



Local Commissioners Memorandum

Section 1

Transmittal:	24-LCM-15
To:	Social Services District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Employment and Income Supports (EISP) Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
Date:	November 7, 2024
Subject:	2024-2025 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
Contact Person(s):	HEAP Bureau at: (518) 473-0332 or NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov
Attachments:	Attachment 1 – HEAP Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Reference Tool Attachment 2 – HEAP Clean and Tune Benefit Reference Tool Attachment 3 – HEAP Cooling Assistance Component Reference Tool Attachment 4 – 2024- 2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005) Attachment 5 – Special Claiming Codes for Prevention and Restoration Chart Attachment 6 – NYS HEAP Administrative Form Guide Attachment 7 – HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool (LDSS-5099) Attachment 8 – Request for Approval of Local Equivalent Forms (OTDA-5199)

Section 2

I. Purpose

This Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to provide social services districts (districts) with information for the administration of all components and benefits of the 2024-2025 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. The New York State (NYS) [2024-2025 HEAP State Plan](#) was submitted to HHS and may be found on the Office of

Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) website under Laws and Policies, [HEAP State Plans](#).

III. Program Implications

A. Program Components – Dates of Operation

The HEAP components and dates of operation may be adjusted based on the amount of federal funding allocated and the date of receipt of that funding. Districts will be notified if component 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 2024-2025 HERR benefits must be accepted beginning October 1, 2024, through close of business (COB) September 30, 2025, 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) Benefit

Applications for 2024-2025 C&T benefits must be accepted beginning October 1, 2024, through COB September 30, 2025, 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 2024-2025 Regular heater and heat-included benefits must be accepted beginning November 1, 2024, through COB March 17, 2025, 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 2023-2024 Regular benefit component are an advance of the 2024-2025 HEAP benefit. Please refer to [GIS 18 TA/DC012](#) for further direction.

The 2024-2025 advance HEAP Nominal Benefit began on April 13, 2024. For further details on Payment Type NX, please refer to the March 23, 2018, Welfare Management System (WMS) Coordinator Letter - [HEAP Nominal Benefit](#).

Emergency Component

Applications for Emergency heat and heat-related domestic electricity benefits, temporary relocation, and propane tank deposit benefits must be accepted beginning January 2, 2025, through COB March 17, 2025, or until funding allocated to this component is exhausted; whichever comes first. On January 2, 2025, when the Emergency benefit component opens, the first and second emergency benefits will be available. Applicants that have exhausted their first emergency benefit and are in a verified subsequent emergency may apply for the second emergency benefit. Benefits cannot be issued concurrently. Detailed component information may be found in the NYS [HEAP Manual](#).

Cooling Assistance Component (CAC)

Applications for CAC must be accepted beginning April 15, 2025, through COB August 29, 2025, or until funding allocated to this component is exhausted; whichever comes first. Households containing a vulnerable member based on their age (60 years or older, or under age 6) that meet all other component eligibility criteria may receive a Cooling Assistance Benefit without a corresponding medical need.

All other households without a vulnerable member based on their age must have a household member with a medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat. The medical condition must be verified in writing by a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner. Households that are unable to obtain required documentation within the requested timeframe may attest to having a medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat and that they are experiencing a hardship in obtaining medical documentation. A detailed component summary may be found in Attachment 3.

B. Program Updates

The following policy and procedural changes have been made for the 2024-2025 program year. The changes identified in this LCM supersede policy contained in the [HEAP Manual](#) (Rev. 7/1/2021) and any other previously released policy documentation.

Categorically Income Eligible (CE) Policy for Temporary Assistance (TA) Safety Net Assistance (SNA) Case Types 16/17

Please note that only households that are in receipt of certain federally funded benefits including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), SNAP, and Code-A SSI are CE.

For HEAP Mass Authorization process (Autopay) implications, please see WMS-CNS Coordinator guidance issued on August 16, 2024, titled [Welfare Management System \(WMS\) Implications for the 2024 – 2025 Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\) Year](#).

