

Illinois EE Stakeholder Advisory Group Policy Manual Subcommittee Small Group

Thursday, October 13, 2022 Meeting
4:00 – 5:00 pm

Attendees and Meeting Notes

Attendees (by webinar)

Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator
Andy Vaughn, Leidos on behalf of Ameren Illinois
Brook Cranford, Leidos on behalf of Ameren Illinois
Chris Neme, Energy Futures Group representing NRDC
Elizabeth Horne, ICC Staff
Karen Lusson, National Consumer Law Center (NCLC)
LaJuana Garret, Nicor Gas
Matt Armstrong, Ameren Illinois
Philip Mosenthal, Optimal Energy representing IL AG's Office and NCLC
Rebecca McNish, ComEd
Ted Weaver, First Tracks Consulting, representing Nicor Gas
Thomas Manjarres, Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas
Tina Grebner, Ameren Illinois
Victoria Nielson, Applied Energy Group

Meeting Notes

Background and Meeting Purpose

Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator

- The purpose of today's small group meeting is to discuss Ameren's proposed policy for income qualified single-family eligibility.
- This is a policy proposal Ameren submitted as part of the Policy Manual update process. Due to current program challenges Ameren is requesting interim resolution now.
- The small group will discuss draft policy language today, and will also provide time to review after the meeting for any additional feedback.
- The larger Policy Manual Subcommittee is meeting next Wednesday Oct. 19th, and this policy is on the agenda in case any follow-up discussion is needed.

Ameren Illinois Background on Policy Proposal

Matt Armstrong, Ameren Illinois

- Single Family Income Qualified program currently requires customers to provide proof of income; this includes multiple pages of tax returns, statement of income. These records are not easily accessible, or time consuming to find. We are putting this policy proposal to eliminate that program challenge.
- Brief overview of current process for Ameren's Single Family Income Qualified program.
- Karen Lusson: Are LIHEAP or PIPP customers required to follow the SF IQ eligibility process.
 - A: Yes, we have been using the same process. We just started using LIHEAP as a pathway to be considered income qualified.

- Karen Lusson: Customers have already been income qualified through LIHEAP or PIPP, so should be also EE program eligible without further income qualification.

Discussion of Draft Policy Language

All

- Policy language does not call out specific EE programs.
- Chris Neme: Is this only for qualifying for low income, or also moderate income? How do you distinguish between the two?
 - A: We intended to qualify both. For example, if someone is coming in as a Warm Neighbors Cool Friends recipient, they would be part of the moderate-income program (reduced co-pay).
- Chris Neme: What do you mean by “utility funded”?
 - A: Warm Neighbors Cool Friends is funded by customers who donate to a fund. It is utility customer dollars.
- Defining other programs
 - LIHEAP = federal and state dollars
 - State or federal income eligible programs = SNAP, Medicaid, etc
- Participation in federal or local government disaster relief programs
 - Ameren interested in leaving the door open if there is a program in the future.
 - Chris Neme: Concerned about including this, especially the “majority of households” language.
 - Phil Mosenthal: These types of programs are sometimes available to everyone.
- Participation in local government or community programs
 - Chris Neme: Concerned about this qualification option; there is a possibility funds may be spent on wealthier customers
- Karen Lusson: Here are the proxy programs that would be relevant:(1) PIPP; (2) LIHEAP; (3) public or assisted housing (HUD voucher); (4) SSI; (5) SNAP (formerly Food Stamps); (6) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); (7) Telephone Lifeline; (8) PAAD (Pharmaceutical Assistance for the Aged and Disabled); (9) WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children); (10) Medicaid; (11) free or reduced school lunch/school breakfast; (12) Head Start; and (13) Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for Surviving Spouse or Parents of Veterans.
- Phil Mosenthal: What happens with owner-occupied homes?
 - A: It’s based on who holds the utility bill.
- Policy language on using other approaches beyond what is included in the policy list:
 - This is almost the exact language from the current Policy Manual, in the multi-family eligibility section.
 - Chris Neme: Multi-family qualification is unique, same language may not make sense for single family. Suggests including a reference to stakeholder notification.
 - Rebecca McNish: ComEd has concerns about losing this language; will review and discuss internally.
- Phil Mosenthal: What does documentation look like for a customer participating in LIHEAP, PIPP, etc.?
 - Brook Cranford: The point is to remove the burden from customers – providing tax documents is burdensome. We know this customer base utilizing cell phones. They can share participation documentation via a statement that shows their name, for example.

Closing and Next Steps

- Policy Manual Small Group participants to review updated policy document, with policy language edited during 10/13 meeting
- Follow-up discussion at Policy Manual Subcommittee meeting on 10/19
- SAG participants will be given time to review the final draft policy before finalizing the interim policy resolution (deadline for final comments TBD)