



PENNSYLVANIA LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)

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[What is LIHEAP?](#)

The Pennsylvania Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps low income people pay their heating bills through energy assistance grants and emergency repair assistance. There are three types of assistance: Cash, Crisis, and Crisis Interface. You may be eligible for one or all of them.

[Who is eligible for LIHEAP?](#)

Both homeowners and renters who are responsible for their heating bills and have a low or fixed income are eligible. You do not need to an unpaid bill to receive energy assistance. You can receive this money without being on welfare. Persons living in subsidized housing are eligible for the Cash grant only if they pay for part or all of their primary heating source directly to a vendor. LIHEAP eligibility is based on 150% of the Federal Poverty Income Guideline.

[What are the income/resource limits?](#)

There is no resource limit. The eligibility levels may change from year to year, depending upon the amount of the funds available. Because these changes may be significant, it is wise to check each year at your county assistance office to see if you qualify.

(See PA Dept. of Human Services' website for current guidelines and State Plan at www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistanceliheap/. Apply for LIHEAP at www.compass.state.pa.us.)

What are the differences in the types of LIHEAP assistance?

- **THE CASH GRANT** is available to assist with your heating bills. You do not need an unpaid bill or to be in a crisis situation to receive it. The person applying must be responsible for paying for the main source of, either directly or through rent. You may apply grant to a secondary heating source, if it is necessary for the primary heating source to function.

- **THE CRISIS GRANT** is available if you have an actual or imminent home heating emergency that can be resolved with such funds. This grant is separate from the Cash Grant and may provide you with additional financial assistance needed to end the emergency. You may apply more than once in each LIHEAP season for the Crisis Grant, until you have received the maximum amount for that year. Emergency situations include:
 - Broken heating equipment or leaking line which must be fixed,
 - Being without fuel,
 - Utility service termination, and
 - Imminent danger of being without fuel or having utility service terminated.

- **THE CRISIS INTERFACE** is available if you require a heating system repair or replacement. DHS will refer eligible applicant to the local weatherization office, who will make a referral to your local weatherization provider for immediate heating system repairs.

In addition, in some years because of periods of extreme heat, the federal government provides additional money to Pennsylvania to be used to help offset summer cooling costs. You should check with your local county assistance office each summer to see if a cooling grant is available.

How do you apply for LIHEAP?

To apply, call or visit your local county assistance office to set up an appointment or you can apply online at the Pennsylvania Compass website: www.compass.state.pa.us.

Some information you will need when applying includes:

- Names of people in the household
- Proof of income for all household members
- Dates of birth for all household members
- SSN numbers for all household members
- Recent heating bill

When does LIHEAP start accepting applications?

LIHEAP applications are only accepted by county offices during a certain period of the year. The program runs during the cold weather season. Although the program dates change each year, the

opening date for each of the components is generally in early November and the closing date is generally near the beginning to mid-April. The Department of Human Services may extend or shorten the program dates depending upon the availability of federal funds.

Will a lien be placed on the property if energy assistance is received?

No.

When do you know if you are eligible?

A written notice explaining your eligibility and the amount of the Cash Grant that will be credited to your account should be sent 30 days after your completed Cash Grant application is received. The county assistance office request 45 days to process all cash grant applications. If your application is judged to be incomplete, the department must tell you, within 10 days, what is missing and provide you an additional 15 days to complete it.

An application for a Crisis Grant must be acted upon within 48 hours. However, if a life-threatening emergency exists, the department must act within 18 hours. An application indicating a complete depletion of a deliverable fuel supply must be acted upon within 15 days.

How are payments made?

If you are eligible, a payment will be sent directly to the utility/fuel dealer you designate and the payment will be credited on your bill. In some cases, a check may be mailed directly to you.

How much is received?

The amount of your energy assistance grant depends on the size of your household, you income, and your type of fuel. Although grant amounts may change from year to year, typically the minimum Cash Grant you receive is **\$200**. Many grants are substantially higher. The amount of the maximum Crisis Grant also changes from year to year.

What if you are not satisfied with the amount or the way you were treated?

If you are dissatisfied you can request a Fair Housing Hearing through the local Department of Human Services. You have 30 days to file this appeal.

Details on Pennsylvania's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program,

www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/heatingassistanceliheap/

Disclaimer:

We have attempted to insure the accuracy of the information in this pamphlet at the time it was created or revised. However, the law does changes, sometimes quickly and unexpectedly. Therefore, you should consult an attorney before taking or refraining from any action based on the information in this pamphlet.

