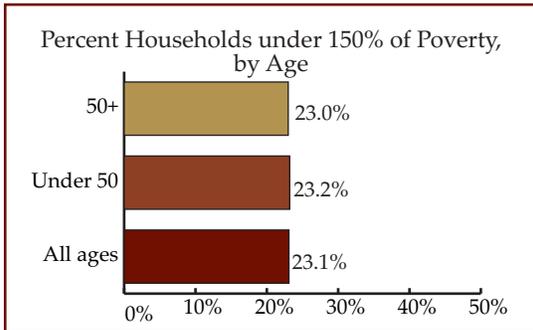


Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

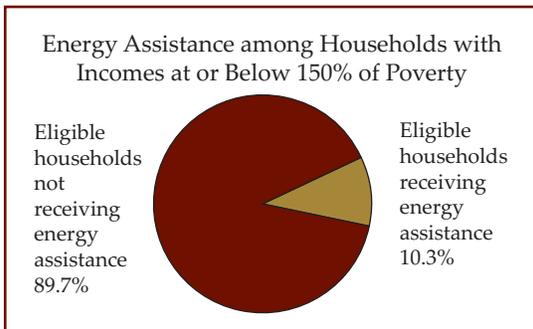
Oklahoma

Oklahoma in Brief (2006)

Total state population:	3,579,212
State median income:	\$50,216
Percent households age 50+:	45.5%

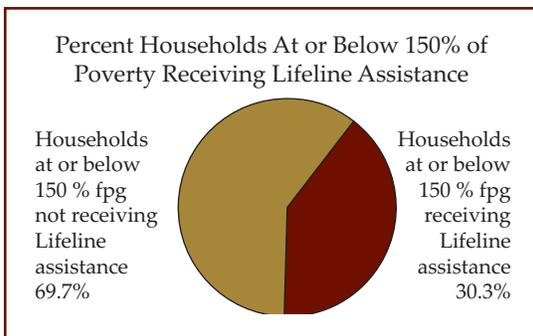


Energy Assistance



Telephone Assistance

Telephone penetration rate in state: 90.4%



Telephone Assistance

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

Lifeline

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

Benefits (2006)

Maximum monthly credit: \$36.50

Basic federal support: \$8.25

State support (Oklahoma Universal Service Fund credit): \$1.17

Federal match: \$0.58

Additional federal credit to residential access line: \$26.50 (maximum)

Funding (2005)

Federal: \$30,514,540

State: \$466,000*

* Source: National Regulatory Research Institute (NRRI), 2004–2005 Universal Service Funding Mechanism Survey.

The state portion (\$1.17) of this benefit is funded through a charge on all telecommunications providers of intrastate retail telecommunications services. Each provider may, at its option, recover the amount of this charge, which is set at 0.4% of billed intrastate retail rates, from its retail customers. Revenues from the charge are forwarded to the Oklahoma Universal Service Fund (OKUSF), which supports several programs, including Lifeline, and then distributed to eligible local telephone service providers as reimbursement for providing the state portion of the Lifeline benefit.

Eligibility (2006)

To receive Lifeline assistance, state residents must complete an application with their local

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

telephone provider and prove they are enrolled in any of the following programs:

- Food stamps
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Oklahoma sales tax relief
- Federal public housing assistance
- State Department of Rehabilitative Services programs
- Head Start
- National School Lunch

Persons living on former Indian reservation land may also qualify if enrolled in any of the following programs:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs general assistance
- Head Start
- National School Lunch

Except for the northwest and Panhandle regions, virtually all of Oklahoma meets the former tribal lands requirement.

