

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Department: Social Services

HB Section(s): 11.190

Program Name: Energy Assistance

Program is found in the following core budget(s): Energy Assistance

1a. What strategic priority does this program address?

Provide effective services to Missourians

1b. What does this program do?

The Department of Social Services, Family Support Division determines eligibility to help low-income Missourians with the cost to heat or cool their homes by targeting elderly, disabled, and young child households to prevent the loss of heating and/or cooling services.

Missouri's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a block grant program. The objectives of LIHEAP are to help low-income people with the costs of home energy, defined as heating and cooling of residences; to increase their energy self-sufficiency; and to reduce their vulnerability resulting from energy needs. The target population is low-income households, especially those with the lowest incomes and the highest home energy costs or needs. Additional factors taken into account for low-income households include family size, elderly, disabled, and families with children under six years of age.

This federal funding for low-income Missourians includes three components: Energy Assistance (EA), Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) and Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (LIWAP). The appropriation authority for LIWAP funds is with the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Energy.

Energy Assistance (EA)

- Provides financial assistance to households to help pay primary fuel source heating bills for Missourians during the months of November through March
- The one time benefit amount is based upon household size, income and the type of fuel used for home heating
- The Family Support Division (FSD) contracts with the Missouri Community Action Agencies and other not-for-profit organizations to determine eligibility and process applications
- Application information, as well as documentation is entered into the state EA data system that is web-based and secure for eligibility determination and payment processing
- Payments are made by the DSS directly to energy suppliers and, in a small number of cases, to eligible clients. Less than 7% of funds are paid directly to clients
- In FFY 2020, the maximum EA benefit was \$495
- In FFY 2020, the average EA benefit was \$285

To receive EA payments, a household must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Missouri resident
- United States citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Resources less than three thousand dollars (\$3,000)
- Responsible for the home heating or cooling bill
- Household income less than one-hundred thirty-five percent (135%) of the Federal Poverty Level

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Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP)

- Provides financial assistance to households in a verifiable energy crisis
- Funding is distributed to the LIHEAP contract agencies through a formula to make payments directly to the energy supplier
- Agencies can also request in the agency yearly plan a portion of the ECIP funding to help purchase or repair furnaces or air conditioners, to pay for emergency or temporary shelter, to provide limited emergency services, and to provide education and outreach
- Winter ECIP can be used for primary or secondary fuel sources
 - Available from November through May based on funding
 - Benefit amount is the amount required to resolve the crisis
 - Maximum benefit amount is \$800
 - FFY 2019 average benefit amount was \$646 (FFY 2020 data will be available in February 2021)
- Summer ECIP is primarily used to restore or prevent disconnection of services of a cooling utility source
 - Available from June through September based on funding
 - Benefit amount is the amount required to resolve the crisis
 - FFY 2019 maximum benefit amount was \$300. In FFY 2020, the maximum benefit amount was increased to \$600
 - FFY 2019 average benefit was \$266 (FFY 2020 data will be available in February 2021)

To receive ECIP payments, a household must meet the above LIHEAP EA eligibility criteria and have a verified crisis defined as the following:

- Received shut off or termination notice from a utility company
- The household is in threat of disconnection, but may not have received a disconnection notice
- Report a propane tank that is less than twenty percent (20%) full
- Have a Cash on Delivery (COD) account
- Have a prepaid electric account that is almost out of funds
- Service is shut off or terminated

Contractors determine disability based on the following definition. "Disabled" shall be defined as an individual who is totally and permanently disabled or blind and is receiving one or more of the following: Civil Service Disability, Medical Assistance, Railroad Retirement Disability Benefits, Social Security Disability Benefits, State Aid to the Blind, State Blind Pension, State Supplemental Payments, Supplemental Security Income, or Veterans Administration Disability Benefits.

