



## Legislation Text

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### Resolution to Become a Low Income Household Water Assistance Program Partner and Execute the Provider Participation Agreement

Access to safe and affordable drinking water and wastewater services is a fundamental element of health, safety, and well-being for households across America. Yet water affordability is a significant and growing concern in communities across the country, and many communities have faced significant challenges related to water safety, aging water infrastructure, and even water shortages due to drought. Moreover, water affordability concerns and the growing crisis of household indebtedness disproportionately impacting low-income individuals and communities of color can be related to multiple adverse household impacts in terms of service disconnections and lien sales, leading to home foreclosures and evictions.

For many low-income households across America, water affordability needs have been significantly exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health crisis, and while water is required to follow the federal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advising washing hands frequently in order to reduce the transmission of Covid-19, the pandemic has made it significantly more difficult for individuals and families to pay their home drinking water and wastewater bills.

While water costs and accessibility vary significantly from state to state, the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provides critical nationwide emergency support on behalf of low-income households so that these households are not forced to choose between paying for water services and other necessities like housing, food, and medicine.

As recommended in Information Memorandum LIHPWAP-IM-2021-02 issued from the US Department of Health and Human Services, agreements are to be put into place between participating parties of the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) to ensure payments made on behalf of low-income households are processed efficiently and in the best interest of the household. Participating parties include MDHHS, Washtenaw County described herein as the Community Action Agency (CAA) and Water/Wastewater Utility (Utility or the City).

Budget/Fiscal Impact: There is no financial impact to the participation in the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program as a service provider.

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Marti Praschan, CFO & Financial Services Area Administrator  
Michelle Landis, Senior Assistant City Attorney

Approved by: Milton Dohoney Jr., City Administrator

Whereas, The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) provides critical nationwide emergency support on behalf of low-income households; and

Whereas, In order for our residents to take advantage of the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program, the City must be a registered Service Partner of the program;

RESOLVED; That City Council approve the attached LIHWAP Provider Participation Agreement; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take the necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution, including but not limited to execution of the LIHWAP Provider Participation Agreement on behalf of the City.