Elimination of the HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829)

The HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829) is eliminated. Districts must discontinue its use and destroy all copies of the HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829), including any previously approved Local Equivalent (LE). This form is no longer required for HEAP applicants whose income is zero, or whose shelter costs exceed their income. Basic maintenance for these households may be explored during the eligibility interview at the district's discretion as necessary.

The form has been removed from the OTDA E-Forms Website and is no longer available for downloading or ordering. The HEAP Low Income tab has been removed from myWorkspace and HEAP 1.0 in NYC.

Weatherization Referral Procedures and Form

Weatherization assistance in NYS is administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) and the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Two-way referrals are sent between HEAP and weatherization providers.

In addition to the current referral process from districts to weatherization subgrantees using the [DHCR WAP #37 Interagency Referral](#) form, subgrantees will use an interagency referral form to refer households that may be eligible for HEAP to districts. Districts may use this referral form to conduct outreach to these households so they may apply for HEAP.

NYSERDA also promotes HEAP to all EmPower+ participants. Every EmPower+ acceptance letter now informs households that they may be eligible for HEAP and instructs participants to visit the OTDA HEAP website to learn more and apply.

All households referred from HCR and/or NYSERDA must complete a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and be income tested using current year HEAP income guidelines.

C. 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. Pending an application suspends the 30 business day application processing timeframe for up to 10 business days. The 30 business day application processing timeframe resumes on the day the documentation or information is provided to the district, or when the 10 business days are exhausted, whichever occurs first. Districts must incorporate their 6 or 13 calendar day voucher review period, as outlined in Appendix H of the [Indirect Payment Processing Sub-System Manual \(IPPS Manual\)](#), into their processing timeframe to ensure clients are provided with timely notice.

Payments for eligible cases included on the Autopay exception report must be authorized in WMS or myWorkspace no later than December 31, 2024.

D. Income Guidelines

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 1-12 individuals, and at 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for households with 13 or more individuals. Income guideline amounts may be found in the 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005), Attachment 4.

E. Application Process

Regular benefit

All applicants outside of New York City (NYC) may apply for Regular HEAP benefits online through [myBenefits](#). Applicants that reside in NYC may apply for Regular HEAP

benefits online through [ACCESS HRA](#). The HEAP Application for 2024-2025 will be available on [myBenefits](#) and [ACCESS HRA](#) starting November 1, 2024.

Applicants outside of NYC may complete, submit, and track their Regular HEAP application online once they create a secure [myBenefits](#) 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 implemented the NYDocSubmit Mobile Application (Mobile Application) (See [NYDocSubmit](#) for participating districts) may also submit required documentation to the district through the Mobile Application using a mobile device (please see [20-ADM-04](#) for more information regarding the Mobile Application).

When the Regular HEAP benefit component is open, households outside of NYC may apply through [myBenefits](#) for both Regular 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 HEAP benefits statewide by submitting paper applications by mail, fax or in person at a district or alternate certifier. A list of [local district HEAP offices](#) may be found on OTDA's website. A printable HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) will be available for download on the [OTDA Website](#) starting November 1, 2024.

Returning applicants must complete a full HEAP application, but these applicants do not need an interview and only need to document earned income and anything else that has changed since their last application, such as identity for new household members, proof of address if they moved within the same district, or vendor relationship if they have a new vendor. The district must compare the application against the previous year's HEAP Application to check for and resolve any changes in household circumstances.

Applicants for Regular HEAP benefits who are not returning applicants must have an eligibility interview. Required interviews may be completed with applicants by telephone or in person if the applicant requests one.

Denial Code H97 – Receiving HEAP in Another Case was established for use when a household has applied for a HEAP benefit online or with a paper HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)), but has an active, ongoing SNAP or TA case, upon which an eligible household will have their Regular HEAP benefit issued. Eligibility examiners 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 18 TA/DC050](#) for further direction.

Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Component

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 interview is required and may be completed with the applicant either over the telephone or in person.

