



AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

**THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, DIVISION OF FAMILY
AND CHILDREN SERVICES**

AND

FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

[Name of Home Water Supplier]

FOR

THE LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLD WATER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHWAP)

This Agreement ("Agreement") is made and entered into by and between the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services ("DHS-DFCS") and **FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT** ("Home Water Supplier"), each individually a "Party" and collectively referred to as the "Parties" and shall be effective upon the date of last signature by the authorized representatives of the Parties ("Effective Date").

WHEREAS, DHS is the State agency that administers and sets parameters for a statewide system of programs and services that provide public assistance to the disadvantaged, disabled and elderly residents of the State of Georgia (the "State") through a network of other agencies and organizations, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 49-2-1 et seq.;

WHEREAS, Home Water Supplier refers to any private or public entity in the business of supplying water for human consumption and/or wastewater related services to customers through public water systems, such as pipelines.

WHEREAS, DHS and Home Water Supplier are empowered to enter into this Agreement pursuant to 1983 Ga. Const. Art. IX, Sec. III, Para. I, as an intergovernmental agreement.

WHEREAS, DHS and Home Water Supplier enter this Agreement for the provision of federal funds to cover and/or reduce arrearages, rates and fees associated with reconnection or preventions of disconnection of service, and rate reduction to assist low-income households with water and wastewater reconnection and ongoing services for households eligible for the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program ("LIHWAP"). The term "arrearage" includes any past due balance on an account.

WHEREAS, DHS operates LIHWAP in accordance with Term Eleven in the Supplemental Terms and Conditions, incorporated in this Agreement as **Attachment A**, as set forth by the United States Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services. Federal funds awarded under this grant shall be used as part of an overall emergency effort to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with the public health focus of ensuring that eligible low-income households have access to drinking water and wastewater services.

WHEREAS, DHS and Home Water Supplier acknowledge that the services provided under this Agreement are governed by and subject to the federal and state laws and regulations in accordance with LIHWAP and its Supplemental Terms and Conditions (**Attachment A**).

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual agreements and covenants hereinafter set forth and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Parties agree as follows:

1. PARTIES' JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parties agree to:

1.1. Maintain regular communication with each other, in all matters, as needed throughout the duration of the Agreement.

1.2. Work in partnership with each other and with each Party's authorized representatives and contractors in the provision of the services and such other goals as may be mutually agreed upon by the Parties.

1.3. Provide information and documentation as reasonably necessary to meet the obligations of this Agreement.

1.4. Cooperate in good faith with any audit or financial reviews conducted by the other Party or any other authorized entity regarding this Agreement. This includes maintaining and providing information descriptive of the services required under this Agreement necessary for the other Party to meet any reporting requirements imposed by State or federal law.

2. HOME WATER SUPPLIER RESPONSIBILITIES

Home Water Supplier agrees to:

General:

2.1. Provide DHS-DFCS a copy of the Employer Identification Number document, which was issued to the Home Water Supplier and which displays the number used by the IRS as the Home Water Supplier's tax identification number.

2.2. Provide DHS-DFCS with at least one designated contact person who shall be available to respond by telephone and electronic mail to all reasonable inquiries regarding LIHWAP household accounts, including but not limited to bills, payments, and services.

2.3. Notify DHS-DFCS immediately when the tax identification number is changed. A new W-9 form will be completed and returned to DHS-DFCS.

2.4. Notify DHS-DFCS within 10 days when the name of the company, ownership of the company, contact person, contact/billing information, services to be provided, or service coverage area changes.

2.5. For privately owned Water Companies: Notify DHS-DFCS if the Home Water Supplier owner or an employee of the Home Water Supplier is also employed by DHS-DFCS or a member of his/her immediate family is employed by the DHS-DFCS. ("Immediate family" means either a spouse or any other person who resides in the same household as the owner/employee and who is a dependent of the owner.)

2.6. For the purpose of monitoring compliance with this Agreement and LIHWAP program compliance, the Home Water Supplier agrees to allow representatives of the Community Action Agency and DHS-DFCS access to all account information for the LIHWAP recipients.

