



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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## Local Commissioners Memorandum

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### Section 1

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<b>Transmittal:</b>	20-LCM-11
<b>To:</b>	Social Services District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Date:</b>	November 3, 2020
<b>Subject:</b>	2020-2021 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	HEAP Bureau at: (518) 473-0332 or <a href="mailto:NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov">NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov</a>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment 1 - Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Reference Tool</a> <a href="#">Attachment 2 - Clean and Tune Benefit Reference Tool</a> <a href="#">Attachment 3 - Cooling Assistance Component Reference Tool</a> <a href="#">Attachment 4 - 2020-2021 HEAP Desk Guide – LDSS-5005</a> <a href="#">Attachment 5 - Special Claiming Codes for Prevention and Restoration Chart</a> <a href="#">Attachment 6 - 2020-2021 NYS HEAP Administrative Form Guide</a> <a href="#">Attachment 7 - 2020-2021 HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool – LDSS-5099</a> <a href="#">Attachment 8 - HEAP Questions and Answers</a>

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### Section 2

#### I. Purpose

This Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to provide local social services districts (districts) with information for the administration of all components and benefits of the 2020-2021 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP).

#### II. Background

HEAP is a federally funded energy program intended to provide assistance to low income households, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, primarily to meet their immediate home energy needs. To receive federal funding, states must submit a State Plan to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) each year. New York State's 2020-2021 HEAP State Plan was submitted to HHS and may be found on the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) website at: <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/stateplan.asp>.

### III. Program Implications

#### A. Program Components – Dates of Operation

The components and dates of operation may be adjusted based on the amount and timing of receipt of federal funding. Districts will be notified if components or program dates change. Districts will be notified of each component's closing date via a General Information System (GIS) message.

Client Notices of Eligibility Determination, payments, or guarantees of benefits to HEAP vendors, including ten-day account hold requests to gas and electric utility companies, must not be issued before the opening date of each program component.

##### **Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) Component**

Applications for the 2020-2021 HERR benefit must be accepted beginning October 1, 2020, through close of business (COB) September 30, 2021, or until funding allocated to this component is exhausted; whichever comes first. A detailed component summary may be found in Attachment 1.

##### **Heating Equipment Clean and Tune (C&T)**

Applications for 2020-2021 C&T benefits must be accepted beginning October 1, 2020, through COB September 30, 2021, or until funding allocated to this benefit is exhausted; whichever comes first. A detailed benefit summary may be found in Attachment 2.

##### **Regular Component**

Applications for 2020-2021 Regular heat and heat included in shelter expense benefits must be accepted beginning November 2, 2020, through close of business (COB) March 15, 2021, or until funding allocated to this component is exhausted; whichever comes first. Detailed component information may be found in the NYS [HEAP Manual](#).

Nominal "heat and eat" benefits continue to be available to households in receipt of ongoing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, who reside in specific HEAP eligible shelter types, incur a shelter expense with heat included, and are not otherwise eligible for the Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance (HCSUA). This nominal benefit is provided to households to assist with home energy costs and to enable these households to receive the full HCSUA to maximize their SNAP benefits. Nominal benefits authorized after the close of the 2020-2021 Regular benefit component are an advance of the 2021-2022 HEAP benefit. Please refer to [GIS 18TA/DC012](#) for further direction.

The 2020-2021 HEAP Nominal Benefit began on September 1, 2020.

##### **Emergency Component**

Applications for Emergency heat and domestic heat-related benefits, temporary relocation, and propane tank deposit benefits must be accepted beginning January 4, 2021, through COB March 15, 2021. Detailed component information may be found in the NYS [HEAP Manual](#).

##### **Cooling Assistance Component (CAC)**

Applications for CAC must be accepted beginning May 3, 2021, through COB August 31, 2021, or until funding allocated to this component is exhausted; whichever comes first. A detailed component summary may be found in Attachment 3.

