



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	21 TA/DC039 Upstate and New York City
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To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, HEAP Coordinators, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, Staff Development Coordinators
From:	Alison Maura, Director of Temporary Assistance and HEAP Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	Impact of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)
Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact Information:	Temporary Assistance Bureau at: 518-474-9344 or otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov SNAP Questions – SNAP Bureau 518-473-1469 or otda.sm.cees.snap@otda.ny.gov HEAP Questions – HEAP Bureau 518-473-0332 or nysheap@otda.ny.gov

Section 2

This GIS provides guidance to local social services districts (districts) on how the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) impacts Temporary Assistance (TA), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefit eligibility. ERAP is an economic relief program developed to help eligible households address rental and utility arrears accrued at their primary residence during the COVID-19 crisis. The program provides significant economic relief to low-income and moderate-income tenants and will help landlords obtain overdue rents. Approved applicants may receive:

- Up to 12 months payment of rental arrears accrued on or after March 13, 2020;
- Up to 3 months of future rental assistance if the household is “rent burdened”, which means they are expected to pay 30 percent or more of their gross monthly income towards their rent;
- Up to 12 months payment of electric or gas utility arrears accrued on or after March 13, 2020.

Payments will be made directly to the landlord/property owner and, in most instances, directly to the utility company on behalf of the tenant. Tenants, landlords/property managers, and utility companies will be notified of ERAP assistance provided on behalf of any ERAP recipient. Tenants must be eligible for ERAP rental arrears to receive utility arrears assistance or help with paying future rent through ERAP. Individuals who do not need assistance paying for rental arrears but need help paying for utility costs are encouraged to apply for HEAP or TA through their districts.

Seven communities that received funding for emergency rental assistance directly from the federal government opted to administer their own programs. Residents of the [City of Rochester and Monroe](#)

[County, Onondaga County](#), the [City of Yonkers](#), and the towns of [Hempstead](#), [Islip](#), and [Oyster Bay](#) must apply to their local programs for emergency rental assistance and are ineligible for assistance from the State-administered ERAP.

For TA, while the ERAP application period is open, applicants/recipients (A/R) should be directed to pursue and use ERAP as an available resource as a condition of eligibility in accordance with 18 NYCRR 352.23. Information regarding ERAP can be found on the OTDA ERAP website here: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/Emergency-Rental-Assistance/>.

If an A/R has an immediate need, such as actually being evicted, that cannot wait for a decision on ERAP eligibility, the district must meet the immediate need the same day the A/R identifies such immediate need. Districts must provide an appropriate notice to the A/R regarding the meeting of their immediate need. For more information on emergency/immediate needs of TA A/Rs, please see [02-ADM-02](#).

For A/Rs that do not have an immediate/emergency need, the district may prescreen for ERAP and if eligibility seems likely the A/R should be directed to pursue and use ERAP as an available resource. If the district denies an A/R's application because they do not have an immediate need and are required to pursue ERAP, appropriate notice must be provided. If the A/R encounters an immediate need soon after denial and they opt to reapply for TA, reapplication within 30 days will not require a new application for assistance. This is consistent with current TA policy.

For A/Rs applying for Emergency HEAP, districts are reminded to verify and document applicant emergency situations through either a utility company website or collateral contact with the utility company prior to emergency benefit authorization while the ERAP application period is open. See [20-LCM-11](#) for detailed program information.

For A/Rs who are granted ERAP benefits, these benefits are not countable as income or as a resource for TA, SNAP or HEAP eligibility or for budgeting purposes. For recipients who are granted ERAP benefits for prospective (future) rent, these payments will cover the difference between the TA grant and the monthly shelter cost. ERAP benefits will not be issued through the Welfare Management System (WMS). In order to avoid a duplication of benefits, information will be shared with districts regarding rental arrears assistance provided to eligible households. Additionally, these households will be provided with a notification regarding assistance received.

A call center is open to handle ERAP inquiries over the telephone and webchat. The telephone number is 1-844-NY1-RENT (1-844-691-7368). The webchat can be accessed from the OTDA ERAP website. Districts may refer individuals to the call center or webchat if they have questions about the program or an ERAP application they've filed. Both the telephone number and webchat went live on June 1, 2021.