

\*\*\* NOTE: TO RETURN TO THIS PAGE, CLICK ON THE COUNTY SEAL \*\*\*

[CLICK HERE FOR THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES' REPORT DATED MAY 24, 2024](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT DATED JUNE 4, 2024](#)

[NEXT REPORT BY COUNTY COUNSEL EXTENDED TO NOVEMBER 19, 2024](#)



**BARBARA FERRER, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.**  
Director

**MUNTU DAVIS, M.D., M.P.H.**  
County Health Officer

**ANISH P. MAHAJAN, M.D., M.S., M.P.H.**  
Chief Deputy Director

313 North Figueroa Street, Suite 806  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Tel (213) 288-8117 • Fax (213) 975-1273

[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov)

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Hilda L. Solis**  
First District

**Holly J. Mitchell**  
Second District

**Lindsey P. Horvath**  
Third District

**Janice Hahn**  
Fourth District

**Kathryn Barger**  
Fifth District

May 24, 2024

**TO:** Each Supervisor

**FROM:** Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.  
Director

**SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING A SAFE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE THRESHOLD FOR RESIDENTIAL UNITS (ITEM NO. 4, AGENDA OF JANUARY 23, 2024, DIRECTIVE 4)**

This is in response to the January 23, 2024 motion by your Board directing the Department of Public Health (Public Health), in collaboration with Department of Health Services (DHS), to report within 120 days and explore opportunities for health plans to cover active and passive cooling as a covered benefit for high-risk beneficiaries. In response, Public Health and DHS convened meetings with LA Care, Health Net, and Molina Health Plans (the health plans). These meetings covered existing efforts by the health plans regarding active and passive cooling support, including existing programs that could be leveraged, and future opportunities.

Current health plan activities that help address extreme heat among vulnerable members include case managers conducting proactive outreach to members during disaster and emergency responses, including during extreme heat events. For example, when there are extreme heat warnings, the health plans utilize available member data to strategically identify and target high-risk beneficiaries with heat-health communications and onsite support, including referrals and transportation arrangements to existing cooling centers. Health plans also operate some of the network of cooling centers serving LA County residents.

The health plans additionally described opportunities and challenges in leveraging existing In Lieu of Services (ILOS), specifically "Community Supports," under the

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative. Community Supports, as defined by the California Department of Health Care Services, provide a potential pathway to cover active and passive cooling for high-risk beneficiaries. The three Community Supports identified by the health plans as most relevant include: Housing Deposits, Environmental Accessibility Adaptations/Home Modifications (EAA), and Asthma Remediation. As reflected in the operative [Medi-Cal Community Supports, or In Lieu of Services \(ILOS\), Policy Guide](#) (relevant excerpts cited below), analyses of the current requirements and criteria for these Community Supports finds that only the Housing Deposits Community Support explicitly allows for coverage of cooling infrastructure such as air conditioners, and only for a specific and small subset population noted below. The EAAs and Asthma Remediation Community Supports both exclude adaptations or improvements that are of general utility to the household.

Housing Deposits cover funding assistance to members for one-time services and household modifications needed to establish a basic household, not including room and board. This includes funding to purchase household goods such as air conditioners and other items that are “designed to preserve a members health and safety in the home.” The policy’s eligibility criteria requires that individuals must also receive Housing Transition/Navigation Services (at a minimum, tenant screening, housing assessment, housing support plan, etc.) in conjunction with this service. While a potential source of cooling support, members are only eligible to receive Housing Deposits once in their lifetime.

Environmental Accessibility Adaptations/Home Modifications (EAA) cover physical adaptations to a home that are necessary to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of a health plan member or enable them to function with greater independence in the home. This Community Support is intended for individuals at risk for institutionalization. Examples of allowable EAAs include ramps, grab-bars, and chair lifts. Modifications are limited to those that are of direct medical or remedial benefit to the member and exclude adaptations or improvements that are of general utility to the household. Current policy does not reference active or passive cooling adaptations. To access this benefit, a physical or occupational therapy evaluation and report must be submitted as part of the review process. A home visit must also be conducted to determine suitability. For a home that is not owned by the member, the member must provide written consent from the homeowner for installation. EAAs are payable up to a total lifetime maximum of \$7,500.

