

# Home Energy Assistance Program Clean and Tune Benefit

## Benefit Component

The Heating Equipment Clean and Tune (C&T) benefit is available to assist Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) eligible homeowners with the cost of cleaning primary heating equipment. This may also include chimney cleaning, minor repairs, and installation of carbon monoxide detectors or programmable thermostats, if needed, to allow for the safe, proper and efficient operation of the heating equipment.

## Application Requirements

Applicant households that received a Regular HEAP benefit greater than \$50 during the current program year or are currently in receipt of Temporary Assistance (TA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, **AND** who have not moved since receiving a current program year Regular HEAP benefit, may apply by completing, signing, dating and submitting to the local social services district (district) the Home Energy Assistance Program Heating Equipment C&T Request for Benefit ([LDSS- 5081](#)).

Applicant households for which the preceding does not apply must complete both the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) **and** the Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)). Districts must check the box “Clean and Tune” in the agency use section on page one of the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) upon receipt.

- Applicants who do not have an open and active HEAP, Temporary Assistance (TA), or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) case must have their benefit issued on a case type 60.
- Each HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) and/or HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) must be date-stamped upon receipt.
- An authorized representative or individual with Power of Attorney may request this benefit on behalf of the applicant. The applicant must designate an Authorized Representative using page four of the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)), or with a dated and signed statement from the applicant authorizing the individual to request a C&T benefit on their behalf.
- Applicants requesting a C&T benefit who received a Regular HEAP benefit greater than \$50 during the current program year are not required to be interviewed. All other applicants must have an interview. Interviews may be completed by phone or in person .
- Applicants requesting assistance for the C&T benefit cannot apply online through myBenefits.
- Districts outside New York City may process requests for benefits in [myWorkspace](#).

- Any applicant who is denied a C&T benefit may reapply.

## Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all basic HEAP eligibility criteria to be eligible for the HEAP C&T benefit. See the [HEAP Manual](#), Chapter 8 – Basic Eligibility for specific eligibility criteria.

In addition to basic eligibility, all applicants for Heating Equipment C&T must meet the following criteria:

- The applicant must be the homeowner. An applicant attestation to homeownership may be accepted. Districts must request documentation whenever there is reason to question the statement of homeownership.
- The applicant for C&T must have been the homeowner of the property for the 12 months prior to the month of application.
- The applicant must have resided in the dwelling for the 12 months prior to the month of application.
- The dwelling must be the applicant's primary residence. Roadworthy trailers or mobile homes registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles are not considered permanent primary residences.
- The applicant's dwelling must be in compliance with local building and safety codes, must not be in condemned status, and must be safe and structurally sound. The dwelling must not be considered unsafe and/or unfit for habitation.
- The applicant must not have a signed sales contract to sell the dwelling for which they are applying for assistance.
- Eligibility for applicants whose dwelling is in the process of foreclosure or for sale on the open market must be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine when and if the premises will be vacated by the applicant.
- The primary heating equipment must be older than 12 months prior to the month of application.
- The applicant's primary heating equipment must not have been cleaned and tuned within the past 12 months prior to the month of application.
- In cases where the primary heat source is wood or wood products, the chimney must not have been cleaned within the past 12 months prior to the month of application.
- Applicants with service contracts that include C&T services are not eligible.

Applicants that received a current program year Regular HEAP benefit in an amount of \$50 or less are not eligible for the C&T benefit. However, such applicants who move into an eligible living situation may apply for this component using both the HEAP Heating System Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) and the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)).

## Documentation

Applicants must meet all HEAP documentation requirements to be eligible for the Heating Equipment C&T benefit.

- Applicants who request a benefit using both the HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) and the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) must provide documentation of residence, identity for each household member, documentation of household income and a valid Social Security Number for each household member.
- Districts must use any permanent documentation available in the applicant's case record or within the agency, if applicable.
- Applicants whose request for the C&T benefit is pended to provide required documentation must be provided the Documentation Requirements form ([LDSS-2642](#)). A copy must be retained in the case record.