Emergency, Clean and Tune, Cooling Assistance Components

Applicants for Emergency, C&T, and CAC should contact the district office in their county of residence for information and applications. Applicants for Emergency, C&T, and CAC who have not received a current program year Regular component benefit must have an eligibility interview conducted.

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.

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

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

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

Households in receipt of SNAP or federally funded TA benefits are eligible for an automatic Regular HEAP benefit if they are HEAP eligible according to information in WMS on the date of the HEAP Autopay file creation. This date is known as the "pull-down."

SNAP households are considered in receipt of "ongoing benefits" for HEAP purposes if there is a valid "96-FS ongoing benefits" payment line on the SNAP case in the month that the Autopay is run.

Non-federally funded TA households may also receive a HEAP benefit through the TA Autopay if they are in receipt of ongoing SNAP benefits. These households must be a case type 16 or 17 with a PA/FS Code equal to 01.

TA recipients on a case type 16 or 17, with a PA/FS code not equal to 01 with income at or below HEAP's maximum allowable income based on household size will also receive a benefit through the HEAP Autopay.

These households 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 TA or SNAP using [myBenefits](#).

Recipients of ongoing SNAP or federally funded TA benefits who 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 WMS TA and SNAP eligibility information, 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.

Authorized and Exception reports were available to districts in Production Hosting Reports & Enterprise Documents (PHRED) following the Autopay, which are sorted by Case Name within Office/Unit/Worker. Please note district workers must be granted access to these reports by their Local Area Network (LAN) administrators to view them on PHRED. The file names are as follows:

- 2024-2025 HEAP Mass Authorization Report, TA/SNAP – WINR0650-HEAP
- 2024-2025 HEAP Mass Authorization Exception Report, TA/SNAP – WINR0630-HEAP

Cases with payments authorized as part of the Autopay will appear on a HEAP Mass Authorization Report. The HEAP Mass Authorization Report identifies all federally funded TA cases, and NTA/SNAP cases (Case Types 11, 12, 16, 17, 31) to which an authorization for HEAP payment has been automatically posted. A unique authorization number is used in posting this HEAP payment for all cases listed on the Autopay.

- Due to the specific nature of this transaction, districts cannot use this authorization number when attempting to perform a subsequent undercare/maintenance transaction to the case identified on this list.
- Instead, they must use the authorization number assigned at the time of the last transaction preceding this Autopay, as shown on the latest LDSS-3209 change form in the case record.

Note: Cases for which a Nominal HEAP payment was authorized will be identified on the reports by having a "Y" value displayed in the "NX" column.

HEAP Exception reports are available in PHRED and contain cases that are missing data items and not authorized for HEAP on the Autopay. If districts are able to obtain the missing information prior to December 31, 2024, a Regular benefit may be issued without the household having to complete a separate HEAP application. If a HEAP payment is determined to be appropriate, district staff shall use normal undercare/maintenance procedures to authorize the appropriate benefit.

Individuals who become recipients of ongoing SNAP or federally funded TA after the Autopay file creation will not be included in the Autopay process. These individuals should apply for HEAP by submitting a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) on or after November 1, 2024 **and** will need to complete an interview either over the telephone or in person at a district or certifying agency. Depending on funding availability, OTDA plans to conduct an additional Autopay in March 2025. Individuals who become recipients of ongoing SNAP or federally funded TA after the September Autopay file creation and do not apply for HEAP after November 1, 2024, will be included in the March 2025 Autopay.

Any individual who receives a Regular benefit via the Autopay must not be issued a duplicate Regular benefit. Districts must complete a 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 (H9) 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. The heat-included benefit amount received must be subtracted from the heater benefit prior to authorizing the amount of the Supplemental Regular Benefit.

Additional information on this process was provided to districts in the WMS-CNS Coordinator guidance issued on August 16, 2024, titled [Welfare Management System \(WMS\) Implications for the 2024 – 2025 Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\) Year](#).