Asthma Remediation is a specialized form of an EAA that covers remediation of asthma triggers from a member’s home. Covered remediations include high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters, mattress and bedding replacement, and de-humidifiers.

Current policy explicitly allows for “ventilation improvements” but does not include cooling devices/systems.

LA Care, Health Net, and Molina Health Plans are supportive of efforts to prevent and mitigate adverse health outcomes during climate change-related extreme weather. They expressed a commitment to engage in future discussions, planning, and advocacy on this topic to support health plan members that are most vulnerable or at-risk from extreme heat. To move forward this would require a collaborative effort to develop criteria to identify vulnerable members, including clinical diagnosis/conditions as well as sociodemographic factors, such as racial and socioeconomic disparities in heat-related health effects and health care access. This type of targeted identification would support current outreach efforts and delivery of heat-health messaging and communications around cooling centers and/or energy assistance.

These discussions also surfaced potential advocacy areas which could further empower health plans to provide these services for their members. One path could be advocating for the State to incorporate climate change adaptations, including active and passive cooling items and weatherization services into Community Support programs under CalAIM. With some narrow exceptions noted above, interventions that maintain healthy temperatures inside the home for vulnerable populations are not explicitly covered under Medi-Cal. Extending coverage of cooling interventions to high-risk beneficiaries is feasible. Other States, like Oregon, have received Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approval to cover equipment like air conditioners, air filtration devices, and generators for Medicaid members with health conditions who live in an area where an emergency due to extreme weather has been declared by the federal government or the state governor’s office. To support a cost-effective approach, the health plans indicated that such advocacy should not apply to all Medi-Cal beneficiaries but rather to a subset of beneficiaries with comorbidities and medically complex chronic conditions who would need the most help coping with extreme weather and help to avoid emergency department visits. Implementation of such a benefit would require flexibility and/or amendments to existing building code, as well as timely and reasonable consent from property owners for physical adaptations or for equipment that is physically installed in the home (e.g., air conditioners). The health plans stressed that implementation of the proposed benefit would also require close coordination with energy assistance programs to help eligible members pay for their electricity bills when temperatures become extremely high. Otherwise, many members may not utilize these benefits as they need due to high energy costs. Electricity costs can be a major factor when considering use of cooling appliances and systems, and further research into more cost-effective passive cooling options is needed.

Public Health and DHS will continue collaborating with Health Plans and community partners to plan for a sustainable County extreme heat preparedness and response system. Such a system could capitalize on health plans' clinical expertise and data to identify members most at risk from extreme heat and equitably leverage available federal, state, and local cooling resources, equipment, and supportive services before and during periods of dangerously high heat.

BF:am

c: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Department of Health Services  
CEO Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Unit  
Chief Sustainability Office  
Los Angeles County Development Authority



**Chief  
Executive  
Office.**

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 974-1101 ceo.lacounty.gov

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Fesia A. Davenport

June 4, 2024

To: Supervisor Lindsay P. Horvath, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport FAD  
Chief Executive Officer  
FAD (Jun 3, 2024 13:20 PDT)

**REPORT BACK ON ESTABLISHING A SAFE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE  
THRESHOLD FOR RESIDENTIAL UNITS (ITEM NO. 4, AGENDA OF  
JANUARY 23, 2024)**

On January 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion directing the Chief Executive Officer with assistance from the Chief Sustainability Office (CSO) and the Internal Services Department (ISD) to identify and report within 120 days on potential funding streams and facilitate access to existing federal and State resources to implement a potential ordinance establishing a safe maximum indoor temperature for rental dwellings in the County of Los Angeles (County), including resources to provide technical and financial assistance to small landlords, low-income tenants, landlord occupied rental units, and those who would be unduly burdened by a retrofit requirement. Technical assistance should include, but is not limited to, assessing the dwelling's needs and installing electric air conditioning units or weatherization to meet the ordinance requirements.

The first section below outlines existing resources that can support low-income tenants and landlords with cooling-associated expenses. The second section includes additional resources and actions that the County could pursue to further mitigate potential tenant and landlord financial burdens.



