

HEAP Regional Training and myWorkspace

Questions and Answers

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HEAP POLICY

1. **Q. If an applicant applies for regular benefits, but another household member is the customer of record, is this applicant still eligible to apply for this benefit?**
 - A. **Regular Benefit Heater H1:** The bill for utility service or fuel does not have to be in the applicant's name as a condition of eligibility for the regular benefit component, but a direct vendor relationship must be established if the account is not in the applicant's name.

Regular Benefit Heat Included HX: The applicant must provide proof of indirect payment for the cost of energy included in their rent.
2. **Q. Can an applicant who is not the customer of record (in question 1) apply for emergency benefit?**
 - A. The applicant must be the customer of record for emergency benefits.
3. **Q. Is there a CSR plan boiler plate language that can be sent to SSDs?**
 - A. There is none at this time. Please refer to 99-ADM-4 for specific instructions.
4. **Q. Must Social Services Districts (SSD) offer financial reimbursement when advertising for an Alternate Certifier?**
 - A. Financial reimbursement to Alternate Certifiers is not a requirement for participating in HEAP.
5. **Q. What is the correct CNS Denial Code to use when an applicant applies for a furnace repair/replacement benefit?**
 - A. SSDs should encourage applicants to apply for a program that may assist them. If the applicant insists on applying for HEAP, they must be given an application and the correct CNS Denial Code would be F08 – HEAP application received after HEAP program year closing date.
6. **Q. Do Alternate Certifiers have 15 days to route applications to SSDs for processing?**
 - A. SSDs must establish procedures with Alternate Certifiers which enables the SSD to meet the 30 business day requirement for notification of action taken on an application for assistance. For additional information please review 13-LCM-11.
7. **Q. Who signs the Agency Use section on the HEAP application?**
 - A. The Agency Use section of the HEAP application is to be signed by both the worker who processed the case and that worker's supervisor, whether that is SSD or Alternate Certifier staff. Only SSD staff may sign the LDSS-3209.

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8. Q. Are “snowbirds” eligible for emergency benefits if they are not in the home when benefit component open on January 2, 2014?

A. Certifiers must determine that the current dwelling is the primary residence and indicate this on the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B). This is done via applicant declaration used in conjunction with information contained in the case file. Collateral contact with the vendor may also be used to substantiate this information.

9. Q. Can the HEAP ABEL budget indicate what type of income is being used like it does for SNAP?

A. No. ABEL Does not support this for HEAP.

10. Q. Do recipients of ongoing TA and SNAP benefits, who were not on the AutoPay have to apply for HEAP benefits?

A. Individuals who were not eligible to be included on the AutoPay may apply for HEAP benefits on or after November 18, 2013 by submitting a HEAP application (LDSS- 3421).

11. Q. How does the SSD determine the primary heat source for a utility account that includes both electric and natural gas?

A. The fuel type is determined by the information provided on the application and confirmed via the utility company’s website. If the website contradicts the applicant’s information, SSDs may telephone the utility’s representative directly.

12. Q. Will there be any additional mass authorizations for active TA and SNAP recipients who missed the September 2013 AutoPay?

A. OTDA does not have any additional mass authorizations scheduled at this time. This is due to the reduction in HEAP funding. If NYS receives additional funding this is an option which may be considered.

13. Q. Must applicants sign the federal income tax form they submit for proof of self-employment income?

A. If the applicant chooses to utilize their income tax to document income, it must be a signed copy of the form submitted to the IRS.

14. Q. Under what circumstances can an SSD reissue a regular benefit or an emergency benefit?

A. Regular benefits and emergency benefits are not cashed out to recipients. When a recipient changes vendors, a benefit amount remains, and the recipient continues to be a resident of NYS, one of the following actions is taken by the SSD:

Regular benefits: The SSD must obtain a refund for the remaining balance and reissue the balance to a new vendor. If the recipient has moved, the SSD must make an effort to provide any remaining funds to the recipient’s new heating vendor. If the recipient does not have a direct vendor relationship, funds are returned to the SSD’s HEAP account.

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If the recipient has changed fuel type (ex. natural gas to propane), the SSD may still refund the balance or unused benefit to the new vendor.

