

# 2007 Joint Low Income Energy Conference

Session Presentation

## Minnesota Assurance 16 Program

What is it? And Why Should It Matter to You?

Nashville Tennessee

Tuesday June 5, 2007

Session 1A

10:45 AM to 12:15 AM

# 2007 Joint Low Income Energy Conference

Workshop Presenter:

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Energy Assistance Programs

TriCap

# Minnesota EAP Overview

We will look at:

- Minnesota Program Overview
- Coordinated Responsibility Model
- Assurance 16 delivery

# General Program Description EAP Overview

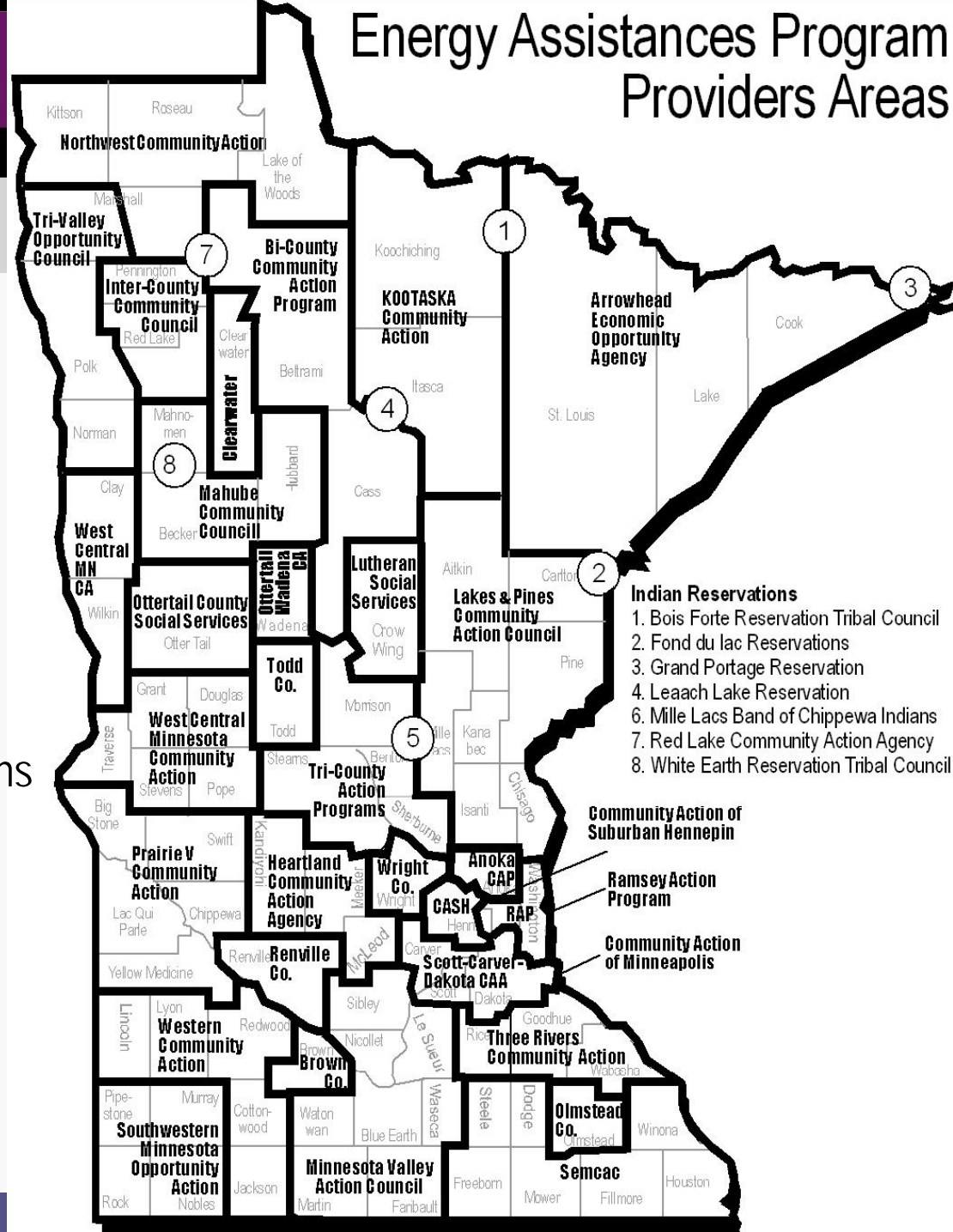
## Components of the program

- Primary Heat payments ranging from \$100-\$1200
- Intervention in energy crisis situations
- Outreach activities
- Energy Related Repair program which helps repair or replace furnaces
- Weatherization program

# Service Providers

- 40 local service providers
  - serve geographic areas
- Some serve both EAP & WAP
- These include:
  - Community Action Agencies
  - Counties
  - Indian Reservations
  - Private nonprofit organizations

