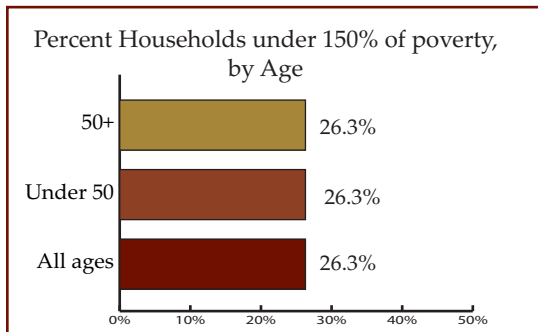


Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

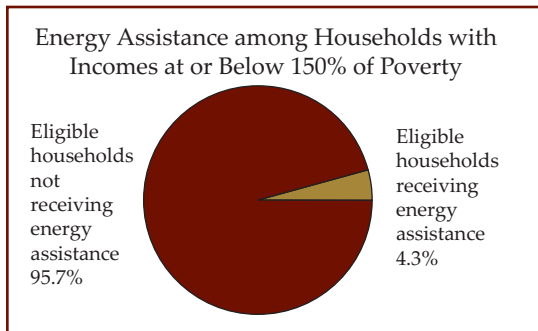
Alabama

Alabama in Brief (2006)

Total state population:	4,464,356
State median income:	\$51,156
Percent households age 50+:	45.0%

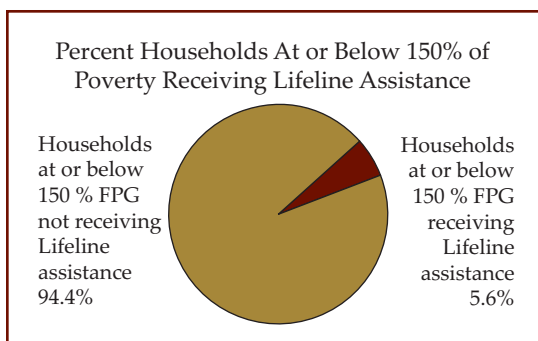


Energy Assistance



Telephone Assistance

Telephone penetration rate in state: 91.9%



Telephone Assistance

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

Lifeline

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

Maximum Benefits (2006)
 Maximum monthly credit: \$13.50
 Basic federal support: \$8.25
 State support: \$3.50
 Federal match: \$1.75

Funding (2005)

Federal: \$3,192,240
 State: \$ 1,132,110 (est.)

Local telephone companies recover the cost of providing the state portion of this benefit (\$3.50 per subscriber) in the rates they charge non-Lifeline subscribers for basic local telephone service.

Eligibility (2006)

To receive Lifeline assistance, state residents must complete an application with their local telephone provider and prove they are enrolled in Medicaid. Beneficiaries must re-certify with their local telephone provider periodically to remain eligible for this program.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 26,955

LinkUp

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

Benefits (2006)

LinkUp subscribers receive the following:

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

- A credit of \$30 or a 50 percent 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: \$30,192

Eligibility (2006)

Eligibility requirements are the same as for Lifeline.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 1,670

Energy Assistance

The main federal- and state-sponsored energy assistance programs in Alabama are the following:

- LIHEAP
- Weatherization Assistance Program
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund
- Utility Rate Assistance

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

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

Benefits (FY2005)

Benefit levels for FY2005 are as follows:
Crisis: \$440 maximum per household

Heating: \$240 maximum per household
Cooling: \$240 maximum per household

Clients receive a benefit once per year. 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 May 31 with an early application period for older and disabled residents. Crisis assistance is available year-round, while cooling assistance is available from June 1 to September 30.

Funding (FY2006)

Federal

Tribal set aside:	\$105,564
Regular Net Block Grant:	\$16,663,884
Additional FY2006 Block Grant:	\$14,456,602
Total Emergency Funds:	\$661,706
Reach Grant:	\$1,000,000

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs distributes grants to local Community Action Agencies throughout the state. These agencies accept applications, determine eligibility, notify clients, and make payments to energy providers and clients. Alabama allocates LIHEAP funding in the following manner:

Heating assistance:	38%
Cooling assistance:	30%
Crisis assistance:	20%
Weatherization:	10%
Administration, Assurance 16	2%

Eligibility (FY2005)

State residents with household incomes at or below 125 percent of poverty are eligible for LIHEAP.

Participation (FY2005)

Households served by program component:

• Heating:	48,981
• Cooling:	32,976

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

Alabama

- Winter/Year-round Crisis: 12,479
- Summer Crisis: 12,108
- Weatherization: 486

applications, determine eligibility, and provide weatherization services, including performing energy audits and implementing suggested measures.

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), the U.S. Department of Energy provides Alabama with a formula distribution grant to help low-income residents—especially those who are 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 (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 attic, floors, water heater, 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 (FY2005)

Total:	\$3,210,538
Federal:	\$3,210,538
Department of Energy:	\$2,417,993
Additional funding through LIHEAP:	\$792,545

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Division of Community and Economic Development, distributes grants to 19 Community Action Agencies throughout the state. These agencies accept

Eligibility (FY2005)

State residents with household incomes at or below 125 percent of poverty are eligible for weatherization services.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 846

Utility Rate Assistance

The major electric power company and two gas companies in the state waive their monthly service charge for eligible subscribers.

Benefits

\$7.99–\$8.61 discount per month, depending on the utility.

Recipients are exempt from the utilities' monthly service charge.

Funding (FY2004)

Total: \$1,700,000

Utility surcharge: \$1,700,000

Funding for this program arises from assessments by participating utilities on residential ratepayers estimated to be between \$0.04 and \$0.06 per month per customer, depending on the utility.

Eligibility

SSI and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients in the utilities' service areas are eligible for assistance. Participants enroll through power and gas companies offering this assistance.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 16,000 (approx.)

Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund

The Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund provides eligible recipients with assistance in weatherizing their homes.

Benefits (FY2005)

Funding for this program supplements the benefits provided through the state LIHEAP and Weatherization Assistance Program.

Funding (FY2005)

Total: \$117,988

State: \$117,988

The Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund is funded through voluntary contributions by Alabama taxpayers, who check a box on their state income tax forms to contribute a portion of their tax refund or payment. The Fund also receives interest earned on the principal remaining in the fund.

Eligibility (FY2005)

Households with total incomes at or below 125 percent of poverty are eligible for assistance. Recipients are selected based on need for services not necessarily covered by the state's WAP.

Participation (2005)

Participation numbers are reflected in LIHEAP and WAP totals.

Seasonal, Health, and Income-Related Disconnection Policies

Alabama prohibits the disconnection of residential electric or natural gas service for nonpayment when the National Weather Service forecasts that the temperature at that location will be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below for that calendar day.