

Erie County

2012-2013 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP):

Federally funded program that assists with home heating costs

Regular HEAP: “Heater’s Benefit” \$400-\$700

HEAP opens November 19th 2012

Early Access applications will be mailed to age 60+ and under age 60 disabled Households in September 2012. Any Household in receipt of Foodstamps (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance may not get an early access application and may not need to apply for Regular benefit, which may be calculated and sent to heating supplier automatically.

Regular HEAP: Assistance with main source of heat. Gas and Electric benefits appear as a credit on bill about 60 days after approval. Oil, propane, wood, coal, etc. benefits produce an immediate delivery of fuel totaling benefit amount.

- **Do Not** need a shut off notice to receive Regular HEAP.
- 30 day “hold” is placed on heat account if benefit is approved.
 - If there is a shutoff notice, service will not be shut off during that 30 days and utility company will not seek collection for the portion of the total bill equaling the benefit amount.
- There is **NO resource test for Regular HEAP**, HEAP will not examine household’s savings or checking accounts etc.

Companies will be notified of Regular HEAP benefit amounts starting November 19, 2012 (program opening)

HEAP Regular Benefit Amounts

\$400 base benefit →	Natural Gas or Electric Heat
\$600 base benefit →	Deliverable fuel (i.e. oil, propane, kerosene)
\$500 base benefit →	Deliverable fuel (wood, coal, etc.)
Add on \$25	Add an additional \$25 to base benefit if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household has Tier 1 income
Add on \$25	Add an additional \$25 to base benefit if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a vulnerable in the household – child age 5 or under OR an adult

HEAP Regular Benefit: “Renter’s Benefit” Heat Included in Rent

\$ 25 Tier I \$20 Tier II	<u>Heat costs included in Rent (NON SUBSIDIZED RENT ONLY)</u> , benefit amount based on HH income
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Emergency HEAP: shut off notice or low fuel supply \$160-\$600

Emergency HEAP component scheduled to open **January 2 - March 15, 2013**

- Must have a shut off notice or low fuel supply and exhausted Regular HEAP assistance.

1 Emergency benefit is available for main source of heat and 1 Emergency benefit is available for “heat related” electricity. Heat Related electricity is electric service needed to operate essential heating equipment (Furnace, thermostat, etc.)

- HH may have no more than \$2000 (or \$3000 for a Senior Citizen HH) available liquid resources (\$\$ in savings, checking, stocks, bonds, CDs, IRAs, 401k). Monthly living expenses in savings are not counted and are determined on a case by case basis.
- Countable (liquid) and Excluded Resources are listed on Page 6

HEAP Emergency Benefit Amounts	
\$400----->	Natural Gas Heat Only
\$560----->	Electric Heat – PSC and municipal electric companies
\$600----->	Deliverable fuel (i.e. oil, propane, kerosene)
\$500----->	Other fuel (coal, wood, wood products)
\$160----->	Heat related Electric – PSC and municipal electric companies

How to Apply for HEAP

1. **If Service is OFF, or household is OUT of heating fuel** (heat or heat related electricity*)
 - A household member or authorized representative** **must report to HEAP** for assistance
 - **478 Main Street, Buffalo (8:00am-4:00pm)**- All Households receiving Temporary Assistance or SNAP, and Heads of Household under 60 years of age, non Vulnerable
 - **291 Pearl Street, Buffalo (8:00am-4:00pm)**- Heads of Household 60 or older, or under 60 and Vulnerable (not receiving TA or FS)

2. **If Service is ON, but household has a current shut off notice or low supply (less than ¼ tank) of heating fuel** (heat or heat-related electricity*)
 - Household member/authorized representative** may call the **HEAP Hotline at 858-7644**
 - A HEAP Hotline representative will examine the situation and direct the application process accordingly. Client may or may not need to report.

3. **If Service is ON, NO shut off notice and NO low fuel supply** (heat or heat-related electricity*)
 - HH may call the **Application Request Line at 858-1969** or pick up an application at HEAP office
 - HEAP will mail or provide an application packet and instructions at intake window.

Documentation Requirements: *Regular HEAP*

If Household **is receiving Foodstamps (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance:**

1. Regular HEAP: Many Active TA or SNAP households have Regular HEAP *calculated and sent to heating supplier automatically (auto pay)*. No application for Regular HEAP is required for these HHs.
 - a. If auto pay is not completed for a TA/SNAP HH:
 - i. Completion and submission of HEAP application **following sections only** is required:
 1. Section 1 (name of head of household, DOB, SS#)
 2. Section 3 (heat and utility information)
 3. Section 5 (signature)

If Household is not receiving TA or SNAP & received HEAP assistance last season (November 2011 - April 2012):

A completed and signed HEAP application & the Following Documentation is Required:

1. Proof of GROSS EARNED Income (Wages) received with the last 30 days for all Household Members
 - If paid weekly, last 4 paystubs
 - If paid bi-weekly, last 2 paystubs
 - Proof of UNEARNED Income NOT Required (Social Security, Pension, Unemployment, Workers Comp, Disability, etc.) If you moved or there are new members in your Household, you must document those changes.

