22.
- Program applications would be available on website, supporting documentation would be uploaded to a secure site and CAA representative would receive information, certify program eligibility and import information to software.
- Signature of applicant presents and issued that will need to be addressed to successfully implement a web based application.
- No current plans to purchase new EAP & FAP software. Web based application will be integrated into whatever software is used.
- Cost to develop a Business Requirements Document for a web-based application is approximately \$5,000 & will be included in CAP budget due 8/1.

Other Business:

Utility budgets due by 8/1

Questions re: budgets due by 8/7

Answers re: budgets due by 8/14

Hold date-8/18 in the event that discussion is necessary prior to submission of budget