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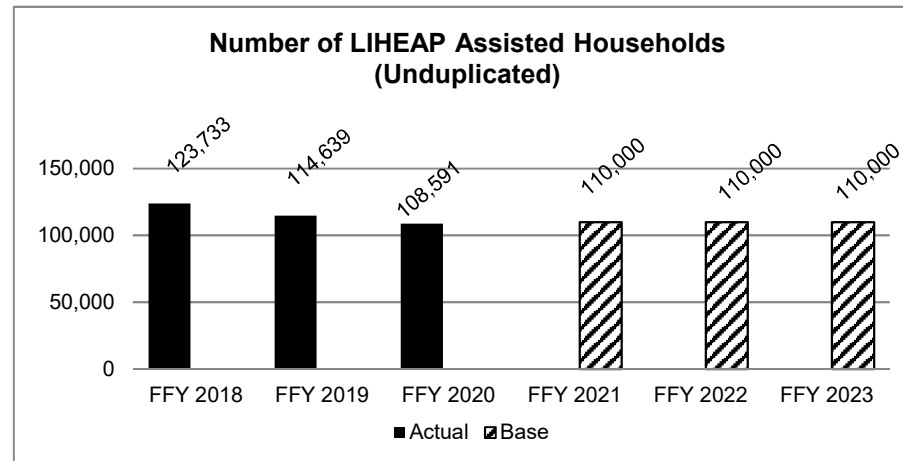
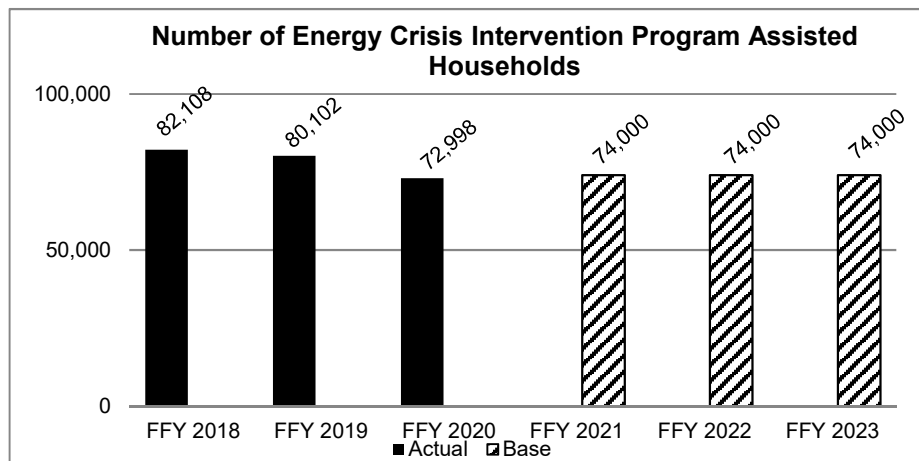
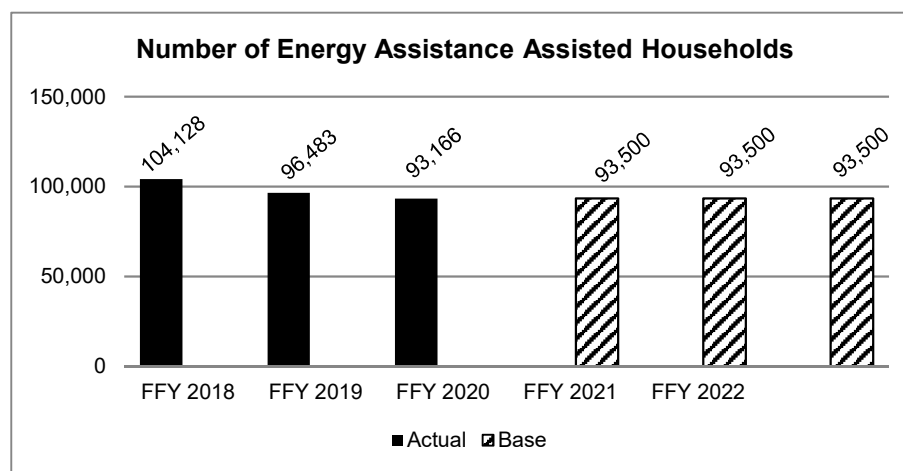
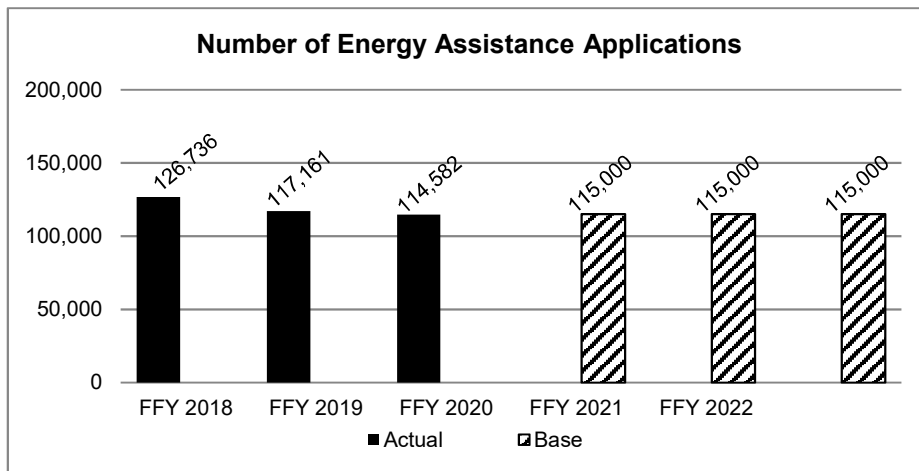
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2a. Provide an activity measure(s) for the program.



