



## Status of Various Benefit Programs through the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Human Services during COVID-19

**County Assistance Offices:** On March 16, the decision was made to continue to operate CAO, but close them to the public. This is necessary to ensure continuity of program operations so that the CAO may continue to process applications and maintain existing cases.

**Medicaid:** The CAO will continue to accept and process Medical Assistance applications. Individuals can indicate on the application if they have a health emergency, including COVID-19. The CAO will continue to prioritize Medical Assistance Applications where there is an immediate health concern. Self-attestations will be accepted.

**SNAP:** SNAP Certification periods will be extended at least for the next three months so SNAP cases will not be terminated during this period.

**TANF:** The CAO is encouraging employment and training providers to provide remote services where possible and, if not, exercise flexibility for participants. The CAO is also suspending face-to-face interviews and will not terminate or sanction recipients based on RESET requirements

**LIHEAP:** It is now permissible for the CAO to accept a client's statement as verification of income or household composition if they are unable to acquire the requested documentation, third party verification by the caseworker has not been possible, or the household is receiving other benefits that have already accepted the client's statement. Accepting client statements as verification during this emergency is sufficient verification. NOTE: If the CAO later determines that income did not decrease, they will file an overpayment.

### LIHEAP SUGGESTIONS FROM PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION:

- (1) Pay what you can during the moratorium to establish positive payment history, even if it is not the full amount due.
- (2) Contact their utility provider to apply for CAP
- (3) If they are already in CAP, contact the utility company to report any decrease in income so that their CAP amount can be recalculated.

**CHILD CARE OPERATIONS:** Child care facilities were closed statewide on March 16 to support COVID – 19 mitigation efforts. Exceptions to this policy are family child care homes and group child care homes operating inside a residence. All childcare providers will continue to receive Child Care Work payments through April.

**ABAWD:** Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents who were time limited off of the SNAP program can receive benefits for the duration of the current emergency by reapplying.

**Office of Long-Term Living:** Has directed the Community HealthChoices managed care organizations (CHC-MCOs) to not reduce or terminate any personal assistance services or reassess long-term services and supports for at least the next three months.

**If you have questions, apply for services by calling 1-800-665-6957 or apply at [nwls.org](http://nwls.org)**