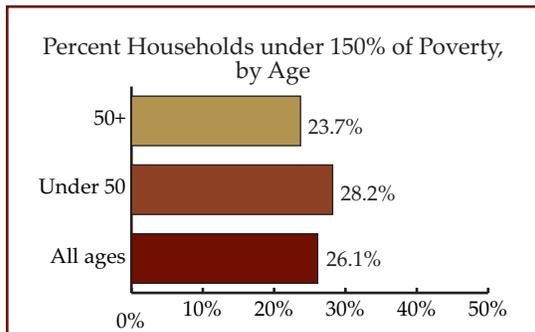


Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

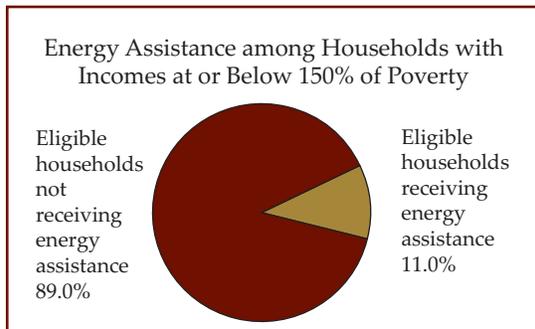
New Mexico

New Mexico in Brief (2006)

Total state population:	1,954,599
State median income:	\$45,867
Percent households age 50+:	47.4%

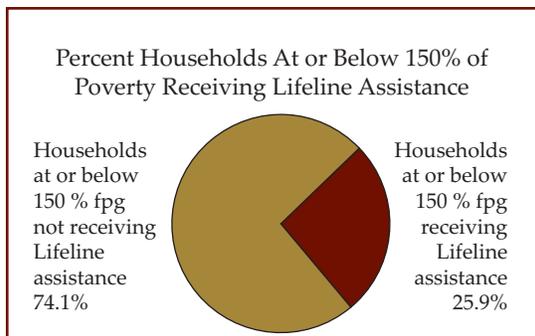


Energy Assistance



Telephone Assistance

Telephone penetration rate in state: 86.7%



Telephone Assistance

Lifeline and Link-Up are the primary sources of telephone assistance for low-income households in New Mexico.

Lifeline

Lifeline provides participating low-income households with a monthly credit toward the price of basic local telephone service.

Benefits (2006)

Maximum monthly credit: \$15.39

Basic federal support: \$8.25

State support: \$5.39

Federal match: \$1.75

Funding (2005)

Federal: \$10,411,084

State: \$3,351,780 (est.)

State support is provided by a state-funded supplemental assistance program known as the Low-Income Telephone Assistance Program (LITAP), which provides for a reduction of \$5.39 to the charges for one-party residential flat-rate local service for eligible low-income subscribers. Subscribers to Lifeline are also eligible for LITAP assistance and receive both discounts monthly.

Eligibility (2006)

To receive Lifeline assistance, state residents must complete an application with their local telephone provider and prove they are enrolled in either of the following programs:

- Medicaid
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program - Energy Assistance Program

Beneficiaries must recertify with their local telephone provider periodically to remain eligible for this program.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 62,070

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

Participation rate: 31.6% (based on 150% of the federal poverty guideline)

Link-Up

Qualified customers receive a discount on the price of installing new telephone service.

Benefits (2006)

Link-Up subscribers receive the following:

- A credit of \$30 or a 50% reduction in the charges customers pay for connecting to new telephone service, whichever is less
- The option of deferring payment on the balance of the connection fee (up to \$200) with no interest charges for a period not to exceed one year

Funding (2005)

Federal: \$192,103

Eligibility (2006)

Eligibility requirements are the same as for Lifeline.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 10,503

Energy Assistance

Low-income energy assistance programs in New Mexico include the following:

- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)— Energy Assistance Program
- Weatherization Assistance Program

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program—LIHEAP

The federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides the state of New Mexico with a block grant to help eligible low-income households meet their immediate home energy needs. With this grant, New Mexico distributes payments primarily for heating assistance. The state also uses a portion

of the grant to supplement funding for New Mexico's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Benefits (FY2005)

Heating: \$240 maximum per household
\$128 average per household

There is no crisis component, but households in a crisis situation will have their applications fast-tracked. Although there is no formal cooling component, benefit payments can be used for summer electricity payments if the household has not already received a benefit.