Emergency benefits: The SSD may only re-issue the benefit to a new vendor if a recipient changes vendor when:

1. The recipient closes the original account;
2. The recipient is the customer of record for a new heating and/or heat-related account;
3. Credits belong to the applicant/payee (WMS relationship code 01); and,
4. The recipient is in an emergency situation and reissuing the emergency benefit is necessary to resolve the emergency.

15. Q. If a paper case is processed in myWorkspace, must SSDs use the Document Requirement Form (LDSS-2042) when an applicant is pended, even though myWorkspace produces a document requirement form?

A. If an application is processed in myWorkspace, and it is pended, a document requirement form will be produced, but GIS 13TA/myB005 relaxed the policy requiring the use of myWorkspace for processing all applications. Paper applications may be processed using WMS and in those instances the Documents Requirements form (LDSS-2642) will be used for pended applications.

16. Q. If SSD have and applicant with heat included with rent and they do not have a shut-off on the electric bill, does the SSD send the \$20/\$25 benefit to the utility?

A. This is an SSD option to send the benefit to the utility company or to the recipient.

17. Q. If an applicant provides their signed prior year's income tax return with Schedule E must they still complete Rental Income Calculation Worksheet (LDSS-5001)?

A. This is up to the applicant. To calculate rental income applicants may either submit the previous year's signed and completed income tax form with a completed scheduled E OR they may use the "three month method," which determines gross monthly income for the three months prior to the month of application by deducting allowable business expenses from the gross receipts, then averaging the three months' net profit, and dividing that amount by three to arrive at the gross monthly countable income. A Rental Income Worksheet (LDSS-5001) would be completed if the applicant uses this method to document income. An example of using the LDSS-5001 is found in attachment 3 of this document.

18. Q. If an applicant submits a Schedule C for the proof of self-employment income, should the SSD complete the Self-Employment Worksheet (LDSS-3785)?

A. The Self-Employment Worksheet (LDSS-3785) is not required, but is recommended.

19. Q. Are returning HEAP applicants required to provide documentation verifying their Medicare Part B/D expenses?

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A. Returning applicants are not required to provide documentation of unearned income. Since Medicare Part B/D is an expense that is deducted from the gross Social Security income, the returning applicant would not have to provide documentation of this deduction. If the SSD is processing the application through myWorkspace, they need to be sure to go to the bottom of the “Other Expenses” tab and click on “Verified” in order to exclude the Medicare Part B/D from the gross Social Security income.

20. Q. How do SSDs close a case for someone who is on the Early Outreach list and has not sent in an application because they have died or gone into a nursing home?

A. 1. Application not sent in: No action required. The case will auto-close next season if there has been no activity.

2. Death: No action required because an application has not been submitted. The case will auto close next season if the case has no activity and there are no other household members (close with 05-H95). If an application is submitted and there are household members, delete the deceased recipient with an Individual Code of 13.

3. Nursing Home: SSD must determine whether the applicant meets the temporary absence criteria. If they do meet the temporarily absent criteria and are expected to return to the household, then the case will be processed as it regularly would once the application is received.

If the applicant does not meet the temporarily absent criteria, and an application has not been submitted then no action is required and the case will auto-close next season if the case has no activity or the SSD may close the case using case closing Transaction Type 07 or an Undercare Action of 05 with Denial Code M03. If applicant does not meet the temporary absence criteria and an application is submitted, the application would be denied using the CNS Denial Code M03.

FINANCE

21. Q. What is the name of the Benefits Issuance Control System (BICS) Report that lists the Statewide Financial System (SFS) vendor changes?

A. The name of the daily BICS report is “SFS Vendor Processing Report” (print file: SFSVENREPORT). DDSs should review for New (N) or Changed (C) SFS vendor data and update SFS data in the BICS vendor record, if necessary.

22. Q. Is OTDA going to reach out to the area motels to sign them up as a state vendor in SFS?

A. Motels receive vendor direct payments which are issued through the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC). These payments must have SFS data attached to their local vendor IDs. At a minimum this requires completion of, and submission to the HEAP Bureau, a substitute W-9 by all of these vendors. Prior to the opening of the HEAP emergency benefit component, SSDs should review their list of emergency housing sites to ensure that these vendors all have SFS data. If a vendor does not complete this process SSDs should refrain from using this vendor for HEAP emergency housing or pay those through the two party check process using their local district allocation.