G. Regular and Emergency Benefit Amounts

The Regular benefit amount is based on primary fuel type, income tier and the presence of a vulnerable household member, defined by HEAP in Chapter 9 of the [HEAP Manual](#) as a child under age 6, an individual aged 60 or older, or an individual that is permanently disabled. The Emergency benefit amount is based on the type of emergency.

The Regular benefit add-on amount for Tier 1 households increased to \$61 for the 2024-2025 program year. To receive the Tier 1 add-on, the household must have gross income must be at or below 130% of federal poverty level for the household size, or at least one adult household member must be in receipt of SNAP, federally funded TA, or Code A SSI. The add-on amount for households with a vulnerable member remains the same as 2023-2024 at \$35.

The heat included benefits remain the same, at \$50 for Tier 1 households and \$45 for Tier 2 households.

See the 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005), Attachment 4, for updated income guidelines and benefit amounts. This guide may also be ordered on card stock through OTDA using the process outlined below in Section III, I, Forms.

H. 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 is without heat if they have no heating fuel, utility service has been disconnected, or has non-working heating equipment. 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 10 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. This may include temporary relocation, safe supplemental heat, or referral to TA or other community programs, if the household is ineligible for HEAP or if HEAP eligibility has not been determined within the required timeframe. The application date for Emergency benefit applicants eligible for income deeming is the date the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) is completed by the district eligibility examiner, either over the telephone or in person with the applicant. The application date for applicants that are 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).

I. Emergency Special Claiming Code G

A Special Claiming Code must be entered for all HEAP payments on Screen 6 of WMS. 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 designation “G” or “H” must be used in the Special Claiming Code field for all HEAP payments, including those for Early Outreach. Districts must use one of the appropriate Special Claiming Codes below:

- Special Claiming Code G – “HEAP Restoration” is required for HEAP payments which restored heat
- Special Claiming Code H – “HEAP Prevention” is required for all HEAP payments which prevented the loss of heat

See the Special Claiming Codes for Prevention and 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 WMS-CNS Coordinator guidance issued on August 16, 2024 WCL081524 [Welfare Management System \(WMS\) Implications for the 2024 – 2025 Home Energy Assistance](#).

J. Forms

Two forms used to administer HEAP were revised for the 2024-2025 program year. The HEAP Administrative Form Guide, Attachment 6, is a table that identifies revised forms, and whether the form is mandatory or optional.

All forms were made available for ordering on September 6, 2024. These forms, along with any forms that were not revised, must be used for the 2024-2025 program year. All old versions of revised forms must be discarded at both the district and alternate certifier.

The updated HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool (LDSS-5099) can be found in Attachment 7. This tool is available for download on [LDSS E-Forms](#) and may be ordered on printed card stock, per the directions below.

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

How to order forms:

All forms with LDSS or PUB numbers are produced by OTDA and may be ordered. When ordering any HEAP forms, be sure to order sufficient quantities for the entire HEAP year. 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. Please allow for up to 4-6 weeks for processing and receiving of all requested documents. No forms are drop shipped.

HEAP forms are available on the OTDA Intranet [LDSS E-Forms](#) page and are available for download by local districts for reproduction locally, depending on print specifications. All publications in languages other than English and Spanish are available via the intranet only.

Requests for printed copies can be placed by either completing and emailing the ordering form, or through the online ordering system via the OTDA Intranet [LDSS E-Forms](#) page.

Email ordering request:

Requests for printed copies should be submitted to OTDA by completing the [OTDA876](#) form and emailing it to: forms.orders@otda.ny.gov.

Online ordering request:

Publications and LDSS forms can also be ordered online by accessing the Bureau of Management Services' Electronic Forms and Publications Online Ordering System at: <https://formorders.otda.ny.gov/>. If presented with a Login prompt, enter your HSEN ID and password.

This system provides users the ability to order forms, envelopes, and publications over the OTDA intranet. Once the order is submitted, the user can view the status of their order and will receive system generated emails when their order is processed and shipped.

Questions concerning ordering forms should be directed to the Bureau of Management Services (BMS) Document Services at (518) 474-9489.