## Energy Assistances Program Providers Areas

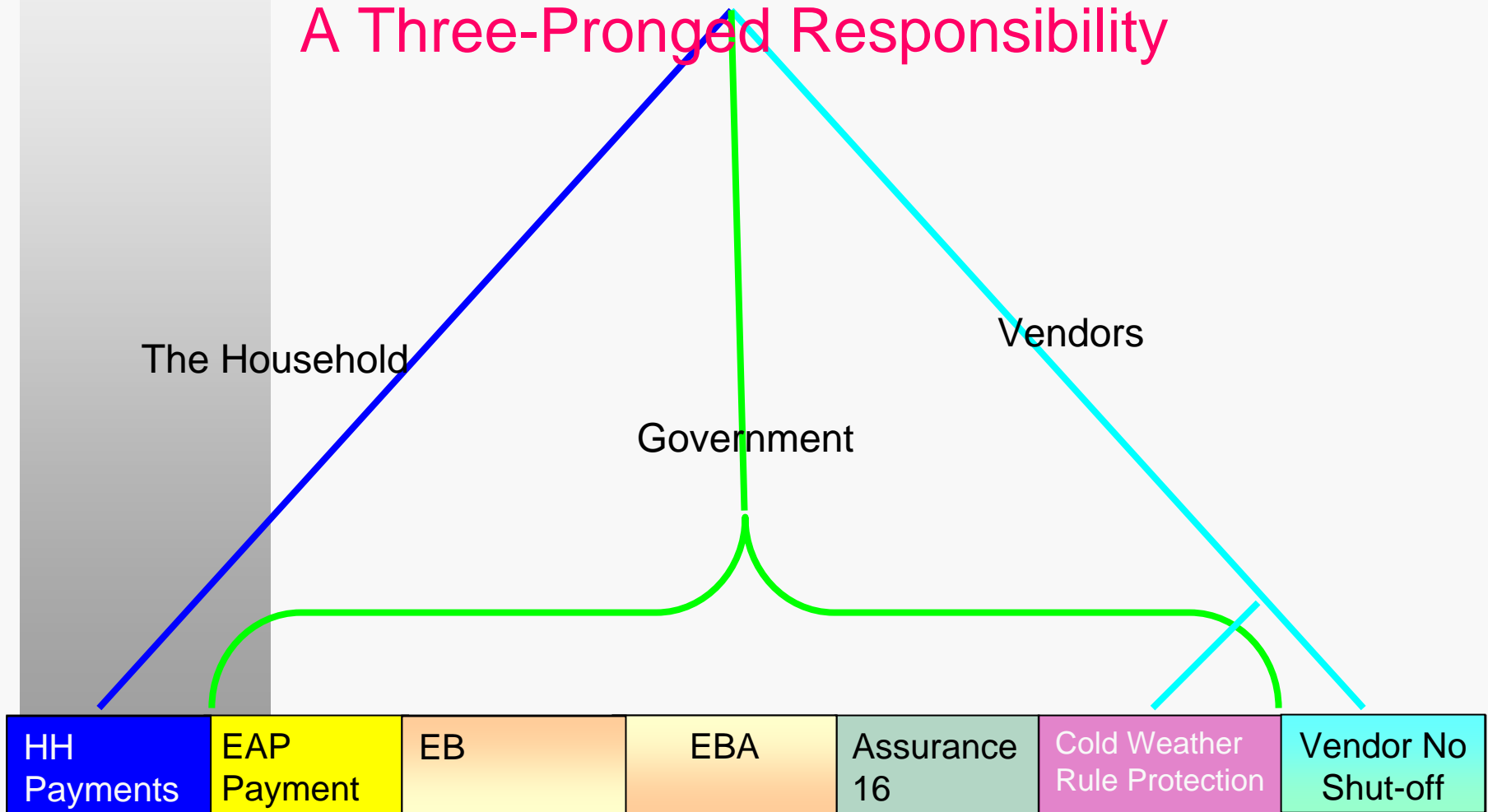


# The Coordinated Responsibility Model

- Minnesota EAP employs a “Coordinated Responsibility Model”
- Responsibility for energy assistance has three branches:
  - **Government** responsibility includes providing heating payment supplements, case management and advocacy for households, and maintaining influence with vendors.
  - **Energy Vendor** responsibility is to be as flexible as possible so energy payments leverage the highest possible level of service to the household.
  - **Household** responsibility is to make reasonable and planned payments for energy service, access government aid when necessary and communicate with vendors and government service providers.