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23. Q. Are SSDs able to continue to issue or reissue payments for the 2012-13 heating season with the BICS locks turned off? Can SSDs open and then close the locks so payments can go out?

A. The prior year only HEAP lock allows SSDs to open and release payments to issue benefits from the prior HEAP year. This prior year lock governs only prior year HEAP payments, with all PA, FS, NPA-HEAP and emergency benefits being released by this one lock. SSDs are able to utilize this lock to issue prior year HEAP benefits until September 30 of the current HEAP season. That is, for the 10/1/2012 – 09/30/2013 HEAP season, prior year benefits (10/1/2011 -09/30/2012) can be issued until 09/30/2013, the end of the current season. The current HEAP locks continue to work as previously, meaning, if the current year locks are “off,” all current and prior year payments are produced. For example, if the current PA HEAP lock is set to “off,” both the current and prior year PA benefits are produced, even if the prior year lock is set to “on.” If all current year locks are “off,” then all categories of prior year HEAP benefits are produced. The prior year HEAP lock applies to all HEAP pay like Methods of Payment, both directs and indirect payments (i.e. MOP=01 and 09).

MYWORKSPACE

24. Q. If a paper application requires a signature how would the supervisor sign off while using myWorkspace?

A. By signing into myWorkspace and authorizing the benefit, the supervisor has electronically signed the application.

25. Q. Once a HEAP application is pended in myWorkspace, will the other workers, who may be processing the application, be able to see if it has been pended and why?

A. Only if the worker pending the application notated the information in the case comments section.

26. Q. In myWorkspace, is there an application date for the Undercare returning household in the “Case Information” tab?

A. Once the returning application is pulled through the “Undercare/Case Management” option in myWorkspace, the application will reflect the program opening date of 11/18/2013 if submitted prior to program opening. If the application is submitted and pulled through the “Undercare/Case Management,” option on or after the program opening date, the application will reflect the date it was electronically submitted.

27. Q. How will paper Early Outreach applications be processed in myWorkspace by the Alternate Certifier?

A. Early Outreach applications can be pulled in through the “Case Management,” option in myWorkspace.

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28. Q. Can information be moved electronically from the “Intake Application Inbox” to the “Undercare Inbox?”

A. No, applications in the Application Inbox represent new applicants. The applications in the “Undercare Inbox,” represent returning applicants.

29. Q. Will myWorkspace prompt SSDs to complete the Low-Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829)?

A. If as Low-Income Worksheet (LDSS-3892) is necessary, myWorkspace will prompt workers to complete it. The Low-Income Worksheet (LDSS-3892) is only necessary if the shelter costs exceed income.

30. Q. How is an application pending in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, “Undercare Management”, go to “Case Details” screen click on “Worker Actions” and the drop down will give the option to pend or un-pend application. Additionally, all information in the eligibility questions section must be verified or the information will automatically be placed on the documentation requirements form.

31. Q. How is a name changed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on “Perform Undercare Maintenance,” then click on “Individual Tab,” and make change.

32. Q. How is someone added/deleted to/from household composition in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on “Perform Undercare Maintenance,” then select “Individual,” tab and select “Add Another to Add or to Delete.” Use scroll bar slide to the right until you reach “Individual Status Code,” and choose 15 for “Remove/Delete.”

33. Q. How is a budget created in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on “Perform Undercare Maintenance,” then select “Payment Budget,” tab and select “Option Create New Budget.”

34. Q. How can a vendor/account number be changed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on “Perform Undercare Maintenance,” then select “Payment Budget,” tab and at bottom of page, click on “Vendor Information.”

35. Q. How are individual category codes changed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on “Perform Undercare Maintenance,” then select “Individual,” tab, slide scroll bar and edit information as needed under “Individual Status Code.”

36. Q. How is shelter type/amount changed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on “Perform Undercare Maintenance,” then select “Shelter,” tab and make change.