How to request a Local Equivalent Form:

To make changes to a state mandated LDSS form, districts MUST submit to the BMS a written request using the Request for Approval of Local Equivalent Forms (OTDA-5199) found in Attachment 8. The district must receive written approval from the OTDA BMS prior to using the local equivalent form.

Local equivalent forms may be developed by districts to be used in place of State-mandated forms and must contain all the information required on the State-mandated forms but may contain additional local information. Local equivalents may differ in format as well as media from the mandated forms. Districts develop local equivalent forms for many reasons, including 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.

All prior year approved waiver requests remain valid unless OTDA revises a form for which a district has an approved waiver, or the district makes additional revisions to a form which has an approved waiver.

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. For more information on this procedure districts should consult [16-ADM-03](#).

K. 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 as needed. 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 district employees or 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:
 - Error prone areas (e.g., earned income cases),
 - New applications, new workers' cases, or
 - 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 improve accuracy.
4. A description of how alternate certifiers assist with HEAP and work with the district.

Note: Alternate certifiers must not perform final review of cases or approve HEAP benefits for eligible households they assist.

CSR 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 subsequent plans, unless or until a revision to the approved plan is needed.

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's 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 review and provide the final sign off/approval.

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 2024-2025 program through [eReports](#) on Centraport 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 Anna Vitolins at: Anna.Vitolins@otda.ny.gov and Rachel Kerr at: Rachel.Kerr@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 the OTDA Website under HEAP, and select "Locate Your Local HEAP Vendor" for the [Participating Vendor List](#). 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.

This list is updated daily and must be provided to applicants who need to choose a participating vendor. Districts must check the participating 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 Regular denial transactions beginning November 1, 2024.

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):
<https://intranet.otda.ny.gov/directives/listserve.asp>.

Use the following link to subscribe to Employment and Income Support Program (EISP) mailing lists (GIS messages): <https://intranet.otda.ny.gov/dta/resources/subscribe.asp>.

Please see the [June 26, 2018 WMS-CNS Coordinator Guidance Letter](#) for more information.

P. Systems

Detailed information regarding the current WMS implications for the 2024-2025 HEAP year may be found in the August 16, 2024, WMS-CNS Coordinator guidance letter, [Welfare Management System \(WMS\) Implications for the 2024 – 2025 Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\) Year](#).

It is strongly suggested that districts 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 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](#).

For assistance with problems establishing remote connections through a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL), the district verification department must contact the NYS Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) Desk at: 518-402-5911 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Please discuss any problems with your district's LAN or Systems Administrator in accordance with district procedures before contacting the ITS Service Desk.

Alternate Certifier Access to myWorkspace

The Alternate Certifier's roles and responsibilities have not changed from previous years. Alternate Certifiers 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 the [OTDA Intranet](#) website under Reference Materials, select HEAP Information and then [Remote Access End User Guide](#).

The district identifies the Alternate Certifier role that works best for their operations and is responsible to communicate the roles and responsibilities to the Alternate Certifier. 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 worker and supervisor functionality in myWorkspace can be accessed from the myWorkspace "Resources" link in the myWorkspace External Links toolbar or on the [OTDA Intranet](#) website under Program Areas, EISP, and Resources and Data Reference Materials, select [myWorkspace User Roles](#).

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.

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.

HEAP Mass Closing

The HEAP Mass Closing ("HEAP Auto Close") of 2023-2024 upstate HEAP cases (Case Type 60) which have had no activity since September 30, 2023 will have a projected completion date of October 6, 2024. HEAP cases automatically closed through this process will be assigned the unique authorization number '24HEAPCL'.

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 FFY2024

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 [IPPS Manual](#).

Initial production of the 2024-2025 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. Please see GIS [24DC067](#) for the initial 2024-2025 voucher payment schedule.

Voucher Review Period

During the voucher 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 or voiding the voucher. A HEAP OSC voucher that is in “OSC-Sent” status is unable to be voided or canceled.

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 §358.5](#) 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 under separate cover once federal LIHEAP funding is released to the State from HHS.

Issued By:

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