## Scope of Benefits and Specifications

The C&T benefit application period will open on October 1, 2021, and benefits will be provided on a first come, first served basis to eligible applicants through September 30, 2022, or until all funding allocated to this component is exhausted, whichever comes first. If an applicant is found eligible for the C&T benefit, the following guidelines must be followed:

- **Prior to beginning any C&T work, the vendor must determine that the heating equipment is operable and safe to operate.**
- **Vendors must not complete a C&T service if it is determined that the heating equipment is inoperable or unsafe to operate.**
- **Vendors must refer customers to the district if at any point during the C&T service it is determined that the heating equipment is inoperable or unsafe to operate.**
- Benefits must not exceed \$400 per applicant.
- Only one C&T benefit will be provided per eligible applicant every 12 months (as determined by the month of application).
- The C&T service must only be performed on the primary heating equipment.
- Vendors must charge the same rate for services performed for households not in receipt of HEAP.
- If any repairs are necessary to ensure the proper and safe operation of the heating equipment, vendors must obtain approval from the district prior to completing this work. **Approved repairs in combination with the C&T service must not exceed \$400.**

- The cost of work performed by the vendor for C&T services and the cost of related parts and repairs performed under HEAP are not subject to New York State sales tax.
- Vendors must provide services directly and may not contract out any portion of the work.
- A carbon monoxide detector must be installed if one is not present in the dwelling, or if the current carbon monoxide detector in the dwelling is over five years old.
- A programmable thermostat may be installed, with client consent, if one is not already present in the dwelling.

## Referrals and Temporary Assistance

Individuals referred to the district due to inoperable or unsafe heating equipment should be directed to apply to have their heating equipment repaired or replaced through the Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) component, if that component is open.

Individuals whose heating equipment repair or replacement needs cannot be met through the C&T Program, HERR, or who have been found ineligible through HEAP may, if they apply and are found eligible, have their needs met under Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Emergency Assistance to Families (EAF), Emergency Safety Net Assistance (ESNA), or Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA). Department Regulations 18 NYCRR 352.4(d), 352.6(e), 352.7(b), 372.4(b) and 397.5(h) provide districts the ability to meet the costs necessary for the repair or replacement of essential heating equipment if the repair or replacement is essential to the health and safety of the household. For more information, see the [Temporary Assistance Sourcebook, chapter 16, section C, Equipment Repairs](#).

In accordance with 18 NYCRR 352.23, using and pursuing available resources is a condition of TA eligibility.

## Processing Timeframes and Client Notification

The district must determine an applicant's eligibility for the C&T within 30 business days of receipt of the completed Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) and/or HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)). Requests for Heating Equipment C&T benefits may be pended for missing or additional documentation for up to 10 business days if necessary. Any pending timeframes, up to ten business days, will not be counted towards the 30-business day requirement. If the applicant fails to provide the requested documentation by the due date, the benefit request must be denied.

Applicants must be provided an appropriate notice of the eligibility decision made on the request for the C&T benefit no later than 30 business days from the date of receipt of the final vendor invoice for payment. A copy of all notices must be retained in the case record for 6 years, including the current program year.

If the vendor does not use customer account numbers, districts must use the client's case number or the vendor's invoice number. Welfare Management System (WMS) Screen 6 VND/ACCT field (Vendor ID field on the 3209) must be utilized for all C&T benefits.

Manual notices must be used for the approval and denial of C&T benefits when CNS is not available. Districts must provide recipients with a completed Home Energy Assistance Program Notice of Eligibility Decision – Approval ([LDSS-3494A](#)) or completed Home Energy Assistance Program Notice of Eligibility Decision – Denial ([LDSS-3494B](#)) when using a manual notice for the C&T benefit.