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

Participation (2005)

Households served: 130,848

Participation rate: 32.4% (based on 168% 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, whichever is less, on the charges customers pay for connecting to new telephone service
- 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: \$1,775,149

Eligibility (2006)

Eligibility requirements are the same as for Lifeline.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 55,743

Energy Assistance

Low-income energy assistance programs in Oklahoma include the following:

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

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides the state of Oklahoma with a block grant to help eligible low-income households meet their immediate home energy needs. With this grant, Oklahoma distributes payments under three categories of assistance: heating, cooling, and crisis. The state also uses a portion of the grant to supplement funding for Oklahoma's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Benefits (FY2006)

Heating: \$220 maximum per household

Crisis: \$165 maximum for two-person household

Clients receive one benefit a year in each category of assistance. 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. Heating assistance is available from December 1 to December 30; crisis assistance is available from March 15 to March 31.

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

Funding (FY2006)

Total: \$32,362,270

Federal: \$26,962,270

Regular net block grant: \$14,007,976

Additional net block grant: \$12,191,374

Total emergency/cont.: \$762,920

State appropriation: \$5,400,000

County offices of the Department of Human Services accept applications and determine eligibility. The central office notifies clients and makes payments to energy providers and clients. Oklahoma allocates LIHEAP funding in the following manner:

• Heating assistance:	50%
• Cooling assistance:	25%
• Crisis assistance:	6%
• Weatherization:	9%
• Administration, etc.:	10%

Eligibility (FY2006)

State residents with household incomes of 110% of poverty or less are eligible for assistance.

Households receiving public assistance from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services are preauthorized for the program. Oklahoma also uses an assets test to determine the financial eligibility of clients for LIHEAP.

Participation in Oklahoma's LIHEAP program does not reduce the client's eligibility or benefits under other state assistance programs.

Participation (FY2005)

Households served by program component:

Heating:	84,509
Cooling:	17,616
Winter/year-round crisis:	8,069
Summer crisis:	7,396
Weatherization:	450

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), the U.S. Department of Energy provides Oklahoma with a formula distribution grant to help low-income residents—especially those 60

years and older, disabled, or living with young children—increase the energy efficiency of their homes, reduce their energy expenditures, and improve health and safety.

Benefits (FY 2006)

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, and replacing broken glass panes

Funding

Total: \$5,125,595

Federal: \$3,913,595

Department of Energy (FY2006): \$2,831,669

LIHEAP funding (FY2005): \$1,081,926

Private funding (FY2006): \$1,212,000

Oklahoma Energy Resources Board:
\$1,000,000

George Kaiser Family Foundation: \$200,000

Energy Conservation Assistance Funds:
\$12,000

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services contracts with the Department of Commerce to provide weatherization services in Oklahoma. Nineteen community action programs that contract with the Department of Commerce accept applications, determine eligibility, and provide weatherization services, such as performing energy audits and implementing suggested measures.

Eligibility

Households with incomes at or below 60% of state median income are eligible for assistance. Priority is given to households with elderly or disabled members.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 1,150

Seasonal, Health-, and Income-Related Disconnection Policies

Seasonal

Oklahoma prohibits disconnection of natural gas or electric service if the National Weather Service forecasts any of the following temperatures for the day of disconnection:

- 32°F or below during the daytime
- 20°F or below during the nighttime
- 103°F or above during the day

In addition, the Oklahoma Corporate Commission has the authority to order a temporary ban on all disconnections during periods of extremely severe weather, or in circumstances where disconnection would be dangerous to the life or health of the customer.

Health

The state requires utilities to delay for up to 30 days disconnection of residential service if a licensed medical doctor or osteopath certifies that disconnection of service would precipitate a life-threatening condition because the customer or a permanent household member is dependent on electrically operated equipment that is needed to sustain the person's life. A medical certificate may be renewed once, for a total of 60 days. The customer is required to pay the bill in full or negotiate a deferred-payment arrangement for the balance during the period of delay.

Income/Deferred Payments

The state delays disconnection of natural gas and electric utility service for nonpayment for up to 20 days if it is established that the customer has applied for financial assistance (including Supplemental Security Income) from a state, federal, or local social service agency. Oklahoma prohibits disconnection of residential utility service if the household enters into a deferred-payment agreement.