### **Existing Resources**

The attachment lists relevant resources that are currently available or will soon become available for tenants and/or landlords. Most of these resources are related to energy assistance, energy efficiency, and/or building decarbonization:

- Energy assistance can mitigate increases in utility expenses due to increased energy usage associated with air conditioning;
- Energy efficiency services and products (including weatherization and passive cooling resources) can mitigate potential increases in energy usage and related expenses associated with air conditioning; and
- Decarbonization programs often support households with upgrades that have cooling co-benefits, such as installation of solar panels (which reflect heat, in addition to providing power) and electric dual heat pumps (which can provide energy-efficient cooling in addition to energy-efficient heating).

Not all programs in the attachment are designed specifically for the purpose of cooling rental units; however, they can be implemented in support of that goal through the promotion or targeting of resources to low-income tenants and landlords in heat-vulnerable areas.

### **Potential Resources**

Separately, the following resources could be used or designed to support compliance with a cooling mandate:

- **Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF):** the GGRF established through the Inflation Reduction Act was designed to mobilize financing and private capital for energy resilience, and it includes multiple programs. In its role as administrator of the Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN), ISD will work with the State program that is administering GGRF Solar for All funding to ensure that resources for solar panel installation on low-income properties are equitably distributed across the State including in the County.
- **The California Equitable Decarbonization Program:** this statewide incentive program will support building owners with decarbonization retrofits and incentivize the increased adoption of low-carbon technologies, such as dual heat pumps. ISD is planning to pursue funding that will become available through this program and will work to ensure optimal deployment of the resources in the region.

- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant:** the County recently received an award to support energy efficiency at County facilities; although the County may not be eligible to pursue additional funding in support of home cooling, eligible cities within the County could apply to use the funds for home energy efficiency or decarbonization initiatives.
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):** the County's CDBG funding is used to support a variety of purposes. Currently, none are explicitly aimed at supporting home cooling or climate resilience; however, allocations to support landlords with making building upgrades can be considered.

### **Additional Potential Actions**

Additional potential actions to maximize the availability and use of resources for tenants and landlords in support of a temperature threshold policy include:

- Pilot a new heat resilient housing or whole home resilience program, potentially modeled after programs in other local jurisdictions such as the City of San Antonio's "Under 1 Roof" program, which replaces deteriorated roofs of qualifying applicants with cool roofs, or the King County program providing free heat pumps to income-qualified applicants.
- Explore making Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funding available for new cooling appliances.
- Explore new potential financing mechanisms, such as the creation of a Climate Resilience District.
- Instruct departments that work with landlords and tenants to promote existing resources, especially to those landlords and tenants who could be burdened by a temperature threshold policy. This could include actions such as:
  - Participating in communication campaigns to raise public awareness of cooling- and energy-related resources, such as the Clean Energy Education Campaign planned by the Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability.
  - Providing landlords and tenants with tailored informational materials (e.g., funding alerts; a "decision tree" application to assist tenants or landlords with determining program eligibility; or a dedicated website or fact sheet regarding existing resources in support of cooling goals).
- Leverage SoCalREN's network of contractors to serve as a conduit for raising landlord awareness of the temperature threshold policy (once enacted) and of resources to become compliant.



Each Supervisor  
June 4, 2024  
Page 4

As extreme heat continues to pose increased risk to communities within the County, the resources and potential actions listed in this report can help renters and landlords keep homes at safe temperatures and reduce the burden associated with compliance of the proposed ordinance, if enacted.

Should you have any general questions or concerns, please contact me or Rene Phillips at (213) 974-1478 or [rphillips@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:rphillips@ceo.lacounty.gov).

For resource specific questions, please contact Ali Frazzini, Chief Sustainability Office, [afrazzini@csso.lacounty.gov](mailto:afrazzini@csso.lacounty.gov) or Minh Le, Internal Services Department, [msle@isd.lacounty.gov](mailto:msle@isd.lacounty.gov).