FFY 2019 actual was updated to reflect more accurate data.

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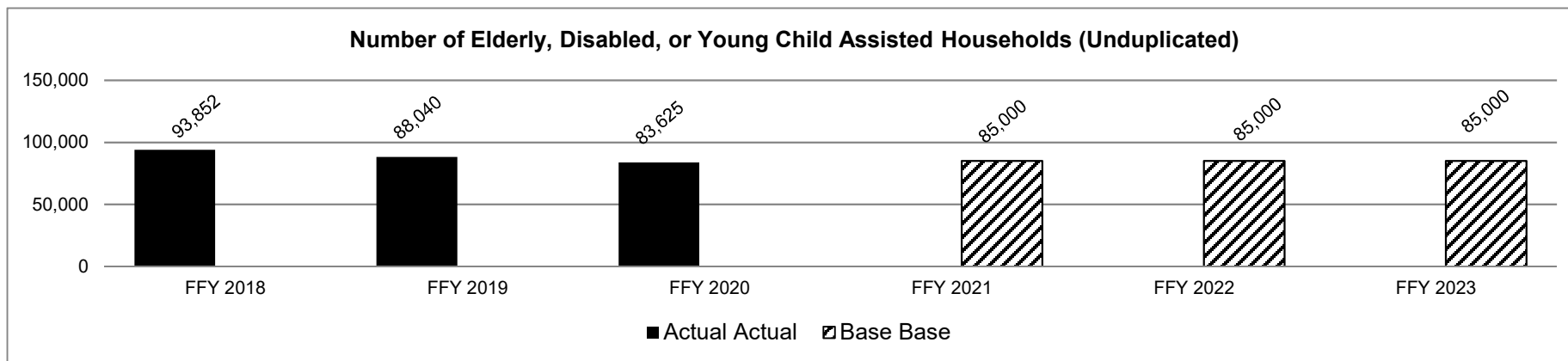
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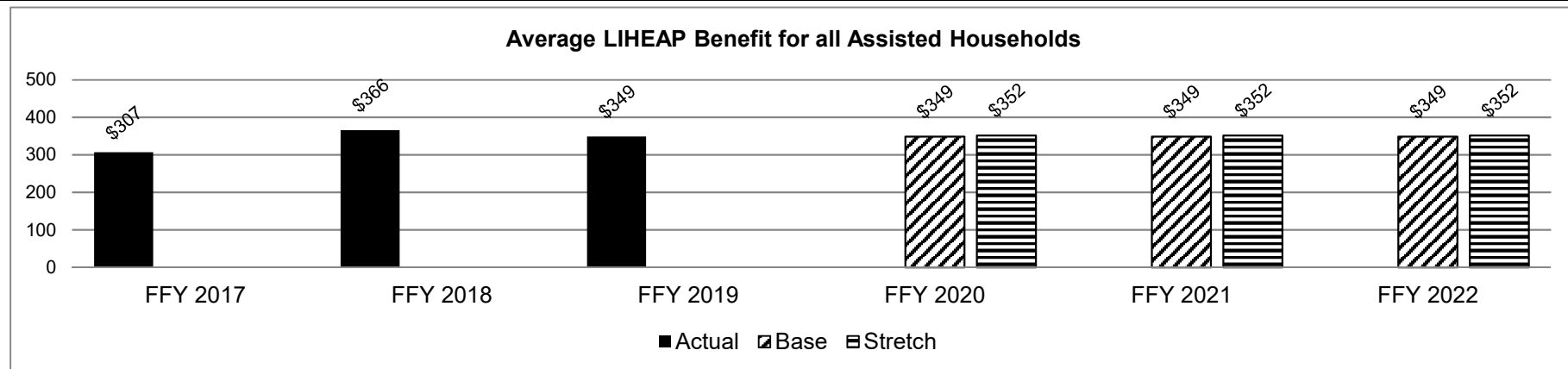
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2b. Provide a measure(s) of the program's quality.

