

## HEAP Clean and Tune Benefit Reference Tool

### A. 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, installation of carbon monoxide (CO) detectors or programmable thermostats, if needed, to allow for the safe, proper, and efficient operation of the heating equipment.

### B. Application Requirements

Applicant households that received a Regular HEAP benefit greater than \$50 during the current program year or are currently in receipt of ongoing 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 the Home Energy Assistance Program Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) with their local social services district (district).

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, TA, or SNAP case must have their benefit issued on a case type 60.
- Each HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) and/or HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) must be date-stamped upon receipt.
- An authorized representative or individual with Power of Attorney (POA) 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 have an interview. All other applicants must have an interview. Interviews may be completed either over the 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](#) accessed through Centraport under applications.
- Any applicant who is denied a C&T benefit may reapply.

Effective for the 2022-2023 program year, the Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) no longer requires an applicant signature. This will allow the application to be completed by the eligibility examiner over the phone with the applicant if only the [LDSS-5081](#) is required.

### C. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all basic HEAP eligibility criteria to be eligible for the HEAP C&T benefit.

In addition to basic eligibility, all applicants for Heating Equipment C&T must meet the following criteria, as found in Chapter 15 of the [HEAP Manual](#):

- 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 Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) and the HEAP Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)).

See the [HEAP Manual](#), Chapter 8 – Basic Eligibility

See the [HEAP Manual](#), Chapter 15 – Clean and Tune Benefit Eligibility Criteria

### D. Documentation

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

- Applicants who apply using both the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) and the HEAP

Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)) must provide documentation of residence, identity for each household member, documentation of household income, and a valid Social Security Number for each household member that has a valid Social Security Number.

- Districts must use any permanent documentation available in the applicant's case record or within the agency, if applicable.
- Applicants whose request for C&T benefit is pending to provide required documentation must be provided the Documentation Requirements ([LDSS-2642](#)). A copy must be retained in the case record.

#### E. Scope of Benefits and Specifications

C&T benefits are provided on a first come, first served basis to eligible applicants. 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.
- If it is determined that the heating equipment is inoperable or unsafe to operate, the vendor must not complete a C&T service.
- 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 \$500 per applicant.
- Only one C&T benefit will be provided per eligible homeowner 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 \$500.**
- 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. Local County Sales Tax may be collected if applicable.
- Vendors must provide services directly and may not contract out any portion of the work.
- All clean and tune jobs must include the installation, per manufacturer's specifications, of at least one CO detector when one is not present, not working, or the current CO detector in the dwelling is five years past the date of manufacture printed on the CO detector.
- A programmable thermostat may be installed, with client consent, if one is not present in the dwelling.

## F. 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 HEAP HERR, or who have been found ineligible for 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, Additional/Special Needs, Section C, Equipment Repairs.

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

## G. 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 HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) and/or Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit ([LDSS-5081](#)). Requests for Heating Equipment C&T benefits may be pended for missing or additional documentation for up to 10 business days if necessary. If the applicant fails to provide the requested documentation by the due date, the benefit request must be denied. The HEAP Denial Code HEAP Clean and Tune Denial (M14) must be used for Clean and Tune denials.

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, plus 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 C&T denials that are denied using denial code Y99 – Manual Notice must be reported on the HEAP Denied Applicant Report under C&T.

## H. 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 C&T services by selecting the option for

Clean and Tune 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.

#### **I. Heating Equipment Clean and Tune 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 ([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 the application must be denied using HEAP Clean and Tune Denial (M14). Workers should utilize the “other” selection and cite “you failed to make arrangements for clean and tune services of your heating equipment by the due date of (date)”.

#### **J. HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Services Invoice**

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

Districts use this form to notify a vendor that an individual is approved for clean and tune 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 3 of this form.

Districts must contact the recipient to confirm the satisfactory completion of the C&T services, including minor repairs, the installation of CO 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.

#### **K. 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 \$500 per benefit.

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

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