



Energy Assistance Still Available

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Springfield – The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced that winter heating assistance through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is still available.

Heating assistance and Reconnection Assistance (RA) applications will be processed through May 31st, or until funding is exhausted. Even if your household has already applied for and received LIHEAP (bill payment assistance, but not the full RA benefit) since October 1, 2018, you may be eligible for the RA benefit.

Reconnection Assistance is available for eligible households who are disconnected from their energy source needed for heating or are under imminent threat of disconnection (are within 7 days of being disconnected or have less than 25% in their propane tank). The RA benefit may also be approved to help adults who are trying to establish heat-related energy services. RA is provided to eligible households if a) it will ensure reconnection and b) if the household has made a good faith effort to maintain energy services and/or can pay a portion of the balance due to the energy vendor, when applicable.

“We understand we’re coming out of an extremely cold winter and Illinois residents’ heating bills are probably higher than they anticipated,” said Erin Guthrie, Acting DCEO Director. “This program was created to help our most vulnerable residents remain healthy, safe and warm during the winter months.”

A single-person household can qualify with a monthly gross income of up to \$1,518; a two-person household up to \$2,058; a family of three can earn up to \$2,598; and a family of four can earn up to \$3,138. Benefits are paid directly to energy vendors on behalf of eligible households. The exception is households whose heating costs are included in their rent.

Customers must bring all required documentation when applying for assistance, including:

- Proof of gross income from all household members for the previous 30-day income period, beginning with the date of the application.
- A copy of their current heat and electric bills issued within the last 30 days (if they pay for their energy directly).
- A copy of their rental agreement (if they are renting) showing that utilities are included, the monthly rental amount and landlord contact information.
- Proof of Social Security numbers for all household members.
- Proof that their household received TANF or other benefits, such as Medical Eligibility or SNAP, if receiving assistance from the Illinois Department of Human Services.

LIHEAP heating assistance applications, including Reconnection Assistance, will continue to be accepted through May 31, 2019 or until funding is exhausted. Applications are taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

LIHEAP is a state and federally funded energy assistance program for low-income families in which heating bill payments are made on behalf of households. LIHEAP applications are processed through a network of 35 local administering agencies around the state.

For a complete listing of LIHEAP's local administering agencies and additional information about the program, go to www.liheapIllinois.com, or call the LIHEAP toll-free hotline at 1 877 411-WARM (9276).