

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

What is HEAP?

HEAP is a federally funded program that can help income eligible individuals pay for Electricity, Propane, Natural Gas, Wood, Oil, Kerosene, Coal, or any other heating fuel to help you heat your home. HEAP also offers an emergency benefit for households in a heat or heat related energy emergency. In addition, HEAP offers a furnace repair and/or replacement benefit for homeowners with heating equipment that does not work.

How does HEAP work?

HEAP benefits are paid directly to the heat supplier to the account of the customer of record.

What are the different kinds of available HEAP benefits?

There are three available HEAP benefits: the regular benefit, an emergency benefit, and furnace repair or replacement.

What is the HEAP regular benefit?

The regular benefit is a grant to assist low-income households with the cost of their major heating source for their home. The regular benefit component of the 2012-2013 HEAP opened on November 19, 2012. You do not need a disconnect notice to receive regular HEAP.

If heat is not included in your rent – you can get between \$400-\$550 depending on your monthly household income, heating type, and the presence of an individual that is either age 60 or older, under age 6, or permanently disabled. Households with natural gas heat will receive a grant of \$400 to \$450. The benefit will appear as a credit on your bill approximately 60 days after approval. After approval, a 30 day hold will be placed on your account. If you heat with oil, propane, wood, coal, etc., an approval will produce an immediate delivery of fuel.

What is the HEAP emergency benefit?

The HEAP emergency benefit is a grant to help individuals who have a disconnect notice or low fuel supply and do not have the resources available to resolve the emergency and have exhausted regular HEAP. The emergency benefit component of the 2012-2013 HEAP program opened on January 2, 2013. Households with natural gas heat will receive an emergency grant of \$400.

One HEAP emergency benefit is available for both your main source of heat and for a heat-related electric account in order to restore or continue utility service to eligible customers. A 30-day hold be placed on your account upon approval. Heat related electricity is electric service needed to operate essential heating equipment (e.g., furnace, thermostat, etc.). You also must have less than \$2,000 in available liquid resources, if no member of your household is age 60 or older, or less than \$3,000 in resources if any of your household is age 60 or older.

What is the emergency benefit amount?

Emergency HEAP Benefit Amounts for 2012-2013	
TYPE OF EMERGENCY	AMOUNT
Natural Gas Heat Only	\$400
Electric Heat (PSC and municipal electric companies i.e. National Grid, NYSEG)	\$560
Deliverable Fuel (oil, propane, kerosene)	\$600
Other Fuel (coal, wood, wood products)	\$500
Heat related Electric (PSC and municipal electric companies i.e. National Grid, NYSEG)	\$160

What is the Furnace Repair or Replacement program?

The Furnace Repair and Replacement Program of HEAP is available to help homeowners repair or replace furnaces, boilers and other direct heating components necessary to keep your home's primary heating source working. This program opened on October 1, 2012.

Furnace benefits amounts are based on the actual cost incurred to replace or repair the furnace, boiler, and/or other essential heating equipment necessary to keep your home's primary heating source working.

Applications for furnace repairs or replacements are available at the Erie County Department of Social Services office. Contact the HEAP hotline at 858-7644.

The homeowner or authorized representative must apply in person with all necessary documentation:

1. Two furnace estimates from a participating HEAP contractors (list is available at 291 Pearl Street Intake Window)
*when you call for an estimate ask for a free estimate and ask if they participate with HEAP
2. Proof of home ownership
3. Proof of resources (bank statements, stocks, bonds, CDs, etc.)
4. One form of Identification for all household members
*homeowners must reside in the property and own the property for 12 months prior to application
5. Proof of income for all household members received within the last 30 days

What are the income guidelines for HEAP?

In 2012-2013, your total gross household monthly income for your household size must be at or below the following guidelines:

Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income
1	\$2,138
2	\$2,796
3	\$3,453
4	\$4,111
5	\$4,769
6	\$5,427
7	\$5,550
8	\$5,673
9	\$5,797
10	\$5,920
11	\$6,346
Each additional	Add \$495

What are the resource guidelines for HEAP?

For the regular HEAP benefit, there are no resource guidelines. For the emergency HEAP benefit the household must have no more than \$2,000 (or \$3,000 for a senior citizens household) in available liquid resources (e.g. savings, checking, stocks, bonds, CD, 401K, etc.) *certain resources are excluded. Please call the HEAP office with questions.

How do I apply for HEAP?

By Mail – Regular HEAP	In Person – Regular or Emergency HEAP	By Phone – Regular HEAP
<p>Who can apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All clients who received HEAP last season. ▪ New clients if Head of Household is 60+, or disabled OR if Household has disabled individual or child age 5 or younger OR if Household contains member receiving SSI benefits and lives alone. ▪ Proof of ALL household earned income (for last 30 days). ▪ Proof of unearned income (social security, pension, etc.) required. <p>Mail To: <u>60+ or Disabled Clients:</u> 291 Pearl Street, Buffalo, NY 14202 <u>All Other Applicants/ALL TA / SNAP Benefits (f/k/a FS):</u> 478 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14203</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If Head of Household is 60 or older OR disabled and received HEAP last year, they will receive an application by mail during early access period (Sept. to Oct.) ▪ New applicants may call the Application Request Line at 858-1969 to request an application by mail. <p>TA or SNAP Benefits (f/k/a FS) households may not need to apply for Regular HEAP, approval may be automatic, BUT if missed auto pay, TA / SNAP households may mail in an application.</p>	<p>Who can apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Households who did or did not receive HEAP last season may apply in person. ▪ Your service is off or you are out of a fuel supply ▪ Must bring proof of ID, income for all household members, and current heat and electric bills. ▪ Must bring proof of ALL resources (bank stocks, CD's, IRA's, etc.) FOR EMERGENCY HEAP APPLICANTS ONLY ▪ Age 60+ clients unable to appear due to infirmity, call 858-8526, ▪ Under age 60 clients unable to appear due to disability/physical impairment, call 858-6901. <p>*The HEAP office is open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p><u>Regular HEAP:</u> Who can apply? If received HEAP last season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Households in which Head of Household is 60 +. ▪ SSI households that live alone. <p>If you did not receive HEAP last season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May initiate application process by phone. However, a completed and signed application and all required documentation must be submitted to the HEAP office by mail, in person, or via fax. <p><u>Emergency HEAP:</u> Who can apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All households who were approved for a regular benefit this season. ▪ Callers should be prepared with Case Number, Social Security Number, utility account numbers, household income and resource (bank accounts, etc.) amounts. ▪ HEAP Assistance Hotline: 858-7644

What if I am denied HEAP?

Call our office immediately at (716) 847-0650. We will review the decision with you. If it appears to be wrong, we will tell you how to challenge it, or we may agree to take your case. If you disagree with the denial, you have 60 days to request a Fair Hearing.

To request a Fair Hearing, notify the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) by telephone, on-line, fax, or mail that you want a Fair Hearing. You can write on the back of your notice the reason for requesting the hearing. If you phone, get the name of the person you speak to. If you write, send your letter by certified mail and keep a copy. The correct address is:

New York State Office of
Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)
Office of Administrative Hearings
P.O. Box 1930
Albany, New York 12201-1930
Telephone No.: 1-800-342-3334
Fax No. (518) 473-6735
<http://otda.ny.gov/oah/FHReq.asp#online>

For further information about HEAP, you may call our office at (716) 847-0650.