



Utility Rate Discounts and Assistance

Utility Advisory Committee

May 1, 2025

Utility Rates

- Set by each utility independently based on their unique expenses, policy decisions and regulatory requirements.
- Cost of Service based.
- Rate Studies typically performed during Master Plan processes for utilities or as a result of this process.
- Depending on housing type may or may not be paid directly by the occupants (Owner/Renter/Multi-Family).

Utility Assistance

- Lifeline Rates
 - Discount program
- Helping Neighbors
 - Financial Assistance
 - Administered by local non-profit



Lifeline Rates

Criteria to qualify:

- Low income AND disabled, OR
- Low income AND over age 62

50% reduction in utility bill

The combined household income must be less than the amounts listed below*

| Number in Household | Combined Household Income** |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | \$39,450 |
| 2 | \$45,100 |
| 3 | \$50,750 |
| 4 | \$56,350 |

*The income amounts for eligibility are reviewed and updated annually.

**For households with more than four family members, please call for income limits.

Lifeline Rates - Criteria

Income - 50% or less of Median Gross Household income by number of people in household

Age - Valid identification with birthdate

- or -

Disability – eligibility documentation

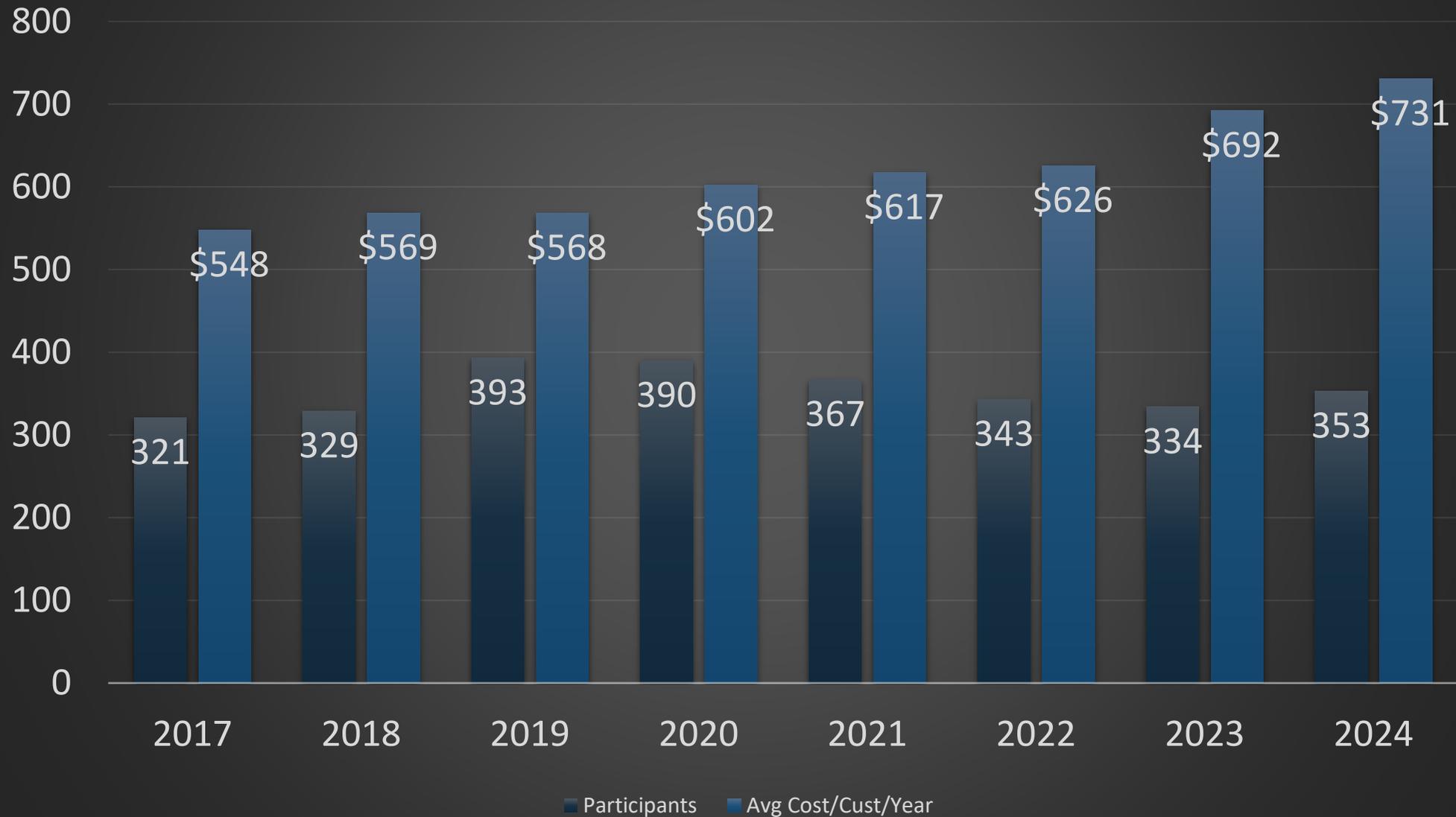
- Current Social Security Income Letter or Parking Placard;

