

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 17, 2026
Honorable Members of the Quality of Life, Arts and Culture Committee: Zarin D. Gracey (Chair), Laura Cadena (Vice Chair), Adam Bazaldua, Paul Ridley, Bill Roth, Chad West, Gay Donnell Willis
TO
SUBJECT **Upcoming Council Agenda Item: August 25, 2026, Item #26-2371A: Authorize (1) the implementation of the Energy Assistance Program and (2) the acceptance of donations from energy and utilities providers**

The purpose of this memorandum is to brief the Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee on City Council agenda item #26-2371A scheduled for August 25, 2026. This item will authorize (1) the implementation of the Energy and Utilities Assistance Program, and (2) the acceptance of donations from energy and utilities providers in an amount not to exceed \$1,900,000.00 and is described in the attached Exhibit A: Program Statement. This item has no cost consideration to the City.

Background

Since 2019, the City has accepted private donations from energy and water providers to provide temporary financial relief to households most vulnerable to the high utility costs. The donations received from these providers are reserved for their customers and the donated funding amount can vary annually. These utilities assistance are provided to individuals and families experiencing a temporary financial crisis in the City of Dallas. Customers experiencing difficulty in paying their utility bills have an option to reach out to the Office of Housing and Community Empowerment's (OHCE) community services intake line for assistance or apply in-person through social services provided at the West Dallas Multipurpose Center and the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center. Provider rules limit how often the City may assist a customer within a 12-month period; customers may generally receive assistance once per year, except for Atmos customers, who may receive assistance up to three times within a calendar year.

This item provides temporary financial assistance to individuals and families who are experiencing a temporary financial crisis and who reside in the City of Dallas, as described in the Program Statement.

Through Council-authorized agreements with utility providers, the Office of Housing and Community Empowerment – Community Services Division administers utility assistance funds to help eligible Dallas residents maintain essential utility services. OHCE staff determines eligibility, processes payments to utility providers on behalf of qualified residents and provides regular reporting to ensure accountability and proper stewardship of donated funds.

The chart below provides accomplishment details.

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Providers	FY24-25 Households Served	Amount Provided for Assistance	FY25-26 Households Served (as of 7/16/26)	Amount Provided for Assistance
Atmos Energy	252	\$ 95,408.83	344	\$ 98,784.51
Dallas Water Utilities	206	\$ 20,566.78	173	\$ 17,129.49
Reliant Energy (NRG)	118	\$ 37,076.40	117	\$ 27,372.25
TXU Energy	262	\$ 22,757.66	270	\$ 62,574.32
TOTAL	839	\$175,809.67	904	\$205,860.57

For FY 25-26, OHCE – Community Services staff received calls from 8,218 individuals who contacted the utility assistance intake line and were not able to be served.

Individuals did not qualify for assistance for one or more of the following reasons:

- They had already reached the maximum level of support allowed per person by the service provider.
- Funding was no longer available for the specific utility service requested.
- The individual resided outside the City of Dallas.

All individuals who did not qualify were provided with a list of alternative resources to assist them in identifying other available support options.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact myself or Thor Erickson, Director, Office of Housing and Community Empowerment at thor.erickson@dallas.gov

Service First, Now!



M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, J.D.

Assistant City Manager

[Attached - Exhibit A: Program Statement]

c: Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, City Manager
Bertram Vandenberg, City Attorney (I)
Mamatha Sparks, City Auditor (I)
Billerae Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Baron Eliason, Inspector General (I)
Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety

Dev Rastogi, Assistant City Manager
Alina Ciocan, Assistant City Manager
Robin Bentley, Assistant City Manager
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer
Ahmad Goree, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
John Johnson, Chief of Real Estate
Directors and Assistant Directors

Exhibit A

Energy and Utilities Assistance Program Program Statement

DESCRIPTION – Energy and Utilities Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program, administered through the Office of Housing and Community Empowerment (OHCE), is designed to provide temporary financial assistance to individuals and families who are experiencing a temporary financial crisis and who reside in the City of Dallas (City). Donations from energy and utilities providers will be accepted to provide assistance and support to their customers who apply through OHCE's community services intake line or email and in-person at the West Dallas Multipurpose Center or the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center.

FUNDING

Receive private donations from electric, gas, and water providers. Donated funds are reserved for that provider's customers and can only be used for temporary financial assistance.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A. Eligible Participants. Individuals or families eligible for assistance must be:

- 1) a Resident of the City of Dallas;
- 2) a customer of an energy and utility provider who donated program funds;
- 3) experiencing a temporary financial crisis; and
- 4) a residential customer.

Generally, the City can only assist a customer once in a 12-month period. However, Atmos Energy provides aid up to three (3) times per customer in a 12-month period collectively from the City and its partnering agencies.

B. Ineligible Participants. Individuals or families not eligible for assistance are:

- 1) a person who is not a resident of the City of Dallas;
- 2) a person who is not a customer of an energy and utility provider who donated program funds;
- 3) a person who is not experiencing a temporary financial crisis; or
- 4) a commercial customer.

APPLICATION/APPROVAL PROCESS

- A. Utility customers complete an application, provide a delinquent utility bill (the bill must be in the person's name who is applying for assistance), and a current ID.
- B. OHCE qualifies customers to be a client for assistance based on proof of financial hardship, Dallas residency, and the Provider's established eligibility standards.
 - 1) For Dallas Water Utilities (DWU) - OHCE emails DWU to determine if the client is eligible for pledge.
- C. If determined eligible, OHCE makes a pledge of payment on behalf of the client.
- D. City remits payment to Provider with supporting documentation of payment.
- E. Payment should be remitted within 30-45 days from the pledge date.

REPORTING AND DOCUMENT RETENTION

In accordance with internal policies, OHCE keeps digital records of applications and energy and utility providers to report account activity and balance of funds.

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This program statement may be amended by the City Manager or his/her designee, as appropriate, to meet requirements of the energy or utilities providers.