# Envisioning Crisis Components

## A Three-Pronged Responsibility

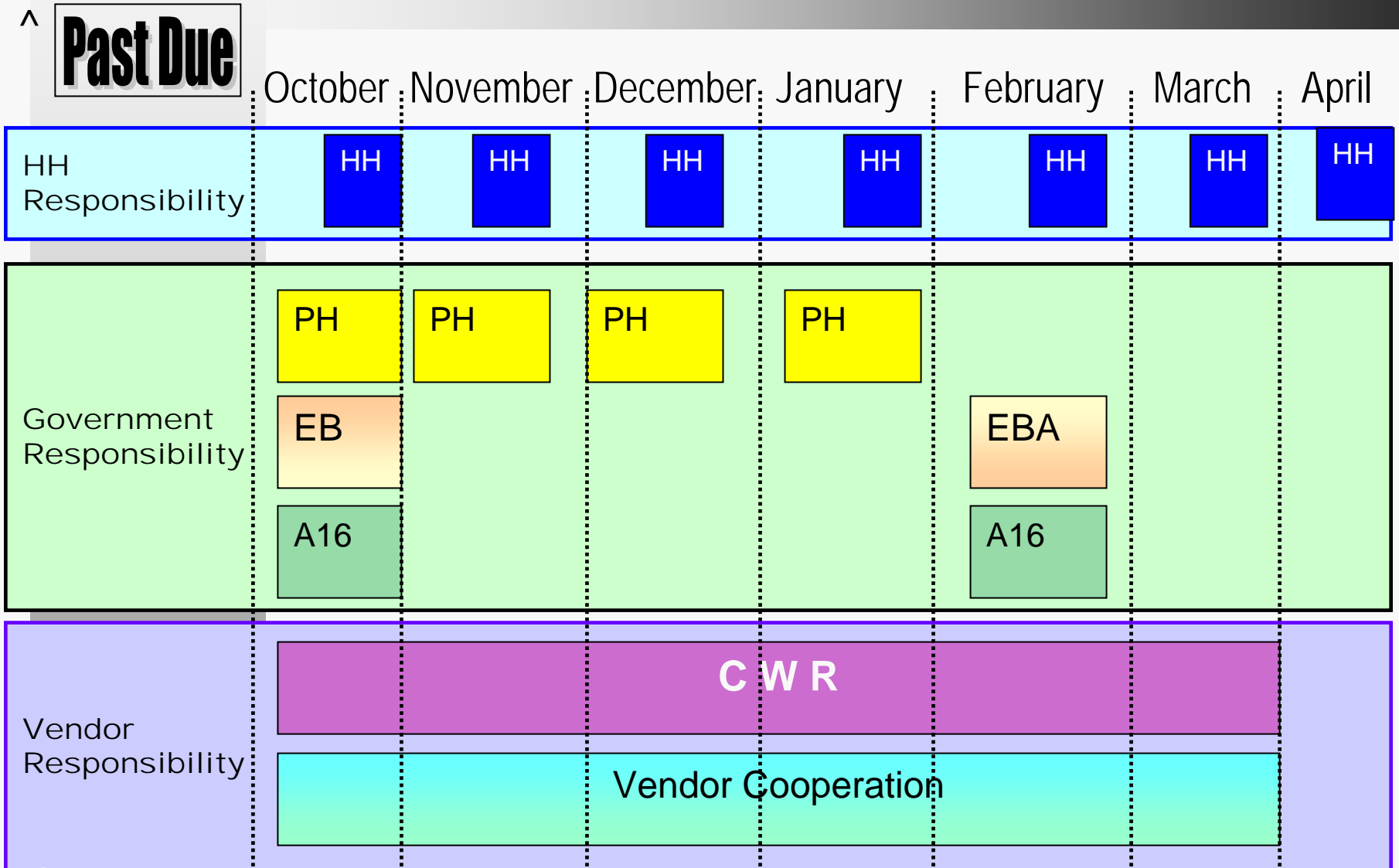


# The Coordinated Responsibility Model

Program components are designed to work together to encourage household payment:

- **Primary heat** payments for connected utilities are **scheduled** over four months so vendor billing is more likely to show an amount due;
- An **Emergency Benefit (EB)** (formerly crisis) pays the past due plus current bill up to \$300 so more/most/all the primary heat benefit addresses this year's heat bills;
- **Assurance 16** case management helps households establish and maintain regular or planned reasonable payments for energy; and
- An **Emergency Benefit Adjustment (EBA)** provides an incentive to establish and maintain regular or planned payments for energy and reduces the amount still owed to the vendor.

## Minnesota Energy Assistance Program



## Identifying A16 Households

- A16 HHD are referred when they are identified as Crisis HHD
- Contact is made by phone or letter
- Explaining A16 - Sell program
- Inform client Cold Weather Rule Protection does not exempt them from attempting to pay their bill
- Encourage client to be proactive before 4/15
- Some resist or try to put you off
- Some households are referred by vendors

## Determine Need (Assessment)

- Assess
  - Discussion with HHD to understand there situation
  - with *Reasonable Payment Worksheet*
- Work with Household on budget plan
- Ask them what they can pay? –
  - Many say more than is wise
  - Services help them determine “reasonable’ amount to improve chances of success

## Make a plan

- Set up plan based on the assessment
- HHD should communicate with A16 counselor about changes to the plan beforehand if problem occurs with maintaining payment schedule
- Advocate at the vendor – **Client or A16 Counselor**

## Follow up

- Identify completion of payment agreement
- Identify past due bills & funds needed for a delivery
- Identify clients that EBA is not needed for-bills are current
- Some thank you for doing it
- Some do everything and fail
- Pay incentive **EBA**

## Referral systems and networking to coordinate other resources

- Refer to other services
  - Salvation Army
  - CAER/Vendor & local fuel funds
  - Housing assistance
  - Services within our CAP
- We do this to enable the HHD to be self sufficient
  - May coach

## Lessons/challenges - What works and what doesn't

- Vendor cooperation – some are more of a challenge than others
- What vendors like/dislike about the program
- How this works or not with Fuel funds/Salvation Army
- What is success 5% or 80%?

## Presenter Contact Information

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