All manual C&T denials that are not processed through WMS or myWorkspace must be reported on the HEAP Denied Applicant Report under C&T.

## Vendor Participation

All HEAP C&T service vendors must have a signed HEAP Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Vendor Agreement on file with the OTDA HEAP Bureau. In addition, the vendor must have indicated that they will participate in providing C&T services. If a vendor does not currently have this option selected on their Vendor Agreement or would like to initiate participation, the vendor may contact the HEAP Bureau at: (518) 473-0332 or 1-866-270-HEAP (4327).

Each district can find a list of all its participating C&T vendors in the HEAP Participating Vendor listing found in [Centraport](#). This list is updated daily and must be provided to applicants who need to choose a vendor. Districts must confirm vendor participation using this list prior to authorizing a benefit.

## Heating Equipment C&T Service Scheduling

Participating C&T vendors are responsible for contacting an eligible applicant to schedule services. If a vendor cannot schedule a C&T service with the applicant within 10 business days of the referral, the vendor must notify the district. The district must then send the applicant a copy of the Documentation Requirements form ([LDSS-2642](#)) with the “Other” box checked and the following language, “(vendor name) tried to contact you regarding the HEAP Heating Equipment C&T, but was unsuccessful. Please contact us by (date) to resolve this”. If the applicant does not contact the district within the 10-business day pending period to arrange for a C&T of the primary heating equipment, then a HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Notice of Eligibility Decision ([LDSS-5082](#)) must be sent. The box for “you failed to provide the following information,” is checked and the following language inserted “you failed to make arrangements for clean and tune services of your heating equipment by the due date of (date)”.

## HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice

The HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice ([LDSS-5083](#)) is used by both the district and by the vendor.

Districts use this form to notify a vendor that an individual is approved for services. Once an applicant is approved, the district must provide the vendor with the eligible applicant’s name, address and contact information using the Customer Contact Section of the HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice ([LDSS-5083](#)).

Districts may use the HEAP Guarantee of Payment Letter ([LDSS-5000](#)) to notify a vendor that an individual is approved for C&T services, and to communicate customer and district information to the vendor.

To receive payment, vendors must return the completed HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice ([LDSS-5083](#)) to the district, with the applicant's signature. The following sections of the invoice must be completed prior to returning to the district:

- Services Provided Checklist
  - The vendor must answer each question to identify services performed.
- Customer Section
  - This section is to be completed by the applicant to attest that services have been completed.
- Vendor Use Section
  - The vendor must indicate the total amount for the C&T services, including parts, cost, and labor. NYS sales tax may not be charged on the total cost of work completed.
  - This section must be signed and dated by the technician.

Vendors must perform the C&T services according to the specified industry standards and as outlined in the HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice ([LDSS-5083](#)).

Once the vendor returns the completed HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice ([LDSS-5083](#)), the district must complete the Agency Use Section on page 2 of this form.

Districts must contact the recipient to confirm the satisfactory completion of the C&T services, including minor repairs, the installation of carbon monoxide detectors and thermostats, if applicable, operation of the heating unit, and the condition of the dwelling upon job completion prior to authorizing payment for C&T benefits.

## B. Payment and Authorizations

Districts must not authorize any C&T payments to vendors for applications received when the C&T program is closed.

Vendors must submit a completed HEAP Heating Equipment C&T Services Invoice ([LDSS-5083](#)) to the district in order for a payment to be authorized. Payments to vendors must not exceed \$400 per benefit.

All HEAP Heating Equipment C&T payments are authorized by the districts through WMS or myWorkspace using **payment type J3**. These payments must be issued on a case type 60 (HEAP only) or an appropriate TA or SNAP case type. This pay type does not require the payment amount to match the benefit amount on the stored ABEL budget. The ABEL budget must have an Emergency Benefit Type G – Furnace Repair.

Special Claiming Code H – “HEAP Prevention” is required on screen 6 of WMS for all C&T payments.