## B. Processing Time Frames

There are no changes to the HEAP application processing timeframes. Applicants must be notified in writing of the eligibility decision, either an approval or denial, within 30 business days from the application date, with the exception of Early Outreach applications. Early Outreach application notices must be issued within 30 business days from program opening. Any pending timeframes, up to ten business days, will not be counted towards the 30-business day requirement. Districts must incorporate their six or thirteen calendar day voucher review process, as outlined in Appendix H of the [Indirect Payment Processing Sub-System Manual](#), into their processing timeframe to ensure clients are provided with timely notice.

Payments for eligible cases included on the HEAP Mass Authorization process (Autopay) exception report, must be authorized in the Welfare Management System (WMS) or myWorkspace no later than December 31, 2020.

## C. Income Guidelines

New York State (NYS) sets the income guidelines to the maximum level allowable under federal statute. Maximum income guidelines are set at 60% of State Median Income (SMI) for households with 1-11 individuals and at 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for households with 12 or more individuals. Income guideline amounts may be found in the 2020-2021 HEAP Desk Guide ([LDSS 5005](#)), Attachment 4.

## D. Application Process

All applicants outside of New York City (NYC) may apply for Regular benefits online through [myBenefits](#). New York City applicants may apply by downloading a HEAP application through [ACCESS NYC](#) and submitting it to the NYC Department of Social Services/Human Resources Administration (NYCDSS/HRA). All new, returning or Early Outreach HEAP applicants, outside NYC, should be encouraged to apply for HEAP through [myBenefits](#). Applicants outside NYC may complete, submit, and track their HEAP application online once they create a secure account. Applicants may also use myBenefits to submit required documentation to districts who use OTDA's Imaging and Enterprise Documentation Repository (I/EDR).

Additionally, applicants who reside in a district that has opted to implement the NYDocSubmit Mobile Application (Mobile Application) may also submit required documentation to the district through the Mobile Application (please see [20-ADM-04](#) for more information regarding the Mobile Application). When the HEAP season is open, households may apply through [myBenefits](#) for both HEAP and SNAP using a single application.

Applicants may not apply online through [myBenefits](#) for HERR, Emergency, C&T or CAC.

Applicants may also apply for Regular benefits by submitting paper applications by mail, fax or in person at a district or alternate certifier. Applicants for Regular benefits who are not returning applicants must have an eligibility interview conducted either in person or by telephone. Please note, as advised in [GIS 20TA/DC015](#) the requirements for in-person interviews for the Regular component are currently suspended. Required interviews may be completed with applicants by telephone. Districts will be notified of any future changes.

A printable HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) will be available on the OTDA website, [otda.ny.gov](#), effective November 2, 2020.

There is no change to the availability of the heaters benefit balance to households that include a renter whose heating cost is included in their rent, and who received a heat-included benefit of \$21, \$40 or \$45. These applicant households with the primary responsibility for the heating bill,

if otherwise eligible, may be issued the balance of the Regular benefit based on their household's heat type, income, and presence of a vulnerable individual. The heater benefit balance must be paid using a Payment Type Code H1 – HEAP Regular Heater Benefit on a Case Type 60. The case must include all household members, including the renter who received a heat-included benefit. A Regular HEAP budget must be stored with a D, X or W in the RECD field to back out the \$21, \$40, or \$45 benefit previously received by the household. Households containing a member who is in receipt of on-going Temporary Assistance (TA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits at the time of application are categorically income eligible.

Denial code H97 was established for use when a household has applied for a HEAP benefit on-line or with a paper HEAP application (LDSS-3421), but has an active, ongoing Temporary Assistance (TA) or SNAP case, upon which an eligible household will have their Regular HEAP benefit issued. Workers should use denial reason code H97 in these instances to inform applicants that their Regular HEAP benefit will be issued on their existing TA or SNAP case. Please refer to [GIS 18TA/DC050](#) for further direction.