LIHEAP was designed to provide help with low income households targeting elderly, disabled and households with young children as insufficient heating and cooling can cause health and safety issues for these homes.



2c. Provide a measure(s) of the program's impact.



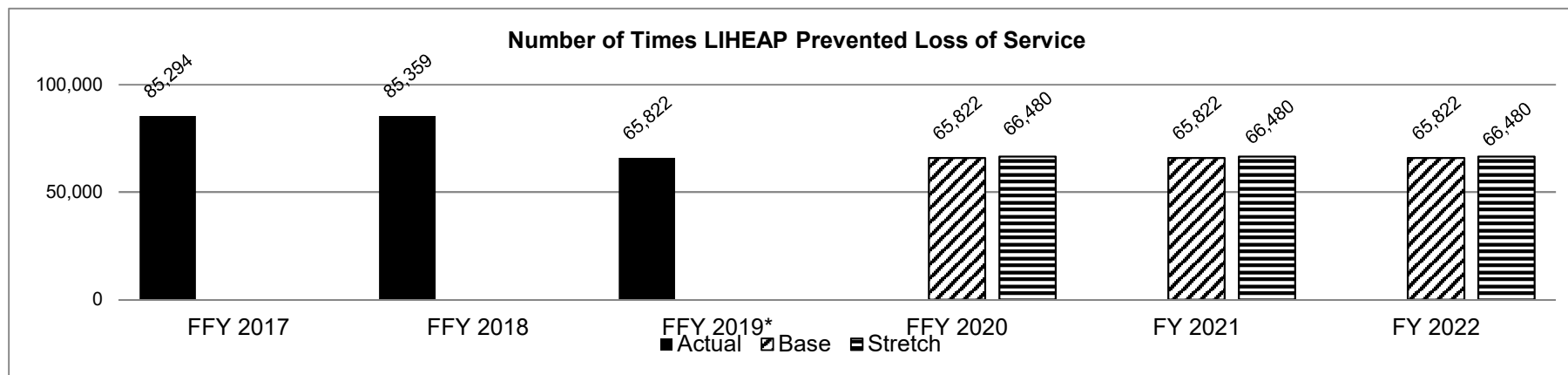
FFY 2020 data and projections will be available in April 2021.