Clients receive one benefit a year (October 1 – September 30). Benefits are paid to the energy provider unless the client's home energy costs are included in rent, in which case the payment is sent directly to the client to pay for heating or cooling costs. Assistance is available year-round as long as funding remains available.

Funding (FY2006)

Total: \$35,367,623

Federal: \$12,367,623

Tribal set-aside: \$760,807

Regular net block grant: \$9,392,231

One-time additional net block grant:

\$1,638,894

Total emergency/cont.: \$565,977

Leveraging incentive program: - \$9,714

State appropriation: \$23,000,000

The New Mexico Human Services Department, Income Support Division, accepts applications, determines eligibility, notifies clients, and makes payments to energy providers and clients. New Mexico allocates LIHEAP funding in the following manner:

- Heating assistance, cooling and crisis: 91%
- Administration, etc.: 9%

Eligibility (FY2005)

State residents with household incomes at or below 150% of poverty are eligible for assistance.

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

Households must have an unsubsidized heating or cooling expenses to be eligible.

Participation (2005)

Households served by program component:

- Heating: 35,363
- Winter/year-round crisis: 55,685
- Weatherization: 654

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

This program helps low-income residents—especially those older, disabled, or living with young children—increase the energy efficiency of their homes, reduce their energy expenditures, and improve health and safety.

Benefits (FY2006)

Maximum benefit per household: \$2,826

Weatherization technicians use energy audits to identify and implement energy-saving measures for each home. Examples of these measures include the following:

- Insulating attics, floors, water heaters, and exposed pipes
- Tuning up, repairing, or replacing the furnace or heating unit and/or air conditioner
- Providing ventilation fans—including electric, attic, ceiling, or whole-house fans—to increase air circulation
- Stopping air infiltration by weather-stripping and caulking around doors and windows, replacing broken glass panes, and installing storm windows

Funding (FY2006)

Total: \$4,657,690

Federal: \$3,857,690

Department of Energy: \$1,857,690

Additional LIHEAP funding: \$2,000,000

State: \$ 3,300,000

Appropriation: \$2,500,000

Department of Finance and Administration budget*: \$800,000

The New Mexico Mortgage Finance Agency distributes grants to four Community Action Agencies (CAAs). These agencies accept applications, determine eligibility, and provide weatherization services, including performing energy audits and implementing suggested measures.

The Public Service Company of New Mexico (Gas) funding is a three year contract, with \$823,453 to weatherization per year for that term. The possibility exists that more public utility funding will be forthcoming within the next year.

Eligibility (FY2006)

Homeowners in the state with household incomes at or below 125% of poverty are eligible for assistance. Service priority is given to the elderly, disabled, and to households with age five and younger.

Participation (2006)

Households served: 1,615

Seasonal, Health-, and Income-Related Disconnection Policies

Seasonal

Between November 15 and March 15, New Mexico delays disconnection of residential natural gas or electric service for nonpayment for at least 15 days after the scheduled disconnection date if the Human Services Department certifies the customer as eligible for or receiving LIHEAP assistance.

Disconnections are permitted after 15 days only if the LIHEAP office fails to make payment on the customer's behalf within that time.

Health

Utilities are prohibited from disconnecting residential natural gas or electric service to households with seriously or chronically ill members at any time, as long as the following requirements are met:

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

- A medical professional certifies in writing that the life or health of the household member will be adversely affected if the disconnection occurs.
- The utility receives certification from the New Mexico Human Services Department or a charitable organization that the customer qualifies for assistance from the organization; or from the customer, demonstrating that the customer is eligible for Medicaid.
- The customer agrees in writing to a deferred payment agreement.

Deferred Payments

Utilities are prohibited from disconnecting a customer's natural gas or electric service for nonpayment if the customer agrees and adheres to a deferred-payment plan.