Districts must issue heat-included HEAP benefits of \$21, \$40, and \$45, whenever possible, to the recipient's utility account if they pay a vendor directly for domestic electricity.

Applicants may apply for the HERR benefit component by submitting paper applications by mail, fax or in person (or via an authorized representative or individual with a documented power of attorney) at the district or alternate certifier. An in-person interview is required. Please note, as advised in [GIS 20TA/DC015](#) the requirements for in-person interviews and applications for the Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) component have been temporarily suspended. Required interviews may be completed with applicants by telephone. Districts will be notified of any future changes.

Applicants may apply for the Emergency benefit component by telephone or in person at the district or alternate certifier. A telephone or an in-person interview is required. Please note, as advised in [GIS 20TA/DC015](#) required interviews may be completed with applicants by telephone. Districts will be notified of any future changes.

Applicants for C&T and CAC should contact the district office in their county of residence for information and applications. Applicants for C&T and CAC who have not received a current program year Regular component benefit must have an eligibility interview conducted either in person or on the telephone. Please note, as advised in [GIS 20TA/DC015](#) required interviews may be completed with applicants by telephone. Districts will be notified of any future changes.

Districts must make reasonable accommodations for homebound applicants to apply for any HEAP benefit. This may include home visits. An authorized representative or individual with documented power of attorney may also be used to apply for all HEAP benefits. Please note, as advised in [GIS 20TA/DC015](#) required interviews may be completed with applicants by telephone. Districts will be notified of any future changes.

If applicants submit multiple applications for a HEAP benefit, the application submitted to the district first, regardless of method (electronic or paper), takes precedence. Subsequent applications must be acted on and an appropriate timely notice must be issued. Electronic or paper applications for HEAP may only be withdrawn with the applicant's written consent.

## E. Mass Authorization (Autopay) Process for TA and SNAP Recipients

The Autopay process is utilized as a tool to maximize outreach and limit administrative costs while maximizing HEAP accessibility and targeting the highest level of assistance to the lowest income households.

TA and SNAP recipients who are in receipt of ongoing benefits are categorically income eligible for Regular HEAP benefits but must also meet all other eligibility criteria for a Regular benefit. These recipients consent to have their eligibility determined for HEAP through the Autopay process when they complete, sign and submit the New York State Application for Certain Benefits and Services ([LDSS-2921](#)), New York State Recertification Form for Certain Benefits and Services ([LDSS-3174](#)), SNAP Application/Recertification ([LDSS-4826](#)), or who apply for SNAP or recertify for SNAP or TA using [myBenefits](#). The consent language is found in the Consent Section of each application.

TA and SNAP recipients in receipt of ongoing TA or SNAP benefits, who are categorically income eligible and meet all other eligibility criteria, at the time of the Autopay file creation or “pull down” are not required to complete a separate HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)).

OTDA uses the TA and SNAP eligibility information found in WMS at the time of the Autopay file creation to determine the household’s income eligibility for HEAP, as well as other eligibility criteria, including living arrangement and vendor relationship. If all HEAP eligibility factors can be collected from WMS, a Regular benefit eligibility determination is made, and a payment is electronically authorized, as appropriate, to either the vendor or the household.

Cases with payments authorized as part of the Autopay will appear on a HEAP Mass Authorization Report which can be found in Production Hosting Reports & Enterprise Document (PHRED).

Please note that district workers must be granted access to these reports by their LAN administrators in order to view them on PHRED.

Autopay Report IDs in PHRED		
	TA	SNAP
<b>2020-2021 HEAP Mass Authorization Report</b>	WINR0650-HEAP	WINR0650-HEAP
<b>2020-2021 HEAP Mass Authorization Exception Report</b>	WINR0630-HEAP	WINR0630-HEAP

After the Autopay file is created, exception reports will be in PHRED with cases that are still missing data items and could not be included on the Autopay. If you are able to obtain the missing information prior to December 31st, you can issue a Regular benefit without a separate HEAP application.