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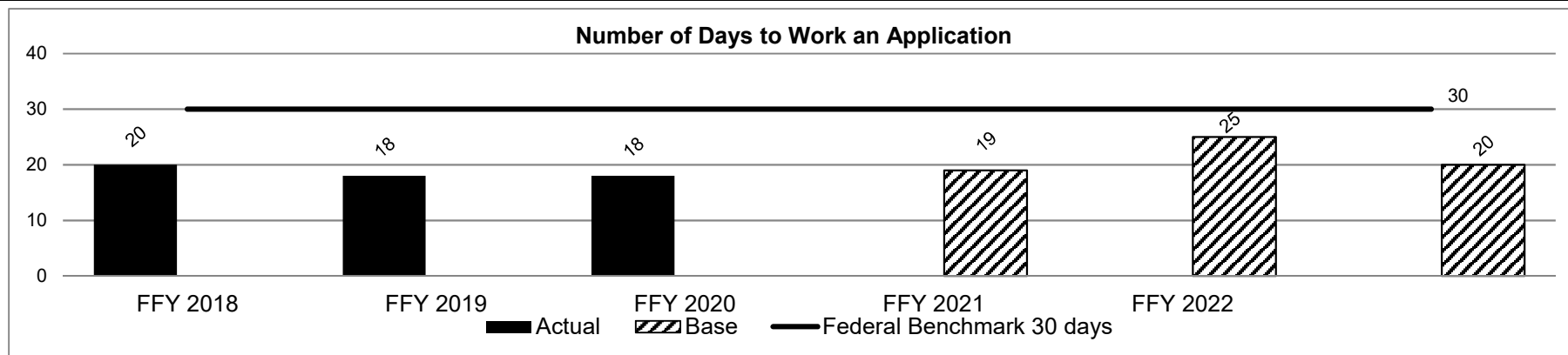
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* In FFY 2019, an improved verification and validation process was implemented resulting in the lower number reported and lower projections going forward. FFY 2020 data and projections will be available in April 2021.

2d. Provide a measure(s) of the program's efficiency.



Projections reflect an expected increase in the number of days to work an application due to an increase in applications resulting from additional funding and an increased need for services as a result of COVID-19.

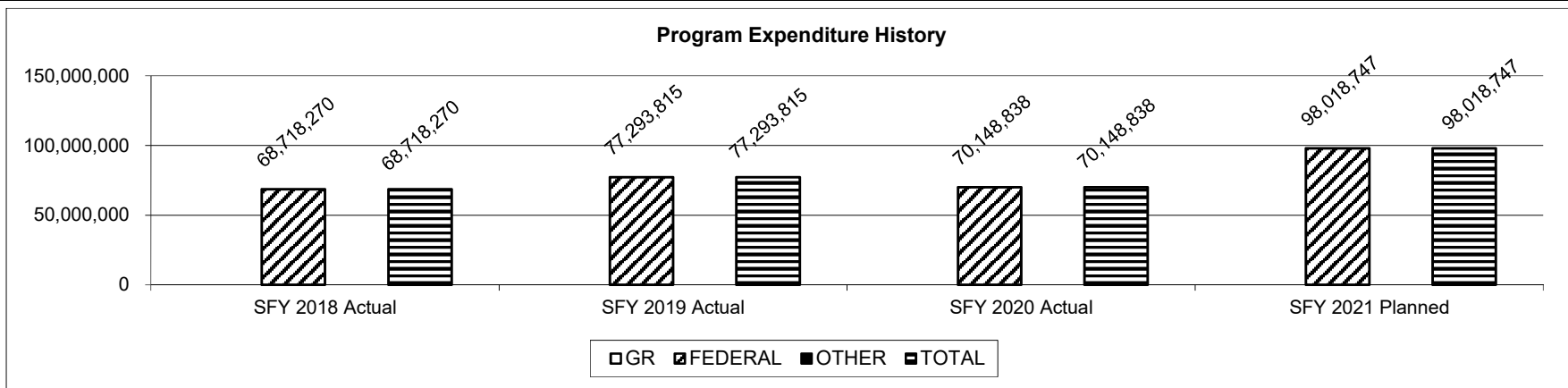
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3. Provide actual expenditures for the prior three fiscal years and planned expenditures for the current fiscal year. (Note: Amounts do not include fringe benefit costs.)



4. What are the sources of the "Other " funds?

N/A

5. What is the authorization for this program, i.e., federal or state statute, etc.? (Include the federal program number, if applicable.)

State Statute: Sections 660.100 - 660.136, RSMo.; Federal law: 42 USC 8621 - 8630 et seq.; Public Law 116-136, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

6. Are there federal matching requirements? If yes, please explain.

No.

7. Is this a federally mandated program? If yes, please explain.

No.