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37. Q. How is an address changed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Perform Undercare Maintenance," then select "Shelter," tab and edit information under "Residence Address," as needed.

38. Q. How is income source added/changed/deleted in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Perform Undercare Maintenance," then select "Income," tab and choose "Delete and/or Add Another," and make changes as needed.

39. Q. How is a case closed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Case Management," then select "Case Operations," enter case number, and submit. This will bring up the "Case Summary," screen which will show last transaction information. Enter correct closing codes.

40. Q. How is a case denied in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Case Management," then select "Case Operations," enter the case or registration number, and submit. This will bring up the "Case Summary," screen which will show last transaction information. Enter correct closing codes.

41. Q. How is a pay type changed in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Perform Undercare Maintenance," then select the "Budget Payment," tab, select "Payment Type," within "Payment Line," section and change payment type.

42. Q. How are payments generated in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Perform Undercare Maintenance," then select the "Budget Payment," tab scroll to "Payment Lines," click "Add Another," and enter line.

43. Q. How is a budget stored in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Perform Undercare Maintenance," then select "Payment Budget," tab, select "Option Create New Budget," and click "Submit Transaction."

44. Q. How are payments voided in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, click on "Perform Undercare Maintenance," then select the "Budget Payment," tab, scroll to the payment line you wish to void, change "Action Code," to 9, and click "Save."

45. Q. How are cases in error determined in myWorkspace?

A. In myWorkspace, within "Case View" header information (which displays on all tabs), under "Pending Date" status it will show if case is in error status.

46. Q. Are SSDs required to register an application in myWorkspace?

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A. The Application Registration function will operate in the same manner regardless of whether the SSD registers the case in WMS or in myWorkspace. The end result will produce an AppTAD or LDSS-3209 depending on what transaction type is selected.

MYBENEFITS

47. Q. Will combination HEAP/SNAP applications appear together or separately in myBenefits?

A. EARLY OUT REACH - HEAP AND NEW SNAP APPLICATIONS:

- The electronic application consisting of early outreach HEAP and new SNAP will be routed to the “myWorkspace Intake Inbox,” and will be identified as program: FS/HEAP.
- On the “Application Details Page,” the eligibility determination worker is presented with an option to split the application into separate FS and HEAP applications. Upon selecting split one of the following two scenarios will occur:

Scenario 1: Same SSD: the application is submitted to the same SSD where the previous season’s HEAP Benefit was issued /authorized:

- The HEAP application will be routed to the “myWorkspace Undercare Inbox”: HEAP Applications. The filing date for this application will be the date of Program Opening (for the 2013-2014 Season the filing date will be 11/18/2013).
- The Food Stamp application will remain in “myWorkspace Intake Inbox.” The Search Results table will identify as Program: FS and will no longer display the case number/name.

Scenario 2: Different SSD: the application is submitted to a SSD OTHER than where the previous season’s HEAP Benefit was issued /authorized:

- The HEAP application will remain in “myWorkspace Intake Inbox.” The filing date for this application will be the date of Program Opening (for the 2013-2014 Season the filing date will be 11/18/2013). Search Results table will identify as Program: HEAP.
- The Food Stamp application will remain in “myWorkspace Intake Inbox.” The Search Results table will identify as Program: FS.

a. HEAP is open:

OPEN SEASON - HEAP AND NEW SNAP APPLICATION:

- The electronic application consisting of HEAP and new SNAP will be routed to the “myWorkspace Intake Inbox,” and will be identified as program: FS/HEAP.
- On the “Application Details Page” the eligibility determination worker is presented an option to split the application into separate FS and HEAP applications. Upon selecting split one of the following four scenarios will occur:

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Scenario 1: Same SSD: the application is submitted to the same SSD where the previous season's HEAP Benefit was issued /authorized:

- The HEAP application will be routed to the "myWorkspace Undercare Inbox": HEAP Applications. The filing date for this application will be the date the application was submitted.
- The Food Stamp application will remain in "myWorkspace Intake Inbox." The Search Results table will identify as Program: FS and will no longer display the case number/name.