For the 2020-2021 program year, households that were due a Tier 1 heat-included benefit were subject to a system-generated correction after the initial autopay was run. A list of cases that were adjusted during this process are available in PHRED. Please see [GIS 20TA/WMS039 Correction of Heat Included Benefit on HEAP Mass Authorization](#) for more information.

HEAP Autopay Correction Reports IDs in PHRED	
2020-2021 HEAP Mass Authorization Hx & H9 Modification - Eligible Report	WINR0981
2020-2021 HEAP Mass Authorization Hx & H9 Modification -Exception Report	WINR0982

Individuals who become ongoing recipients of TA or SNAP after the Autopay file creation will not be included in the Autopay process. These individuals may apply for HEAP by submitting a HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) on or after November 2, 2020. Depending on funding availability, OTDA plans to conduct an additional Autopay in March 2021. Individuals who become ongoing recipients of TA or SNAP after the September Autopay file creation and do not apply for HEAP after November 2, 2020 will be included in the March 2021 Autopay.

Any individual who receives a Regular benefit via the Autopay must not be issued a duplicate Regular benefit. Districts must complete WMS inquiry on all applications for all household members, for every component, to ensure a duplicate benefit is not issued.

Regular benefit recipients may apply for a HEAP supplemental Regular benefit if they received a heat-included benefit, but subsequently move within the program year and are then responsible for the heating bill. These recipients may apply for a supplemental Regular benefit online through [myBenefits](#) or by submitting a paper HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) by mail, fax or in person at a district or alternate certifier. Additional information on this process was provided to districts in the August 13, 2020 [HEAP 2020-21 Systems Letter](#) which outlines the WMS systems implications for the 2020-2021 program.

## F. Regular and Emergency Benefit Amounts

For the 2020-2021 program, the Regular Benefit add-on for households with a vulnerable member and the add-on for Tier 1 households were increased to \$35 and \$31 respectively. The Heat included benefits were increased to \$45 for Tier 1 households and \$40 for Tier 2 households. All other benefit amounts will remain at the same levels as in 2019-2020. The Regular benefit amount is calculated based on primary fuel type, income tier and the presence of a vulnerable household member, defined by HEAP as, a child under age 6, an individual age 60 or older, or an individual in receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

The Emergency benefit amount is based on the type of emergency. See the 2020-2021 HEAP Desk Guide ([LDSS-5005](#)), Attachment 4, for benefit amounts. This guide may also be ordered on card stock through the warehouse using the process outlined in Section I.

## G. Definition of Emergency Types

A HEAP eligible household is considered to be in a life-threatening emergency when the household is without heat. A household without heat has no heating fuel, or utility service has been disconnected. Any HEAP eligible household's life-threatening emergency must be resolved within 18 hours from the time the household applies for an Emergency benefit.

A HEAP eligible household is considered to be in a crisis emergency when the loss of heat is imminent. A household with imminent loss of heat has less than ¼ tank of oil, kerosene, or propane, less than a ten-day supply of other deliverable fuels, or utility service is scheduled for disconnection. Any HEAP eligible household's crisis emergency must be resolved within 48 hours from the time the household applies for an Emergency benefit.

Emergency resolution may include an action other than the issuance of a benefit, such as temporary relocation, safe supplemental heat, or referral to TA or other community programs, if ineligible for HEAP or if HEAP eligibility has not been determined.

The application date for applicants eligible for income deeming is the date the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet ([LDSS-3594B](#)) is completed by the district eligibility examiner with assistance from the applicant, either over the telephone or in person. The application date for applicants ineligible for income deeming is the date the signed and dated HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) is submitted to the district. The HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) must be accompanied by a completed Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet ([LDSS-3594B](#)).

## H. Emergency Special Claiming Code G

A Special Claiming Code must be entered for all HEAP payments on Screen Six of WMS. Previously, Code H was used for all HEAP payments. In order to distinguish whether a HEAP payment is used to prevent loss of heat to the household, or whether a HEAP payment will restore heat to the household, the new Special Claiming Code G was developed for use beginning in the 2019-2020 HEAP Season.

