

CARE Program Expansion June 4, 2020 through August 31, 2020

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Since 2004, the Customer Assistance & Relief Energy (CARE) Package program has been assisting low income individuals and families pay electric bills when an unmanageable hardship occurs impairing a customer's ability to pay the amount due through a one-time payment assistance in the amount of \$110 only available once every six months. Beginning June 4, 2020 (assuming City Council approval on June 3, 2020), the program's eligibility requirements will change through August 31, 2020 to help more low-income customers during uncertain economic times related to COVID-19.

The chart below shows a comparison of the eligibility requirements.

Eligibility Requirements	Before June 3, 2020	After June 3, 2020 through August 31, 2020
Up to Payment Amount	\$110	\$110
Number of Payments Allowed	One in a six month period	Two in a six month period
Who is eligible?	Utility Customers at or < 60% SMI (gross income)	-Utility Customers at or < 60% SMI -Utility Customers currently receiving Utility low-income discount (30%) -Utility Customers currently receiving Fixed-Income Discount (5%)
Documentation Required	-Current utility statement -Social security cards for all members of household -Driver's License or California ID card of account holder -Current rental agreement of service premises -Indicate reason why energy assistance is needed (proof of hardship) -Current approved customer payment plan for other utility charges, or receipt from Finance Department showing payment of other utility charges	-Same -Same -Same -Same -Same
Documentation Required cont'd.		-Not Required
How is application for assistance made?	-In person	-In person, by email, mail and drop-box
Proof of Hardship	-Job loss, unexpected expense, police report of theft, loss of	-Same

	fixed income, sudden change in living condition, etc.	-COVID-19 related unemployment verification, reduction in hours, layoff notification, time without pay to care for COVID-19 positive or at-risk family members, self-employed income loss during pandemic
Method of Application	-In person at Salvation Army located at 525 W. Lockeford Street Lodi, CA 95240 -In person at Community Partnership for Families at 118 N Church Street Lodi, CA 95240 -By email	-Same and by mail or drop box -Same and by mail or drop box

FAQs

1. My gross income is 65 percent of the SMI. Am I eligible for a CARE discount? *The CARE program and the SHARE program both use the San Joaquin County Low Income Energy Assistance Program income thresholds. For San Joaquin County residents, your gross income cannot exceed 60 percent of SMI. The 2020 income guidelines are given below.*

The San Joaquin County Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is able to assist San Joaquin County residents with gross household incomes at or below 60% of State Median Income level.

2020 Income Guidelines at 60% of State Median Income (SMI)									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
\$2,296.93	\$3,003.67	\$3,710.42	\$4,417.17	\$5,123.91	\$5,830.66	\$5,963.18	\$6,095.69	\$6,228.21	\$6,360.72

However, if you currently receive the City's fixed income discount of five percent, and are over 62 years of age, you qualify if your gross income is below \$45,000 annually.

2. I meet the program's income requirement, I have not lost my job, but I am working fewer hours. I don't know when I will be given more hours. Do I qualify for the CARE discount? *Yes. As long as you have a notice from your employer that your hours have been reduced because the business has been impacted by COVID, you are eligible for the assistance.*

3. I cannot pay my total utility bill including water and sewer, or solid waste collection. *Can I still receive the assistance to pay my electric bill? Yes. During the temporary period of June 4, 2020 to August 31, 2020, you do not have to have a receipt from the Finance Department showing payment of the other charges. However, you should get on a payment plan with the Department of Finance to pay the other charges as soon as possible.*

4. I live with my kids in their house. The utilities are not in my name. However, I pay the utility bill. Am I eligible for the assistance? No. Even though you may meet the other program requirements, the utility bill must be in your name.

5. I live with my parents. I lost my job because of a COVID layoff and my parents are on a fixed income. Am I eligible for the assistance? *If the utilities are in your name and you make below 60 percent of the SMI, yes, you are eligible. If the utilities are not in your name, the account holder in your household can apply for the assistance. The account holder must be at least 62 and earn less than \$45,000 per year. If your parents are already on Lodi Electric Utility's fixed income discount program, the CARE assistance payment also applies.*

6. I am an account holder and I am receiving the 30 percent SHARE discount. Am I eligible to receive the SHARE discount and the CARE Program assistance payment? *Yes, as long as you have suffered a financial burden due to COVID. You will be required to provide some kind of documentation of this financial burden reflecting reduced income.*

7. I received a CARE Program assistance payment four months ago, am I eligible to receive another assistance payment? *Yes. During this temporary period of time, an eligible account holder can receive two payments of up to \$110 each.*

8. I was laid off because of COVID. My utility bill is \$160 and I am unable to pay it because I have not yet received my unemployment check from the State. Am I eligible for an assistance payment? *Yes. However, you must meet the other requirements of the program, and your assistance payment is for \$110.*

9. My electric bill is for \$94. Will I receive a \$110 assistance payment? No. The assistance payment will equal the amount owed on just your electric charges, and cannot exceed \$110.

10. My electric bill is \$200. Can I apply for \$110 to pay the current bill, and pay the remainder next month by applying for a second assistance payment? *Yes. The current temporary program would allow you to do that as long as you meet the other requirements including the not-to-exceed two assistance payments in a six month period prior to application.*

11. Not everyone in my household has a social security card, am I eligible for assistance under this CARE Program. *No.*

12. I own my home. Do I have to be a renter to be eligible for this program? *No. Both homeowners and renters are eligible as long as the other program requirements are met.*

13. I can't fill out my application or provide documents in person. How can I get my application reviewed? *You can either mail one of the third party providers at the addresses given above, or click on [this link](#) to apply to ESG. ESG will be the only third party agency accepting applications and documentation electronically. You will have to make copies of the documentation and send, or scan and email ESG. You should telephone ESG and the other third party agencies in advance and talk to a representative who will provide further direction. The telephone numbers are given above.*

You can also visit www.lodi.gov and navigate to the link.