FAD:JMN:MM  
RP:AB:MN:kn

#### Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Internal Services

**EXISTING RESOURCES**

**ATTACHMENT**

Resource	Scope of Program Expenditure	Beneficiary Designation	Funding Structure	Link
<p><b>California Go Green Financing – part of California Hub for Energy Efficiency Financing (CHEEF)</b></p>	<p>Eligible efficiency projects include: central air conditioning unit, central air conditioning system, heat pumps.</p>	<p>Utility Customers</p>	<p>Loan</p>	<p><a href="https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/caeatfa/cheef/">https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/caeatfa/cheef/</a></p>
<p><b>California Public Utilities Commission California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE)</b></p>	<p>Utility bill discount program - up to 30% based on eligibility.</p>	<p>Low-income utility customers</p>	<p>Discount program</p>	<p><a href="https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/california-alternate-rates-for-energy">https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/california-alternate-rates-for-energy</a></p>
<p><b>California Public Utilities Commission Electric Heat Pump Water Heat Program</b></p>	<p>To receive incentives, the Heat Pump Water Heater (HPWH) systems must be designed, installed, and operated in a manner that shifts electricity use from peak to off-peak periods and reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. To achieve these benefits, the incentive program requires using a “thermostatic mixing valve” that allows pre-heating of water during off peak hours when electricity use is low. This is the “energy storage” function of HPWHs. Customers receiving these incentives must enroll in a demand response program where they agree to reduce their electricity use for a brief time during a severe heatwave or other grid emergency.</p>	<p>Low-income utility customers</p>	<p>Incentive</p>	<p><a href="https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/news-and-updates/all-news/cpuc-provides-additional-incentives-and-framework-for-electric-heat-pump-water-heater-program">https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/news-and-updates/all-news/cpuc-provides-additional-incentives-and-framework-for-electric-heat-pump-water-heater-program</a></p>
<p><b>California Public Utilities Commission Family Electric Rate Assistance Program (FERA)</b></p>	<p>Utility bill discount program for incomes that slightly exceed the CARE allowances.</p>	<p>Low-income utility customers</p>	<p>Discount program</p>	<p><a href="https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/family-electric-rate-assistance-program">https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/family-electric-rate-assistance-program</a></p>
<p><b>Catholic Charities of Los Angeles</b></p>	<p>Financial assistance for utility bills.</p>	<p>Low-income utility customers</p>	<p>Financial assistance</p>	<p><a href="https://catholiccharitiesla.org/strengthen-communities/">https://catholiccharitiesla.org/strengthen-communities/</a></p>

Resource	Scope of Program Expenditure	Beneficiary Designation	Funding Structure	Link
<b>Golden State Rebates</b>	Provides rebates to California residents for approved energy efficient cooling products (e.g. air conditioners and smart thermostats).	Southern California Edison (SCE) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) customers	Rebate	<a href="https://goldenstater rebates.clearsult.com/">https://goldenstater rebates.clearsult.com/</a>
<b>Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Residential Energy Rebate Program</b>	Two programs to support home energy retrofits: Home Efficiency Rebates (HOMES) to fund whole house energy efficiency retrofits and the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEEHRA) to help low-moderate income households “go electric” through qualified appliance rebates. Rebates may be available for the following types of building materials: insulation, air sealing, electric panel upgrades, and electric wiring. The rebates will align with state climate goals, which include installing 6 million electric heat pumps by 2030. Californians are expected to be able to apply in 2024.	Low-moderate income households	One time service	<a href="https://www.energy.ca.gov/topics/programs/inflation-reduction-act-residential-energy-rebate-programs">https://www.energy.ca.gov/topics/programs/inflation-reduction-act-residential-energy-rebate-programs</a>
<b>Low-Income Weatherization Program (LIWP)</b>	California’s LIWP provides low-income households with solar photovoltaic systems and energy efficiency upgrades at no cost to residents. LIWP also helps cushion the impact of climate change on vulnerable communities, making it more affordable for low-income households to keep their homes cool and comfortable at a lower cost – whether through energy efficient air conditioning or improved insulation – and protect children and seniors from the health impacts of higher temperatures.	Low-income households	One time service	<a href="https://www.csd.ca.gov/Pages/Low-Income-Weatherization-Program.aspx">https://www.csd.ca.gov/Pages/Low-Income-Weatherization-Program.aspx</a>
<b>IRS Residential Energy Efficiency Tax Credit</b>	This credit applies to energy efficiency improvements in the building envelope of existing homes and for the purchase of high-efficiency heating, cooling and water-heating equipment.	Landlord occupied homes	Incentive	<a href="https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/energy-efficient-home-improvement-credit">https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/energy-efficient-home-improvement-credit</a>