All HEAP payments, including those for Early Outreach, must use one of the appropriate Special Claiming Codes as follows:

- Special Claiming Code H – “Home Energy Assistance Program” is required for all HEAP prevention payments
- Special Claiming Code G – “HEAP Restoration” is required for HEAP restoration payments

See the Special Claiming Codes for Prevention & Restoration Chart, Attachment 5, for a detailed summary of when to use Claiming Code G or H. Additional information on this process was provided to districts in the August 13, 2020 [HEAP 2020-2021 Systems Letter](#).

## I. Forms

Seven forms used to administer HEAP were revised for the 2020-2021 program year. All forms, including those with a revision date of 2020, were made available for ordering on September 7, 2020. These forms, along with any forms that were not revised, must be used for the 2020-2021 program year. All old versions of revised forms must be discarded at both the district and alternate certifier. The HEAP Administrative Forms Guide, Attachment 6, is a table that identifies revised forms, and whether the form is mandatory or optional.

The updated 2020-2021 HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool ([LDSS-5099](#)), can be found in Attachment 7. This guide is also available for download on [LDSS E-Forms](#) and printed copies may be ordered on card stock through the warehouse.

All forms should be ordered by the districts as needed. All forms are available for electronic downloading and printing from [LDSS E-Forms](#), through CentraPort.

### How to order forms:

1. All forms with an LDSS or PUB number are produced by OTDA and can be ordered. When ordering or reordering any HEAP form, be sure to order sufficient quantities for the entire HEAP season. Districts must also take into consideration the form supply needs of alternate certifiers when placing orders. Please check the current supply at the district prior to placing an order.

2. In addition to English, these forms are also available on the OTDA Intranet website in the following languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Russian and Spanish. To access the English and other than English languages forms, go to the OTDA Intranet website at: [http://otda.state.ny.net/ldss\\_eforms/default.htm](http://otda.state.ny.net/ldss_eforms/default.htm).
3. HEAP forms are available on the OTDA Intranet website at [LDSS E-Forms](#) and may be available for downloading by districts for reproduction locally, depending on print specifications.
4. Requests for printed copies of HEAP forms should be submitted to OTDA using either the OTDA 876EL (DOC) or OTDA 876 EL (PDF) available at the link above and either mail, fax or e-mail it to:

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
Bureau of Management Services (BMS) Document Services and Operational Support  
PO Box 1990  
Albany, NY 12201  
E-mail: [forms.orders@otda.ny.gov](mailto:forms.orders@otda.ny.gov)  
District online forms ordering system: <http://formorders/>  
Fax: (518) 402-0084

Questions concerning ordering forms should be directed to BMS Document Services at: (518) 474-9522.

#### **How to request a Local Equivalent Form:**

1. To make changes to a mandated LDSS form, districts MUST submit to the BMS a written request on county letterhead with a modified version of the form attached, prior to program opening. The request must include the reason for the change and a contact person. The district must receive written approval from the OTDA BMS prior to using the local equivalent form.
2. Local equivalent forms are forms developed by districts which are designed to be used in place of State-mandated forms. Local equivalent forms must contain all the information required on the State-mandated forms but may also contain additional information required for the district's own purposes. Local equivalents may differ in format as well as media from the mandated forms. Districts develop local equivalent forms for many reasons, including producing forms to accommodate sight-impaired workers; producing different sized forms which better fit in district case folders; producing forms which have the district address preprinted; and producing electronic forms to be used in place of hard copy forms. The goal of the local equivalent form approval process is to guarantee that districts are using forms which are legally, programmatically and systematically accurate and up to date.
3. All prior year approved waiver requests remain valid unless OTDA revises a form for which a district has an approved waiver, or the district would like to make additional revisions to a form which has an approved waiver.
4. Districts interested in this procedure should consult [16-ADM-03](#) for guidance.
5. Districts are encouraged to work with the HEAP Bureau prior to submitting their official request for approval of a local equivalent form to ensure forms contain all required elements.