2.7. The provisions found at Section 5 of this Agreement are hereby incorporated.

Financial Information/Billing:

2.8. Provide drinking water and/or wastewater services to each eligible and approved residential household, for which payment is provided under this Agreement.

2.9. Charge LIHWAP households using the Home Water Supplier's normal billing process.

2.10. Apply LIHWAP funds for currently open/active accounts, only, as follows:

2.10.1. Do not apply LIHWAP funds to any closed/inactive accounts.

2.10.2. If there is an arrearage on an open/active account, apply all LIHWAP funds to the arrearage on the account first. All remaining payment shall be applied to the customer's current account balance, which may result in a credit on the account. If the water services have been disconnected, the Home Water Supplier agrees to restore water services within 10 business days upon the receipt of the payment from LIHWAP.

2.10.3. If there are no arrears on an open/active account, apply all LIHWAP funds to the customer's current account balance, which may result in a credit on the account.

2.10.4. Charge all LIHWAP households the same rate for home drinking water and/or wastewater services that the Home Water Supplier bills to non-LIHWAP households.

2.10.5. Do not apply LIHWAP payments to account balances that have previously been written off.

2.10.6. Do not apply LIHWAP payments to commercial accounts. LIHWAP payments should only be applied to residential accounts.

2.10.7. Post all payments to customer accounts within 5 business days of receiving the payment.

2.10.8. Clearly notate and distinguish on all LIHWAP household accounts, the LIHWAP funds that are applied to the account.

2.10.9. After LIHWAP funds are applied to an account, include on the customer's next billing statement information concerning all LIHWAP funds applied to the account.

2.11. Continually maintain accurate records of LIHWAP credit balances and annually reconcile accounts. After one year, credit balances must be refunded to DHS-DFCS.

2.12. Not exchange the household's credit authorization for cash or give any cash equivalent for excess credit.

2.13. Cooperate with any Federal, State, or local investigation, audit, or program review. Allow DHS-DFCS representatives access to all books and records relating to LIHWAP households for the purpose of compliance verification with this Agreement.

2.14. Understand that failure to cooperate with any Federal, State, or local investigation, audit, or program review may result in the immediate disqualification from participation in the LIHWAP.

2.15. Take corrective action in the timeframe specified by the DHS-DFCS if violations of this Agreement are discovered. Corrective action may include, but is not limited to, providing detailed documentation of changes made and detailed plans for future changes that will bring the Home Water Supplier into compliance.

2.16. Understand that failure to implement corrective actions may result in the immediate disqualification from participation in the LIHWAP.

Data Collection:

2.17. DHS-DFCS requires the Home Water Supplier to maintain data regarding performance measures, which includes but may not be limited to:

2.17.1. Written information to DHS-DFCS on an eligible household's home drinking water and/or wastewater costs, bill payment history, and/or arrearage history for no more than the previous 12 monthly billing periods even when it may be from a prior occupant household. If the eligible household has been a customer for less than 12 months, the Home Energy Supplier will provide LIHEAP with the requested data and include the number of months that the data supports.

2.17.2. The itemized amount, cost, and type of water assistance and services provided for eligible households approved for assistance under this award.

2.17.3. The type of water assistance used by the eligible household, i.e., drinking

water, wastewater etc.

2.17.4. The impact of the LIHWAP benefit on the LIHWAP household (e.g., amount of assistance to each household, and whether assistance restored water service or prevented shutoff).

2.18. The performance measures data must be provided at no cost to DHS-DFCS nor the account holder and provided to DHS-DFCS within a timeframe specified by DHS-DFCS. Additionally, the performance measures data must be provided in the format requested by DHS-DFCS (or an authorized agent for the DHS-DFCS) for the purposes of verification, research, evaluation, analysis, and reporting. Prior to requesting performance measures data, DHS-DFCS will obtain authorization for release of information from the LIHWAP applicant.

3. DHS-DFCS RESPONSIBILITIES

DHS-DFCS agrees to:

3.1. DHS-DFCS will evaluate the relationship to determine if there is a conflict of interest that will preclude the Home Water Supplier from providing LIHWAP services to a designated locality(s). (Conflict of Interest is defined as a situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a person in an official position because of the possibility of a clash between the person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest.)