Adding acceptable documentation types...

- Veteran of Armed Forces Disability
- County Property Tax Exemption Certificate
- Healthcare Provider Attestation form

Annual recertification in June/July

Lifeline Program Overview

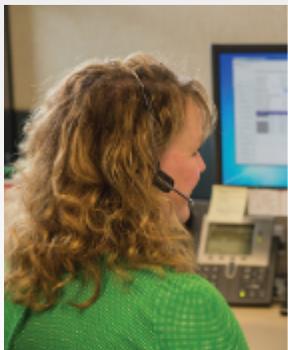


*Participants annually, not point in time number.

Helping Neighbors: Charitable Fund Program

Established July 2021

- \$5,000 from the utilities to establish the fund.
- Voluntary contributions via utility bills.
- The Community Action Council (CAC), a local non-profit, administers the program through a PSA with the City.
- Low-income customers can receive \$75 twice annually to help pay their utility bills.
- Limited by available funding (Not currently an issue)



Donate to the Helping Neighbors program:

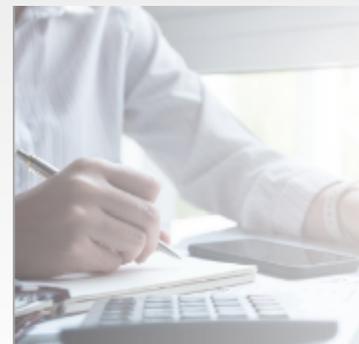
The new City of Olympia Helping Neighbors program is accepting donations from customers. Donations are accepted in any amount and all proceeds help low-income customers who need assistance paying their City of Olympia utility bill.

Visit olympiawa.gov/utilityhelp to learn more, or call 360.753.8340.

Look for the payment coupon section of your utility bill to donate!

| Helping Neighbors Donation | Payment Coupon |
|---|----------------|
| Make a donation to help your low-income neighbors pay each utility bill. Donation Amount: \$ (insert any amount) This amount will be added to your utility bill as a recurring charge. If you wish to stop the donation, do not pay and it will expire at your bill. - Do NOT write or staple notes to bill - Payment options and privacy on back - Questions? Call 800.735.8340, M-F, 9-5 | |

Need to apply to the Helping Neighbors program? See reverse side for details.



Need Assistance with your Bill?

