

PacifiCorp
Low Income Bill Assistance Program
Program Year 2024

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PacifiCorp

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Program Year 2024

As part of a request in the UE-191024 Settlement Stipulation dated July 17, 2020, PacifiCorp dba Pacific Power & Light Company (PacifiCorp) agreed to provide an annual report on its Low Income Bill Assistance (LIBA) Program. The settlement provided for the first report to be submitted by January 1, 2022, with subsequent reports filed 120 days after the end of each LIBA program year. Additionally, PacifiCorp agreed to continue to provide current monthly State of Washington Low-Income Data Tracking report and to include information on disconnections, credit, and collection data, in the LIBA program annual report.

LOW INCOME BILL ASSISTANCE (LIBA) PROGRAM:

Background:

The Low Income Bill Assistance (LIBA) Program has been available through Schedule 17 since November 2003. The Program Year runs from October 1 through September 30, aligning with the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) program year. LIBA provides three discount tiers. The credit amount is based on the income qualification level for which a customer is certified. Previously, LIBA was designed to provide credits to income-eligible households for monthly usage over 600 kWh and included an annual enrollment cap. PacifiCorp proposed revisions to LIBA through Advice Letter 21-04 on July 2, 2021, which changed the discount program from a per kWh credit for usage in excess of 600 kWh to a percentage discount on customer's monthly net bill. PacifiCorp also proposed to remove the annual enrollment cap and expand Tier 3 income guidelines in compliance with RCW 19.405.020 (25) which defines Low Income as "household incomes as defined by the department or commission, provided that the definition may not exceed the higher of eighty percent of area median household income or two hundred percent of the federal poverty level, adjusted for household size"¹. The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) approved the proposed tariff revisions effective August 1, 2021.

Budget:

The LIBA program is funded through Tariff Schedule 91 Surcharge to Fund Low Income Bill Assistance Program, which covers program administration and LIBA program benefits (discounts) provided to income eligible customers. The surcharge is applicable to all customers, except those participating in Schedule 17 and Schedule 18.

Table 1 below outlines the total cost recovery, account balance, bill discount benefit and administrative cost for program year 2024 ending September 30, 2024. As of September 30, 2024, the account had an under-collection balance of \$2,321,915.78. The external administration

¹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=19.405.020>

cost covers the partner agency reimbursements for program intake and certification. The internal administration cost includes marketing and outreach and internal program management.

Table 1. LIBA Surcharge and Expenditures (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024)

Cost Recovery	(\$5,703,345.03)
Discounts	\$4,916,625.10
Administration Cost (External)	\$472,875.00
Administration Cost (Internal)	\$57,401.50
Account Balance (under collection)	\$2,321,915.78

Administration:

PacifiCorp partners with three local Community Action Agencies to administer and deliver the program. The agencies include Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC), which serves Columbia, Garfield, and Walla Walla counties; Opportunities Industrialization Center of Washington (OIC) serving Upper Yakima County; and Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic Db a Northwest Community Action Center (NCAC) serving Lower Yakima County. The agencies respond to inquiries from PacifiCorp customers regarding the program, its purpose, the benefits, and application process.

Additionally, agencies provide intake services, certify customer income eligibility, and assign them to one of the three income tiers. The Agencies currently receive a \$75.00 administration fee for each certified customer. Program administration reimbursement provided in program year 2024 was \$472,875, about 9.61 percent of the direct grant or discount amount.

PacifiCorp’s internal administration cost for program management was \$57,401.50, approximately 1.1percent of the direct grant or discount.

Enrollment:

As of September 30, 2024, 8,354 customers enrolled in the LIBA program. Breakdown of enrollment and percentage by discount tier are detailed in Table 2 below. Most customers are enrolled in Tier 3, which includes customers that would have not qualified for LIBA prior to the expansion of income guidelines. As a result, the program now better serves low-income households and can further reduce household energy burden. Tier 1, which includes customers in the lowest income qualification level, is the second largest enrollment tier. As a result of the price increase in Docker No. UE-230172, effective March 26, 2024, Tier 1 and Tier 2 discounts increased: from 70% to 72% discount for Tier 1 and from 35% to 36% discount for Tier 2 respectively.

Table 2: LIBA Enrollments by Tiers (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024)

TIERS	CREDIT LEVEL	INCOME GUIDELINES	COUNTS	%
1	72%	0-75% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	2,869	34.34%
2	36%	76-100% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	2,172	25.97%
3	15%	101-200% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) or 80% Area Median Income (AMI), whichever is greater	3,313	39.65%
TOTAL			8,354	100.00%

*Low Income Energy Credit is the percentage of a customer's net bill

Outreach and Communications:

PacifiCorp runs LIBA outreach and communications primarily in the Spring and Fall annually; times leading into periods of high bills and around the start of LIHEAP season in early Fall. The marketing strategies utilized include website, social media, bill insert/onserts, bill messages, radio ads, video ads, theater ads, newspaper ads, church ads, community outreach and distribution of program flyers and materials to partner administering agencies and local organizations who share information within their networks. Outreach communications and materials are in English and Spanish and intended to increase program awareness. The flyers include local partner agencies contact information and encourage customers to apply. The actual expenditure for marketing and outreach in program year 2024 was \$51,613.67.

DISCONNECTION DATA REPORTING:

Disconnection data reporting provided in Table 3 below. The reporting period aligns with Low Income Bill Assistance (LIBA) program year from October 1 through September 30 and includes residential services.

Table 3: Disconnection Data Reporting (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024)

1	Total disconnections for all purposes ¹	2,601
2	Total disconnections of residential customers for non-payment	1,534
3	Total disconnections of LIBA and LIHEAP participants for non-payment	298
4	Total remote disconnection, if any, for non-payment ²	0
5	Total remote disconnection of LIBA and LIHEAP customers for non-payment if any ²	0
6	Total disconnections of customers with a medical emergency verified at the premises within the previous two years	0
7	Number of payments, amount received, and mode of payment (cash, check, electronic, etc.) received during a field/premise visit to the service address, made by the customer to prevent disconnection	0
8	Number of free and fee-paid pay stations ³	183
9	Number and nature of customer complaints related to disconnection ⁴	0
10	Number of deferred payment plans and the amount deferred.	
	10a.	14,041
	10b.	\$10,048,074
11	Arrearage amounts	\$6,554,029

1. Disconnections include voluntary and involuntary disconnects

2. There are no residential Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters and, therefore, no remote discounts.

3. The State of Washington pay stations are fee free

4. Commission Complaint – “Pacific Power plans to disconnect the customer’s electric service on June 26, 2023, due to the \$10,000 past due balance owed on their account.”

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

In April 2023, PacifiCorp, d/b/a Pacific Power & Light Company, filed its most recent general rate case in Washington with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission under Docket No. UE-230172. In March 2024, Pacific Power and parties to the rate case reached a partial multiparty settlement agreement outlining various stipulation items, one of which included the development of a draft Language Access Plan for the company's communities and customers in Washington

While a requirement, Pacific Power sees this body of work as an opportunity to highlight diverse activities, available resources and the contributors who have worked in partnership with us to further language access. We continuously work toward providing excellent service and communications to all our customers while carrying out our mission of providing reliable, safe and low-cost electrical service, and we hope this draft document demonstrates our desire to strengthen our relationships with the customers and communities we serve while highlighting the importance of language access for all.

Pacific Power's Language Access Plan is being filed concurrently with the Low Income Bill Assistance Program Annual Report and is attached as a separate document. Refer to Attachment 1 Pacific Power WA Language Access Plan.