3.2. Not serve as the Home Water Supplier for a household in which s/he is a current recipient of assistance from the LIHWAP. (For these purposes, current will be defined as during the present federal fiscal year. Applies to privately owned Water Companies).

3.3. Not serve as the Home Water Supplier for a dwelling/property that s/he owns. (Applies to privately owned Water Companies).

4. TERM

4.1. This Agreement shall begin on the Effective Date and shall continue until September 30, 2022 ("Initial Term"), unless terminated earlier pursuant to **Section 7, Termination**; provided, however, that termination or expiration of this Agreement shall not affect any obligations, representations, or warranties, which by their nature survive termination or expiration. Thereafter, this Agreement may be renewed by the Parties for an additional term, which shall begin on October 1 and end at midnight on September 30, of the following year ("Renewal Option") as follows:

Initial Term: Effective Date – September 30, 2022

Renewal Option: October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023

4.2. The terms and conditions in effect at the time of the renewal shall apply to each renewal term. DHS-DFCS shall send Home Water Supplier written notice memorializing the Parties' intent to exercise a renewal option under this Agreement. Renewal is not automatic.

5. PAYMENT

5.1. All funds for payment made pursuant to this Agreement will be paid directly to the Home Water Supplier by a DHS-DFCS contracted Community Action Agency, as outlined in this Agreement. "Responsibilities of the Community Action Agency" are detailed in **Attachment B** of this Agreement.

5.2. If a Community Action Agency notifies the Home Water Supplier that a payment is a duplicate or was sent in error, the refund check must be made payable to the Community Action Agency within 10 business days of notification. The Home Water Supplier shall refund only the portion of the payment that was a duplicate or the portion of the payment that was sent in error. Do not return the entire check.

5.3. If the Home Water Supplier receives notification that a LIHWAP payment has not posted to the correct account, the Home Water Supplier must credit the LIHWAP payment to the correct account within 5 business days.

6. RELATIONSHIP OF THE PARTIES

6.1. Neither Party is an agent, employee, assignee or servant of the other. It is expressly agreed that this Agreement is not to be construed as creating a partnership, joint venture, master-servant, principal-agent, or other relationship for any purpose whatsoever. Furthermore, neither Party is authorized to or has the power to obligate or bind the other by contract, agreement, warranty, representation or otherwise in any manner whatsoever.

7. TERMINATION

7.1. This Agreement may be cancelled or terminated, in whole or in part:

7.1.1. For convenience of either Party upon delivery of thirty (30) calendar days' written notice of intent to do so, signed by a duly authorized representative of either Party;

7.1.2. By operation of law or act of the General Assembly, so as to render the fulfillment of the Agreement infeasible; and

7.1.3. In the event sufficient appropriated, otherwise obligated funds no longer exist for the payment of a Party's obligations hereunder.

7.2. In the event of termination of this Agreement for any reason, the Parties shall remain liable for only those amounts, if any, incurred up to and including the termination date, subject to appropriations and the payment terms of this Agreement. If the Parties fail to agree in whole or in parts as to the amounts with respect to monies to be paid in connection with the total or partial termination, **Section 13, *Dispute Resolution***, shall govern.

8. DEFAULT

8.1. If there is an event of default, the non-defaulting Party shall provide written notice thereof requesting that the breach or noncompliance be remedied within the time period specified in the notice. If the breach or noncompliance is not remedied by such date, the non-defaulting Party may immediately terminate this Agreement, in whole or in part, without additional written notice.

9. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

9.1. No civil action may be brought under this Agreement by one Party against the other Party.

9.2. DHS-DFCS shall not be held liable for claims arising solely from the acts, omissions or negligence of Home Water Supplier. Home Water Supplier shall not be held liable for claims arising solely from the acts, omissions or negligence of DHS-DFCS.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

10.1. All Parties herein shall abide by all state and federal laws, rules and regulations, and DHS policy on respecting confidentiality of an individual's records. The Parties herein further agree not to divulge any information concerning any individual to any unauthorized person without the written consent of the individual employee, consumer/client/customer, or responsible parent or guardian.

