



City of Smyrna

City of Smyrna
A.Max Bacon City Hall /
Council Chambers
2800 King Street
Smyrna, GA 30080
770-434-6600
www.smyrnacity.com

Issue Sheet

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WARD / COUNCILMEMBER: City wide

\$ IMPACT:

Agenda Title:

Approval of contract with DHS for LIHWAP (Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program) to accept assistance payments from DHS on behalf of Smyrna utility customers with outstanding balances and authorize the Mayor to sign and execute all related documents.

Ward / City Wide

ISSUE AND BACKGROUND:

LIHWAP, which stands for Low Income Household Water Assistance Program, is a federal program that helps low-income households pay for drinking water and wastewater for their homes. This program will help our residents pay their home water bill if the water bill is in their name, or if they can verify that they are experiencing a water burden.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law No.: 116-260) signed on Dec. 27, 2020, included \$638 million in funding with instructions for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to carry out grants to states, territories and tribes to assist low-income households with water and wastewater bills. Additionally, on March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law No.: 117-2) appropriated an additional \$500 million to the new LIHWAP effort.

LIHWAP will open on November 1, 2021 in Georgia and will prioritize households that have an arrearage or past due water bill through the remainder of the year. On January 3, 2022, the program will begin serving households that contain seniors 60 years of age and older and households that contain children five years of age and younger. All other households will be eligible to receive LIHWAP assistance beginning February 1, 2022.

Water suppliers have to complete an agreement with DHS to be able to receive payments on behalf of our customers.

RECOMMENDATION / REQUESTED ACTION: Approval of contract with DHS for LIHWAP (Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program) to accept assistance payments from DHS on behalf of Smyrna utility customers with outstanding balances and authorize the Mayor to sign and execute all related documents.