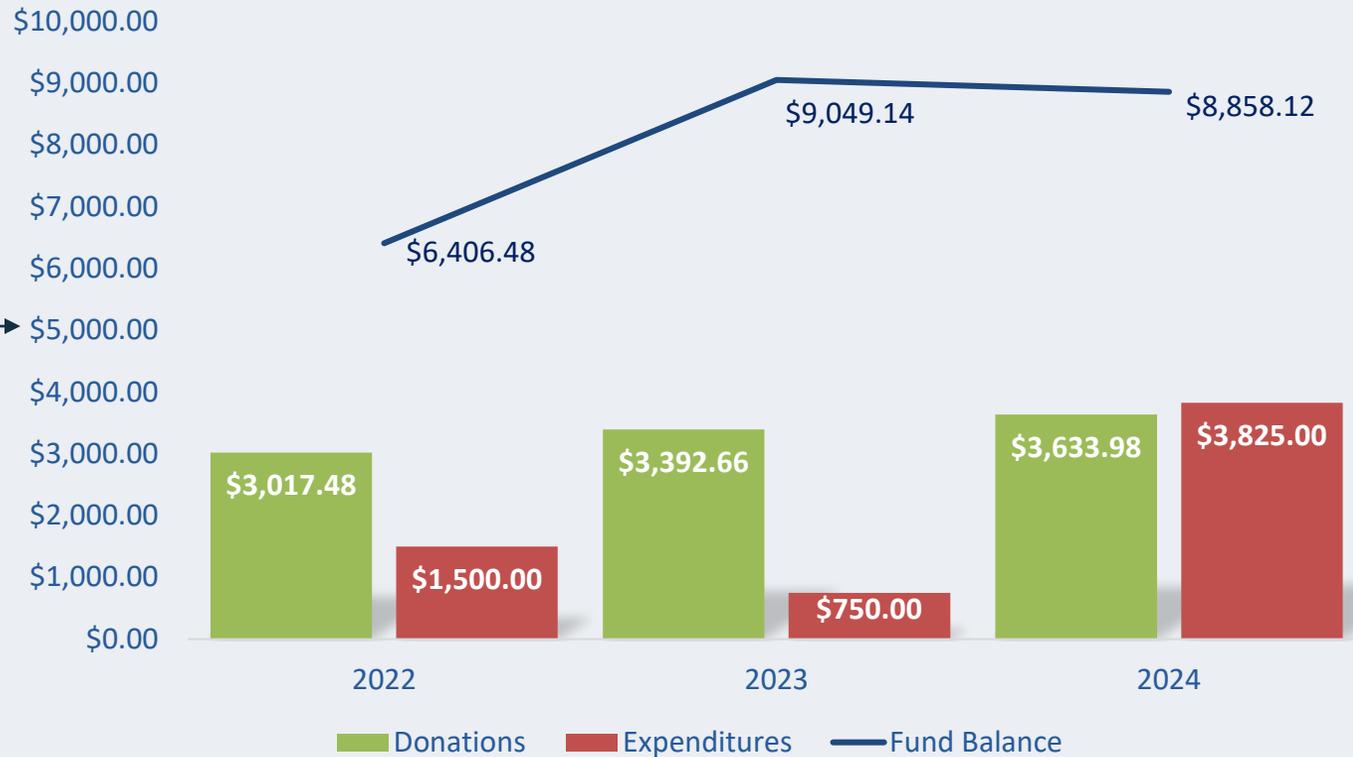
If you are past due on your utility bill and low-income, you could receive assistance from the new Helping Neighbors program. Qualified customers can receive \$75, twice per calendar year. Follow these steps to get started:

1. **Account Past Due:** You received a past due notice from the City.
2. **Income Limits:** Visit olympiawa.gov/utilityhelp or call 360.753.8340 to see if you meet the income limits, based on household size.
3. **Set up an Appointment:** If you meet steps 1 and 2, call the Community Action Council at 360.438.1100 to set up an appointment. They will help you apply for the Helping Neighbors program.

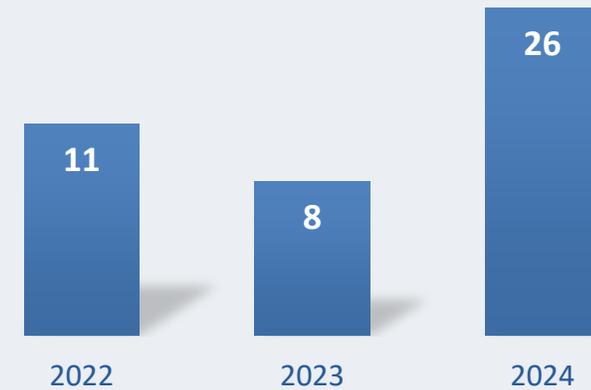
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Helping Neighbors Program

Donations vs. Expenditures with Year-end Fund Balance



Vouchers Issued



Community Action Council
of Lewis, Mason & Thurston Counties

Program started in late 2021 with \$5,000 seed money from the utilities.

Potential Changes for Helping Neighbors

- Change from 2x a year payment to one time payment of a larger amount to reduce administrative burden.
- Increase value of voucher to \$200-300 once a year from \$75 - 2x a year.
- Utilities match donations from rate payers.
- Have a minimum fund balance where the CAC contacts the city/utilities with an opportunity to reseed the fund.



Questions/Discussion