## J. Case Supervisory Review Process

In accordance with [12-LCM-12](#), districts are required to complete a supervisory review and approval on 100% of HEAP applications, unless the district has a Case Supervisory Review (CSR) plan approved by OTDA. The CSR process permits district supervisors to review and approve a targeted or random sampling of HEAP cases.

Each district that chooses to review their cases with an approved CSR plan may implement a plan specific to their district to ensure that cases are processed properly and that corrective action measures are instituted. To maintain accuracy standards, cases chosen for review must receive a thorough review by a supervisor. The case review must be based upon all current information pertaining to eligibility and benefit levels, and the supervisor's approval must be indicated by including the supervisor's dated signature in the case record as required.

Districts that elect to perform a targeted or random sample review should provide increased staff training, when appropriate, to address those areas that are identified through the supervisory review approval process as needing improvement.

All applications from known relatives of any district employee require two levels of review. Written district guidelines that provide for stricter protocol take precedence over this OTDA requirement.

CSR plans must be submitted to and approved by OTDA. The plan must include the following:

1. A description of which cases will be subject to supervisory review and approval. Districts must identify areas or types of cases that should be targeted for 100% review. For example:
  - a. Error prone areas (e.g. earned income cases),
  - b. New applications, new workers cases, or
  - c. Emergency application cases from an alternate certifier.
2. The minimum number of cases each supervisor will be required to review per worker, per week/month.
3. A description of how case processing errors will be addressed to assure accuracy.
4. A description of how the plan will address alternate certifiers. Alternate certifiers must not perform final review or approve HEAP cases.

### CSR Plan Submission

Plans must be submitted to:

HEAP Bureau  
Employment and Income Support Programs  
Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
40 North Pearl Street, 11-B  
Albany, NY 12243

Upon the submission of a CSR plan, OTDA will review each district's plan and approve the plan in whole or in part within 60 days of the date of submission by the district. The time frame may be extended with the agreement of both parties. If any or all components of the plan are not approved, OTDA will specify the reason(s) for the disapproval and will specify the steps, if any, the district must take to rectify the plan. Once a plan is approved by OTDA, a district does not need to submit another plan unless the district revises the originally approved plan. Districts that

currently have a CSR plan approved by OTDA for HEAP do not need to re-submit a plan unless revisions are made to the originally approved plan.

All applications for HERR benefits require two levels of review and a CSR process cannot be used for this component.

It is recommended that the district designated HEAP Coordinator perform the review and sign-off on all HERR benefit applications, unless the HEAP Coordinator has determined eligibility. In that case, a supervisor one level up must sign off.

#### **K. Required Signatures on Authorization**

Districts are required to conduct 100% supervisory review and approval of the authorization document for HEAP unless the district has a CSR plan approved by OTDA. Generally, districts use the Non-Services Authorization Document (LDSS-3209) to authorize assistance; however, a district may request a waiver to use a different process to authorize assistance (for further information see [05-LCM-09](#)). An alternative method of authorization must be approved by OTDA. The LDSS-3209 is signed by the worker who prepared the authorization and the supervisor who approved it. Once both signatures are obtained, the LDSS-3209 becomes the official authorization. The exception for this procedure would be for districts operating under an approved waiver from OTDA Budget, Finance and Data Management.

#### **L. Pending Report Information**

Districts are required to complete and submit HEAP Pending Reports for all applications (Regular, Emergency, HERR, CAC, and C&T) that have been received but do not have an approval or denial transaction through WMS or myWorkspace. Districts must report any pending applications for the 2020-2021 program through [eReports](#) and continue to report the number of pending cases for each program component year-round, on a weekly basis.

