

DATE: February 13, 2020

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, HEAP Coordinators, TA and SNAP Directors

FROM: Jeffrey Gaskell, Deputy Commissioner
Employment and Income Support Programs

SUBJECT: 2019-2020 Home Energy Assistance Program – Revised Component Closing Dates and Second Emergency Benefit

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 18, 2020

CONTACT PERSON: HEAP Bureau at: 518-473-0332

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) of two changes to the 2019-2020 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The dates of operation for the Regular and Emergency benefit components will be extended from March 16, 2020 through April 24, 2020 and a second HEAP Emergency benefit for heat and heat-related emergencies will be available effective February 18, 2020.

The eligibility criteria for the second Emergency benefit will be the same as the first Emergency benefit. Applicants must have exhausted, or have unavailable to them, both the Regular benefit and the first Emergency benefit to be eligible for the second Emergency benefit. First and second Emergency benefits must not be coupled and must be issued separately.

Applicants must apply in their county of residence by telephone or in person and may be eligible for income deeming based on their most recently filed HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)). Districts must continue to use the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet ([LDSS-3594B](#)) and it must be marked "Second Emergency Benefit" on the top. Households must meet resource eligibility requirements.

The second Emergency benefit amounts are the same as the first Emergency benefit amounts and are as follows:

Second Emergency Benefit Amount Table:

Heating Type	Second Emergency Benefit Amount
Heat-Related Domestic	\$140
Natural Gas – Heat Only	\$350
Natural Gas – Heat Combined with Heat-Related Domestic	\$490
Electric Heat	\$490
Oil, Kerosene, Propane	\$675
Wood, Pellets, Coal, Corn, Other	\$525

Systems Implications:

The payment type for this benefit is J1 (HEAP Emergency Benefit – Additional Benefit) for both heat and heat-related emergency payments.

An Emergency HEAP Budget (Benefit Type ‘E – Emergency’) must be stored in ABEL, with the appropriate emergency type, and the payment amount associated with the pay type must match the HEAP Emergency benefit amount on the HEAP budget. The payment line “From Date” should be the application date.

A Special Claiming Code must be entered for all HEAP payments on Screen Six of WMS. Special Claiming Code H is required for all HEAP prevention payments. Special Claiming Code G is required for HEAP restoration payments.

Client Notice System (CNS) support is available for both approval and denial transactions. All HEAP Emergency benefits must be issued directly to a participating vendor. All district payments, except for NYC, meeting the requirement for issuance through the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) process will be made through OSC. NYC HEAP payments are issued locally. Detailed procedures regarding HEAP payment processing are outlined in the “Dear WMS and BICS Coordinator Letter”, released July 23, 2019.

Temporary Assistance (TA) Implications:

Districts must continue to explore the availability of, and individual eligibility for, Regular, first Emergency, and/or second Emergency HEAP benefits before issuing a Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EAF), Emergency Safety Net Assistance (ESNA) or Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA) payment to meet a utility (natural gas or electricity) or non-utility (other than natural gas or electricity) energy emergency.

The Regular benefit and Emergency benefit(s) components are scheduled to operate through the close of business April 24, 2020 or until the funds allocated to these components are exhausted, whichever occurs first.

Districts will be notified via GIS if there are any changes to the component closing dates.

All districts and alternate certifiers must continue to accept applications for Regular and both Emergency component benefits through close of business (COB) April 24, 2020. Mail-in applications postmarked or electronic applications received on or before April 24, 2020, meet the deadline and must be processed. The functionality to submit online HEAP applications for Regular component benefits through myBenefits will be disabled at 5:00 pm on April 24, 2020.

All HEAP applications must be processed in accordance with instructions found in the [New York State HEAP Manual](#) (revised 10/01/2015) and [19-LCM-10](#). All applications for Regular or Emergency HEAP benefit applications received after the deadline must be denied using CNS denial code F08 (HEAP Application Received after HEAP Program Year Closing Date) or, if needed, by using the HEAP Manual Denial Notice [LDSS-3494B](#).

Districts must continue to submit their HEAP Pending Case Report in eReports on a weekly basis, as outlined in [19-LCM-10](#). Pending second Emergency benefits must be reported under Emergency HEAP, item 5: "Number of supplemental benefit applications received but not yet processed on WMS".

The HEAP Bureau has scheduled two conference calls to provide technical assistance to districts with the implementation of 2019-2020 program changes. Representatives from OTDA's HEAP Bureau will be available for questions related to the program administration. Information regarding the conference calls will be forthcoming under separate cover.