Scenario 2: Different SSD: the application is submitted to a SSD OTHER than where the previous season's HEAP Benefit was issued /authorized:

- The HEAP application will remain in "myWorkspace Intake Inbox." The filing date for this application will be the date the application was submitted. The Search Results table will identify as Program: HEAP.
- The Food Stamp application will remain in "myWorkspace Intake Inbox." The Search Results table will identify as Program: FS.

Scenario 3: Not Known to WMS: If the applicant is not known to WMS

- The HEAP application will remain in "myWorkspace Intake Inbox." The filing date for this application will be the date the application was submitted.
- The Food Stamp application will remain in myWorkspace Intake Inbox. The Search Results table will identify as Program: FS.

Scenario 4: HEAP CASE IS ACTIVE IN WMS WITH NO PAYMENT HISTORY FROM THE PREVIOUS HEAP SEASON:

- The HEAP application will remain in "myWorkspace Intake Inbox." The filing date for this application will be the date the application was submitted. The Search Results table will identify as Program: HEAP.
- The Food Stamp application will remain in "myWorkspace Intake Inbox." The Search Results table will identify as Program: FS.

48. Q. If a HEAP application submitted via myBenefits has wrong information on it would a worker add the correct information in their myWorkspace entries?

A. No. The application would be pended and the applicant would be sent a Documentation Requirements form (LDSS-2642).

49. Q. Will the applicant be able to see in myBenefits if they were approved or denied?

A. Yes. Once the applicant creates an account, they have the ability to view the status of their application in myBenefits.

50. Q. Will Early Outreach applicants be able to apply as "New" or "Returning" users in myBenefits?

A. If the applicant has already created an account in myBenefits, they will be able to apply for HEAP benefits as a "Returning," user. If the applicant has not yet created an account in myBenefits, they will apply for HEAP benefits as a "New," user.

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51. Q. What steps should the SSD take when the myBenefits application is received before the paper HEAP application and the paper application includes all required documentation?

A. If an applicant submits multiple applications for a regular or emergency HEAP benefit the application submitted to the SSD first, regardless of method (electronic or manual), takes precedence. Any subsequent application should be denied.

ALTERNATE CERTIFIER

52. Q. Can electronic applications be assigned by the SSD to alternate certifiers?

A. Yes.

53. Q. What is the role of Alternate Certifiers in myWorkspace?

A. Alternate Certifiers have two roles: Alternate Certifier and Alternate Certifier Supervisor. SSDs must decide how to assign these roles to their Alternate Certifiers. Specifics on the roles can be found on page 3 in "myWorkspace User Roles," in the "HEAP myWorkspace Presentation," tab in the HEAP Regional Training Meeting 2013 Participant Training Manual.

54. Q. Will alternate certifiers be able to register HEAP applications for new applicants in myWorkspace?

A. No. Only SSD staff may register applications.

55. Q. Will contract staff or Alternate Certifier be allowed to deny cases in myBenefits?

A. No. Only SSDs may deny applications.

GENERAL

56. Q. Can SSDs run a COGNOS report for Z13s and use that to mail out applications to individuals/households who received a benefit in 2012-13, but do not have a vulnerable member in the household or will the applicants be required to call and request one?

A. No. SSDs cannot run a COGNOS report. Applicants not part of Early Outreach as identified in 13-LCM-11 must apply for HEAP when the program opens on November 18, 2013.

57. Q. Is there specific training available for customizing COGNOS (e-reports), as well as creating and using them?

A. OTDA is in the process of updating the curriculum for this training. When that process is complete, there will be a training announcement. If an SSD is looking for specific assistance with COGNOS reports, please send an email to otda.sm.cognos.reports so the reports team know who is asking and where they are located.

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58. Q. Can OTDA release HEAP funding prior to November 18, 2013?

A. No. Funds cannot be released until Federal funding is received.

59. Q. Can the SSDs get their administrative funding sooner so that temporary staff can be hired earlier in the season?

A. No. Funds cannot be released until Federal funding is received.

60. Q. Will there be training offered to Alternate Certifiers to assist them with myWorkspace?

A. SSDs must provide support to their Alternate Certifiers. Information will be put up on trainingspace.org in the fall.

61. Q. What is the Vendor Line phone number?

A. 1-866-270-4327