If Household is not receiving TA or FS & did not receive HEAP assistance last season (November 2011 - April 2012):

A completed HEAP application and the following Documentation is required:

1. **Proof of GROSS income** received within the last 30 days for all household members
 - a. Wages: If paid weekly, last 4 paystubs
 - b. Wages: If paid bi-weekly, last 2 paystubs
 - c. Award letters- if Applicable (Social Security, Pension, Unemployment, Workers Comp, Disability, etc.)
 - d. Yearly statement of interest received (savings, checking, CDs, money market account, etc.)
 - e. Dividend proof (stocks, bonds securities, etc.)
2. **Social Security Numbers** for all HH Members
3. **1 (one) form of ID** for all HH members (Birth Cert. OR SS Card OR Drivers License OR School ID, etc.)

4. **Proof of residency** (Rent receipt, mortgage statement, utility bill)
5. Current heat and/or electric bill.

Documentation Requirements: *Emergency HEAP*

If Household **received a Regular HEAP benefit this season:**

1. Shut off notice or statement of low fuel supply from company
2. Proof of all HH liquid resources (see page 6)
3. 1 form of ID for any new HH members (that were not listed on Regular HEAP application)

If Household **did not** receive a Regular benefit this season:

1. For main source of heat, no Emergency benefit is available until Regular benefit is exhausted
2. Applicant may apply for Emergency for "heat related" electricity, and Regular benefit for main source of heat simultaneously, and must provide all requirements for Regular HEAP and electric shut off notice and HH liquid resources proof.

Subsidized Rent and HEAP Eligibility

If household receives Government Rental Assistance (Section 8, Belmont, etc.)	
If Heat is included in rent	NOT eligible for HEAP assistance with heating costs*
If Electric is included in rent	NOT eligible for HEAP assistance with electric costs*
If household pays directly for Heat	Eligible for Regular and Emergency HEAP towards heating bill (see above for benefit amounts) – "Heater's Benefit"
If Household pays directly for "Heat Related Electric"***	Eligible for Emergency HEAP "heat related" electric benefits (see above)

****Wage Calculation for all HEAP Applications****

Paid Weekly – $((4 \times \text{Weekly gross})/4) \times 4.3333$

Paid Bi-Weekly – $((2 \times \text{bi-weekly gross})/2) \times 2.1666$

Paid Bi-Monthly – (add 2 gross pay amounts- no other calculation)

Liquid Resources counted for HEAP:

- o Cash
- o Checking and/or savings account balances
- o Stocks/bonds
- o Time deposit certificates
- o IRA accounts, including remaining amounts from a closed out IRA
- o Lump sums from sale of property or insurance settlements and balances from any other lump sum not specifically excluded
- o 401(K) and other retirement accounts
- o Income tax refunds (except EITC payments)
- o Any other available funds not specifically excluded

Excluded Resources--The following are not counted as resources for HEAP:

- o Amounts designated for an allowable current monthly living expense such as food, shelter, employment-related expenses, etc.
- o Money earmarked for payment of the current year's property and/or school taxes for the primary residence
- o One burial plot per household member
- o One written pre-arranged burial agreement with a cash value not exceeding \$1,500 per household member and interest on the burial account
- o Accounts, such as PASS accounts, designated by the Social Security Administration as exempt from SSI resource limits
- o Real and personal property
- o Equipment
- o Automobiles and other vehicles
- o Payments from reverse annuity mortgages
- o Loans (including college loans, personal loans, home equity loans)

- Credit cards or advances from credit cards
- Individual Development Accounts (IDA)
- Although a household is not required to obtain a non-utility fuel delivery on a credit basis, those households who have sufficient resources to pay for the delivery may be required to obtain the delivery and make payment when the resources can be accessed.

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

2012 - 2013

Monthly Household Gross Income Limits

Household Size	Gross Monthly Income
1	\$ 0 – 2,138
2	\$ 0 – 2,796
3	\$ 0 – 3,453
4	\$ 0 – 4,111
5	\$ 0 – 4,769
6	\$ 0 – 5,427
7	\$ 0 – 5,550
8	\$ 0 – 5,673
9	\$ 0 – 5,797
10	\$ 0 – 5,920
11	\$ 0 – 6,346
11 +	+ \$495