



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

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| Transmittal: | 20 TA/DC067 Upstate and New York City |
| Date: | June 29, 2020 |
| To: | Subscribers |
| Suggested Distribution: | Commissioners, HEAP Coordinators, TA and SNAP Directors |
| From: | Jeffrey Gaskell, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs |
| Subject: | 2019-2020 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Revised Component Closing Dates and Change to the Cooling Assistance Component (CAC) |
| Effective Date: | Immediately |
| Contact Information: | HEAP Bureau at: 518-473-0332 or NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov |

Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) of three changes to the 2019-2020 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). Applicant households who reside in government subsidized housing with heat included in their shelter costs are now eligible for a Cooling Assistance Component (CAC) benefit, if all other eligibility criteria are met. Requirements for medical documentation for CAC may be waived for applicants who are unable to obtain such documentation due to COVID-19. Additionally, the dates of operation for the Regular and Emergency benefit components will be extended from June 30, 2020 through August 31, 2020 or until the funds allocated to these components are exhausted, whichever occurs first.

Cooling Assistance Component

Applicants who received or are eligible to receive a Regular HEAP benefit equal to \$21 in the 2019-2020 program year and reside in government subsidized housing with heat included in their shelter costs may be eligible to receive a CAC benefit if the household contains a member with a medical condition that is exacerbated by heat. This includes upstate Welfare Management System (WMS) and NYC equivalent shelter codes **02** (Rent Public), **38** (Subsidized Housing Non-Certificate), **40** (Section 8 Voucher 30% Limit), **96** (SSI High Shelter), and **97** (SSI Low Shelter). Applicants who reside in group homes or congregate care shelter types, which qualifies them for a \$21 Regular benefit, are not eligible for CAC.

Due to current circumstances related to COVID-19, if an applicant is unable to provide medical documentation for CAC, this requirement may be waived under New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Title 18, §351.26. Districts must notate use of this waiver in the Agency Use section of the Cooling Assistance Request for Benefit (LDSS-4992).

All other CAC eligibility criteria must be met, please refer to [Attachment 1](#) from [20TA/DC030](#) for CAC requirements. Applicants who were previously denied a CAC benefit due to an ineligible living situation or lack of medical documentation due to COVID-19 may reapply using the HEAP Application ([LDSS-3421](#)) and/or Cooling Assistance Request for Benefit ([LDSS-4992](#)).

Regular and Emergency Benefit Components

The Regular and Emergency HEAP benefit components are scheduled to operate through the close of business (COB) August 31, 2020 or until the funds allocated to these components are exhausted, whichever occurs first. Districts and alternate certifiers must accept applications for the Regular and Emergency components through COB August 31, 2020, unless districts are notified otherwise.

Mail-in applications postmarked, or online applications received on or before August 31, 2020 meet the deadline and must be processed. The functionality to submit online HEAP applications for Regular component benefits through myBenefits will be disabled at 5:00 pm on August 31, 2020 unless districts are notified otherwise.

All applications for Regular or Emergency HEAP benefit applications received after COB August 31, 2020 must be denied using CNS denial code F08 (HEAP Application Received after HEAP Program Year Closing Date) or, if needed, by using the HEAP Manual Denial Notice ([LDSS-3494B](#)).

Please note, the 2020-2021 upstate WMS systems edits are expected to be implemented on August 15, 2020, after which districts will have the ability to process 2020-2021 Early Outreach applications. Districts are reminded that all payments made for 2019–2020 HEAP benefits must have a payment line 'TO DATE' equal to 9/30/2020.

Temporary Assistance (TA) Implications

Districts must continue to explore the availability of, and individual eligibility for Regular and Emergency HEAP benefits before issuing a Family Assistance (FA), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EAF), Emergency Safety Net Assistance (ESNA) or Emergency Assistance for Adults (EAA) payment to meet a utility (natural gas or electricity) or non-utility (other than natural gas or electricity) energy emergency.

Districts will be notified via GIS if there are any additional program changes.