Districts with no pending cases for a specific component, must enter "0" in that field. Districts must designate at least one individual to report the number of pending applications weekly to OTDA, and it is recommended that districts designate at least one alternate user. If a district has any changes in their pending report designee, please provide the HEAP Bureau with the following information for the person or persons that you would like to have access to eReports: (a) name; (b) user ID; (c) email address; and (d) phone number. This information can be e-mailed to Emily Urban at: [Emily.Urban@otda.ny.gov](mailto:Emily.Urban@otda.ny.gov) and Anna Vitolins at: [Anna.Vitolins@otda.ny.gov](mailto:Anna.Vitolins@otda.ny.gov).

If you have questions, please call your HEAP Bureau liaison at: (518) 473-0332.

#### **M. HEAP Participating Vendor List**

The database for participating HEAP vendors is available through [Centraport](#). Each district has a unique password for the HEAP [Participating Vendor List](#). These passwords will remain unchanged, unless a district requests a new password. Districts must contact their OTDA HEAP Bureau liaison if the current password is unknown or if a new password is required.

Districts must check the vendor list when processing applications to ensure that only participating vendors in their county are issued benefits.

## N. Notice Production

Use of the Client Notice System (CNS) is required for client notices. Manual notices must only be used when CNS does not support the action taken. Proper use of CNS ensures accuracy and further supports consistency of program implementation across the State.

Approval notices will be produced through CNS when the payment file is sent to the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) or when the district sets the HEAP Benefit Issuance Control System (BICS) locks to “U” for Unlocked to produce Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) payments and locally issued two party checks.

Districts may process denial transactions beginning November 2, 2020.

## O. Subscription to Policy Directives

District staff, as appropriate, should subscribe to receive Administrative Directives (ADM); Information letters (INF); Local Commissioner Memorandums (LCM); and, General Information Systems (GIS) messages via e-mail.

Use the following link to subscribe to OTDA policy directives (ADM, LCM, INF):  
<http://otda.state.nyenet/directives/listserve.asp>.

Use the following link to subscribe to Employment and Income Support Program (EISP) mailing lists (GIS messages): <http://otda.state.nyenet/dta/resources/subscribe.asp>.

Please see the Dear WMS-CNS Coordinators letter dated June 26, 2018 for more information.

## P. Systems

Detailed information regarding the current WMS implications for the 2020–2021 HEAP season may be found in the [HEAP 2020-2021 Systems Letter](#).

It is strongly suggested that districts outside of New York City use myWorkspace as the primary computer application to complete eligibility processing for Regular applications submitted through myBenefits.

System access for district employees, including granting entitlements to myWorkspace and the resetting of passwords, is performed at the district level by a district Local Area Network (LAN) Administrator. The LAN Administrator or Systems Administrator is responsible for granting entitlements and setting up Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) accounts to all users including alternate certifiers. Instructions for LAN Administrators may be found in [GIS 17TA/myB006](#) *Providing Remote Access to myWorkspace for Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Alternate Certifiers (AC)*.

For assistance with problems establishing remote connections through a Secure Sockets Layer Virtual Private Network (SSLVPN), district staff must contact the NYS Information Technology Services (ITS) Service Desk at: 1-800-697-1323 and open an ITSM ticket specifically for “SSLVPN Support”. Please discuss any problems with your district’s LAN or Systems Administrator in accordance with district procedures before contacting the ITS Service Desk.

### 1. Alternate Certifier(s) Access to myWorkspace

The Alternate Certifier(s) role and responsibilities have not changed from previous years.  
**The alternate certifier(s) cannot determine final HEAP eligibility, complete final HEAP authorizations in myWorkspace or resolve energy emergencies by guaranteeing**

**payment to energy vendors.** The ‘Remote Access End User Guide’ can be accessed from the myWorkspace ‘Resources’ link on CentraPort (HEAP Information):  
[https://otda.state.nyenet/dta/myWorkspace/myWS\\_switchboard.html](https://otda.state.nyenet/dta/myWorkspace/myWS_switchboard.html).