**EXISTING RESOURCES**

**ATTACHMENT**

Resource	Scope of Program Expenditure	Beneficiary Designation	Funding Structure	Link
<b>SoCalGas Multi-Family Residential Rebate Program</b>	SoCalGas provides incentives to encourage the owners and managers of multi-family residential buildings to increase their energy efficiency. The program offers rebates for the installation of qualified energy-efficient products in apartment dwelling units and in the common areas of apartment and condominium complexes, and common areas of mobile home parks. Cooling solutions may be incorporated into part of this program.	Landlords/ managers	Rebate	<a href="https://www.socalgas.com/for-your-business/energy-savings/multi-family-savings">https://www.socalgas.com/for-your-business/energy-savings/multi-family-savings</a>
<b>SoCalREN Network Multifamily Program</b>	Provides technical assistance to identify cost-effective energy upgrades to multi-family housing and connection to applicable incentive programs; and offers incentives on energy conservation measures such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) upgrades.	Multi-family property owners	Technical Assistance and Incentive	<a href="https://socalren.org/multifamily/property-owners">https://socalren.org/multifamily/property-owners</a>
<b>Southern California Edison Energy Assistance Fund</b>	Fund that provides up to \$300 to be used as a credit on a SCE energy bill.	Low-income utility customers	Financial assistance	<a href="https://www.sce.com/residential/assistance/energy-assistance-fund">https://www.sce.com/residential/assistance/energy-assistance-fund</a>
<b>Southern California Edison Energy Savings Assistance Program</b>	Provides energy-efficient appliances and installation services, including for cooling equipment and smart thermostats, at free or reduced prices to income-qualified customers.	Income-qualifying SCE customers	Incentive	<a href="https://www.sce.com/residential/assistance/energy-saving-program">https://www.sce.com/residential/assistance/energy-saving-program</a>
<b>Southern California Edison Residential Summer Discount Plan</b>	Customized discount program.	No limitations	Discount program	<a href="https://www.sce.com/residential/rebates-savings/summer-discount-plan">https://www.sce.com/residential/rebates-savings/summer-discount-plan</a>
<b>Southern California Edison Smart Thermostat Rebates</b>	\$75 credit available for households that enroll in qualifying programs through authorized thermostat providers, aimed at maximizing energy efficiency of HVAC systems.	SCE customers	Rebate	<a href="https://www.sce.com/residential/rebates-savings/rebates?from=/rebates">https://www.sce.com/residential/rebates-savings/rebates?from=/rebates</a>
<b>Technology and Equipment for Clean Heating (TECH)</b>	The TECH Initiative provides incentives directly to contractors to support the installation of heat pump technologies in existing single-family and multi-family properties.	Contractors and customers (joint application)	Incentive	<a href="https://techcleanca.com/">https://techcleanca.com/</a>

**EXISTING RESOURCES**

**ATTACHMENT**

Resource	Scope of Program Expenditure	Beneficiary Designation	Funding Structure	Link
<p><b>U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)</b></p>	<p>The U.S. DOE WAP works with local energy services providers throughout the state installing weatherization and energy efficiency measures for low-income homeowners and renters that qualify under the DOE WAP.</p>	<p>Low-income households</p>	<p>One time service</p>	<p><a href="https://www.csd.ca.gov/Pages/Residential-Energy-Efficiency.aspx">https://www.csd.ca.gov/Pages/Residential-Energy-Efficiency.aspx</a></p>
<p><b>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)</b></p>	<p>The LIHEAP assists eligible low-income households with their heating and cooling energy costs, bill payment assistance, energy crisis assistance, weatherization and energy-related home repairs. Currently administered by community-based organizations in LA County.</p>	<p>Low-income households</p>	<p>One time service</p>	<p><a href="https://www.csd.ca.gov/Pages/LIHEAPProgram.aspx">https://www.csd.ca.gov/Pages/LIHEAPProgram.aspx</a></p>
<p><b>U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Energy Efficiency and Green Retrofit Program</b></p>	<p>Provides grants and loans for energy efficiency and green retrofit investments in multifamily properties. Three tiers: Element (max awards up to \$750K, per unit cap \$40k), Leading Edge Awards (\$10M cap, \$60k per unit), Comprehensive Awards (\$20M cap, per unit cap \$80k). Examples of eligible Elements investments include, but are not limited to, installation of electric HVAC heat pumps.</p>	<p>HUD-assisted multifamily properties</p>	<p>Loan and grant</p>	<p><a href="https://www.hud.gov/GRRP">https://www.hud.gov/GRRP</a></p>