10.2. Pursuant to 45 C.F.R § 160.103, the Parties agree that DHS-DFCS is a "covered entity" as defined by the federal Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information. DHS-DFCS from time to time may disclose "protected health information" ("PHI") to carry out the functions of this Agreement. These disclosures relate to PHI created or acquired by DHS-DFCS in connection with programs it administers.

10.3. PHI disclosed pursuant to this Agreement is confidential information and will be subject to appropriate safeguards while in DHS-DFCS possession. PHI will not be re-disclosed by DHS-DFCS or its employees without the written consent of the individual to whom the PHI relates or that individual's authorized representative, except as may be required by compulsory legal process. PHI will be retained by DHS-DFCS as required by law and, as appropriate, will be destroyed only in accordance with approved records retention schedules.

10.4. DHS-DFCS is required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Public Law 104-191 (hereinafter referred to as 'HIPAA'), to obtain satisfactory assurances that its Business Associates will provide appropriate safeguards to ensure the security, confidentiality and integrity of PHI that a Business Associate may receive or create on behalf of DHS-DFCS pursuant to this Agreement, and to document those assurances by entering into a Business Associate Agreement with certain entities that provide activities and/or services involving the use of PHI.

10.5. The Home Water Supplier who utilizes, accesses, or stores personally identifiable information as part of the performance of this Agreement are required to safeguard this information and immediately notify DHS-DFCS of any breach or suspected breach in the security of such information. The Home Water Supplier shall allow DHS-DFCS to both participate in the investigation of incidents and exercise control over decisions regarding external reporting.

11. NOTICE

11.1. All notices, requests, or other communications (excluding invoices) under this Agreement shall be in writing and either transmitted via overnight courier, electronic mail, hand deliver or certified or registered mail, postage prepaid and return receipt requested to the Parties at the following addresses. Notices will be deemed to have been given when received.

DHS-DFCS:

Project Leader

Cynthia Bryant, MPH
LIHEAP/CSBG/LIHWAP Unit Manager
2 Peachtree Street
Suite 21-253
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 463-1679
Cynthia.Bryant@dhs.ga.gov

Contracts Administrator

Contracts Manager
Office of Procurement, Contracts and Vendor Management
2 Peachtree Street, NW
Suite 27-214
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 656-4861
(770) 359-3276 (fax)

Home Water Supplier

Refer to Attachment C for the Home Water Supplier's contact information.

11.2. In the event a Party decides to identify a new or additional point-of-contact, said Party shall send written notification to the other Party identifying, the name, title, and address of the new point-of-contact. Identification of a new point-of-contact is not considered an amendment to this Agreement.

12. AMENDMENTS IN WRITING

12.1. The Parties recognize and agree that it may be necessary or convenient for the Parties to amend this Agreement so as to provide for the orderly implementation of all of the undertakings described herein, and the Parties agree to cooperate fully in connection with such amendments if and as necessary. However, no amendment, modification or alteration of this Agreement will be valid or effective unless such modification is made in writing and signed by both Parties and affixed to this Agreement as an amendment. Except for the specific provisions of the Agreement which are amended, the Agreement remains in full force and effect after such amendment.

13. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS

13.1. The Parties agree to comply and abide by all federal and state laws, rules, statutes, case law, precedent, policies, or procedures that may govern the Agreement, or any of the Parties' responsibilities. To the extent that applicable federal and state laws, rules, regulations, statutes, case law, precedent, policies, or procedures - either those in effect at the time of the execution of this Agreement, or those which become effective or are amended during the life of the Agreement - require a Party to take action or inaction, any costs, expenses, or fees associated with that action or inaction shall be borne and paid by said Party.

14. ASSIGNMENT

14.1. No Party may assign this Agreement, in whole or in part, without prior written consent of the other Party, and any attempted assignment not in accordance herewith shall be null and void and of no force or effect. If requested by DHS-DFCS, the Home Water Supplier shall furnish DHS-DFCS the names, qualifications, and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The Home Water Supplier shall, however, remain fully liable and responsible for the work to be done by its subcontractor(s) and shall assure compliance with all requirements of the Agreement.

15. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

15.1. The Parties shall cooperate with each other in good faith and agree to amicably settle any differences expediently through negotiations. Outstanding issues shall be resolved between departmental unit management as appropriate. If no resolution can be reached at the appropriate unit level, the issue will be escalated to upper/ senior management for resolution. If no resolution can be reached at the upper/senior management level, the issue will be escalated to the commissioner level for resolution.

16. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

16.1. Audits. The Parties may audit the performance of this Agreement following reasonable notice to the other. The Parties agree to cooperate with such audit and to furnish any and all records and information reasonable requested by the other.

16.2. Boycott of Israel. Home Water Supplier certifies that Contractor is not currently engaged in and agrees for the duration of this Contract not to engage in, a boycott of Israel, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 50-5-85.

16.3. Governing Law. This Contract and the rights and obligations of the Parties hereto shall be governed, construed, and interpreted according to the laws of the State of Georgia.

16.4. Legislation. Each Party shall promptly notify the other Party of proposed legislation which may affect the subject matter of this Agreement.

16.5. Parties Bound. This Agreement is binding upon all employees, agents and third-party vendors of Home Water Supplier and DHS-DFCS and will bind the respective heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives, successors and assigns of each Party.

17. WAIVER AND SEVERABILITY

17.1. No failure or delay in exercising or enforcing any right or remedy hereunder by a Party shall constitute a waiver of any other right or remedy, or future exercise thereof. If any provision of this Agreement is determined to be invalid under any applicable statute or rule of law, it is to that extent deemed to be omitted, and the balance of the Agreement shall remain enforceable.

18. COUNTERPARTS/ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

18.1. This Contract may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall be an original, and all of which shall constitute one and the same instrument. Any signature below that is transmitted by facsimile or other electronic means shall be binding and effective as the original.

19. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

19.1. This Agreement together with attachments or exhibits, which are incorporated by reference, constitutes the complete agreement and understanding between the Parties with respect to the subject matter and supersedes any and all other prior and contemporaneous agreements and understandings between the Parties, whether oral or written.

20. NONDISCRIMINATION

20.1. The Home Water Supplier shall not discriminate against any household because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination. Additionally, the Home Water Supplier shall not discriminate against a LIHWAP eligible household with respect to terms, deferred payment plans, credit, conditions of sale, or discounts offered to other customers.

21. FRAUD

21.1. The Home Water Supplier will be permanently disqualified from participating in the LIHWAP upon the first finding of LIHWAP fraud. Fraud includes, but is not limited to, intentionally providing false information to DHS-DFCS or knowingly allowing others to do so; intentional failure to notify the DHS-DFCS of a change in circumstances that affects payments received by the Home Water Supplier; intentionally accepting payments that the Home Water Supplier knows, or by reasonable diligence would know, the Home Water Supplier is not entitled to by virtue of an overpayment or otherwise; or intentionally making a claim for a payment to which the Home Water Supplier is not entitled pursuant to the terms of this Agreement and all applicable rules, regulations, laws and statutes. Repayment must be made unless contrary to a court order.

21.2. For overpayments received by the Home Water Supplier that are not the result of intent to defraud, the Home Water Supplier shall be required to repay the full amount to the Community Action Agency.

(SIGNATURES ON FOLLOWING PAGE)

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SIGNATURE PAGE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties agree to the terms and conditions of this Agreement and the undersigned duly authorized officers or agents of each Party have hereunto affixed their signatures on the day and year indicated below.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES

Chris Hempfling, Deputy Division Director &
General Counsel, DFCS

Date

FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT
[Name of Home Water Supplier]

Robert L. Pitts, Chairman Fulton County
Board of Commissioners

5/17/2022

Date

TONYA R. GRIER
CLERK TO THE COMMISSION

5/17/2022

Date



ITEM # 2022-0271 RCS 4/28/22
RECESS MEETING

James M. Smith

June 18, 1881