The district identifies the Alternate Certifier role(s) that works best for their operations and is responsible to communicate the roles and responsibilities to the alternate certifier(s). Districts may grant one of two levels of entitlements in myWorkspace; either an alternate certifier worker or an alternate certifier supervisor. A listing of the alternate certifier worker and supervisor functionality in myWorkspace can be accessed from the myWorkspace “Resources” link on CentraPort (HEAP information) at:  
<https://otda.state.nyenet/dta/resources/myWorkspace/myW-HEAPUserRoles.pdf>.

Alternate certifier staff experiencing problems accessing myWorkspace and/or having HEAP policy questions must contact and work with the district HEAP Coordinator to resolve any issues.

## 2. myWorkspace Problem Solving

District HEAP Coordinators experiencing problems accessing myWorkspace must contact their LAN or Systems Administrator.

District staff must use the “**Contact Us**” button in myWorkspace (located on the myWorkspace Homepage – External links) to report problems with myWorkspace. When reporting problems using the “**Contact Us**” functionality, districts should include as much information as possible, including at a minimum the registry/case number, and any error number and message received.

District staff may access information regarding myWorkspace from the myWorkspace “Resources” link on CentraPort:  
[https://otda.state.nyenet/dta/myWorkspace/myWS\\_switchboard.html](https://otda.state.nyenet/dta/myWorkspace/myWS_switchboard.html).

Alternate certifier staff experiencing problems accessing myWorkspace, with myWorkspace, and/or having HEAP policy questions must contact their district’s HEAP Coordinator.

## 3. HEAP Mass Closing

The HEAP Mass Closing (“HEAP Auto Close”) of 2018-2019 upstate HEAP cases (Case Type 60) which have had no activity since 09/30/2019 began on **October 12, 2020** and was completed on **October 16, 2020**. A report of successfully closed cases will be generated and will be available for viewing in the Cognos HEAP Reports folder. The reports can be viewed by selecting the following folder sequence in Cognos: [Team Content](#) > Global Reports > OTDA > HEAP Reports > Annual Reports > HEAP Auto Close Reports > Auto Close FFY2020.

## Q. OSC Vouchers

Detailed information regarding the authorization of HEAP payments through BICS; including using EBT and the OSC Statewide Financial System (SFS) payment process is available in the [Indirect Payment Processing Sub-System Manual](#).

Initial production of the 2020-2021 HEAP vouchers for vendor direct payments will remain in issued status until they are transferred to the NYS OSC for payment once federal funding is in place.

Districts will receive future guidance when the initial 2020-2021 vouchers for HEAP OSC vendor payments authorized outside of the Autopay will be available.

Districts will receive future guidance when the TA and SNAP Autopay vouchers are available.

### **Voucher Review Period**

During the review period, there are only two actions that districts may perform on a HEAP OSC voucher that is in OSC-Issued status: correcting the customer account number and voiding the voucher.

Please note that each payment line has a unique voucher number and districts are able to void HEAP OSC vouchers using Accounts Menu, Selection 4 – Void a Voucher.

Districts must not adjust payment lines to \$0.00 on OSC vouchers.

### **R. Fair Hearings**

Applicants for and recipients of HEAP benefits may seek review of their eligibility determination at an administrative fair hearing in accordance with the requirements of, and within the time limits specified in, 18 NYCRR Part 358 and 18 NYCRR §393.5.

### **S. Funding Allocations**

All districts receive administrative funds to support HEAP's administration. Additionally, districts receive program allocations for locally issued payments.

Districts will receive administrative and program allocations for program administration and locally issued HEAP payments under separate cover, once federal LIHEAP funding is released to the State from HHS.

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## **Issued By:**

**Name:** Jeffrey Gaskell

**Title:** Deputy Commissioner

**Division/Office:** Employment and Income Support Programs/Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance