



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	20 TA/DC112 Upstate and New York City
Date:	December 16, 2020
To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, HEAP Coordinators, TA Directors, SNAP Directors
From:	Jeffrey Gaskell, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	2020-2021 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Emergency Benefit Component Opening
Effective Date:	January 4, 2021
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Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to provide social services districts (districts) with information about the 2020-2021 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Emergency benefit component. Districts must begin accepting applications for Emergency benefits and may issue guarantees for Emergency benefits on Monday, January 4, 2021. The utility shut-off moratorium will not affect eligibility for Emergency benefits.

Emergency benefits are available to assist eligible households with a heating emergency or a heat-related domestic emergency. Only one Emergency benefit of each type is available per HEAP household for the 2020-2021 season. Temporary relocation for housing emergencies and propane tank deposits to obtain new propane vendors are also available under the Emergency benefit component. Regular component benefits, if available, must be utilized first to resolve heating emergencies for eligible households.

A utility shutoff moratorium due to COVID-19 remains in place, and supersedes the two-week holiday utility moratorium, which typically takes place at the end of December. A moratorium on terminations or disconnections of residential utility services has no bearing on whether an applicant/recipient (A/R) may receive emergency energy assistance. Districts must not deny an application for an emergency payment for a utility termination or disconnection solely based upon an existing moratorium. Termination and disconnection notices are still being issued by utility providers; an A/R may still be eligible for emergency energy assistance if there is a threat of a utility termination or disconnection.

All applicants for the Emergency benefit component may apply via telephone. Applicants for Emergency benefits must be permitted to apply in person. Applications for the Emergency benefit component may not be submitted online via myBenefits unless otherwise directed by the district.

If an eligible household is without heat, districts must resolve the household's life-threatening emergency within 18 hours of the date of application. If an eligible household faces an imminent loss of heat or utility

service to operate a heating source, the crisis emergency must be resolved within 48 hours of the date of application.

To be eligible for an Emergency benefit, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- A Regular HEAP benefit must not be available or any credit remaining on an account is insufficient to resolve the applicant’s emergency.
- The applicant must be facing a heating emergency or heat-related domestic emergency:
 - The applicant’s utility service is terminated or scheduled for termination;
 - The applicant’s electric utility service necessary to operate the primary heating equipment is terminated or scheduled for termination; and/or
 - The applicant is without heating fuel or has less than one quarter tank of oil, kerosene, or propane, or less than a ten-day supply of other heating fuels.
- The applicant must be the customer of record for the utility or deliverable fuel account.
- The applicant households must not have more than \$2,000 (or \$3,000 if the household contains a member age 60 or older) in available liquid resources.
 - Applicants in receipt of ongoing Temporary Assistance (TA) have already been resource tested.

2020-2021 HEAP Emergency Component Benefits

Benefit Type	Benefit Amount
Oil, Kerosene and Propane	\$675
Wood, Wood Pellets, Corn, Coal or other deliverables	\$525
Natural Gas, Heat Only	\$350
Natural Gas Heat with Domestic Electric	\$490
Electric Heat	\$490
Heat-Related Electric	\$140
Temporary Relocation	Maximum of \$500 per program year
Propane Tank Deposit	Maximum of \$500 per program year

Detailed Emergency eligibility requirements and procedures are outlined in [20-LCM-11](#), released November 3, 2020, and in the [NYS HEAP Manual](#) which can be accessed via CentraPort.