

Need help with winter heating bills?



Who is eligible?

Your county's Department of Social Services determines if your household qualifies for the program. The DSS may also require households to meet additional eligibility criteria besides income level to receive assistance. Typically, combined countable income of household members must not exceed 110 percent of the poverty level (about \$20,000 for a family of four, for example). The program gives priority to persons in health emergencies or similar crisis situations.

When do you apply?

Apply now. In many areas, the deadline for this winter's program is mid-November. Payments will be made in February 2005.

What assistance does LIHEAP provide?

The program may be able to offer you one or more of the following types of assistance:

- Bill payment assistance
- Energy crisis assistance
- Weatherization and energy-related home repairs

If you or someone you know will have difficulty paying home heating bills this winter, a federal program could help.

Since 1974, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has helped citizens pay heating (and cooling) so that they are not exposed to unsafe or unhealthy living conditions.

In particular, LIHEAP seeks to make home energy more affordable for two groups of low income households that have the highest home energy needs: households that include frail, older individuals, disabled individuals, and very young children, as well

as high-energy burden households, including those with the lowest incomes and highest home energy costs.

The program is not intended to cover a household's residential energy costs, but is limited to paying for home heating and cooling costs. In some cases, such costs include hot water heating, refrigeration, or cooking. It does not pay for electricity for other uses such as lighting. The amount of help consumers receive will depend on where they live, income, heating and cooling costs, family size and other factors.

What information do you need to apply?

- Recent copies of your utility bills
- A recent payroll stub or other proof that shows your current gross income
- Documentation showing income from Social Security, unemployment insurance, pension funds, disability payments, etc.
- Final shut-off notice from your electric cooperative or other energy utility
- Proof of present address, such as rent receipt, lease or deed, property tax bill
- Proof of total members living in your household. For example, birth certificates, school records, etc.

For more information

Contact your county Department of Social Services.

For local phone numbers and office addresses, contact the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, toll-free in Raleigh at (800) 662-7030 or (919) 733-3055. Go to the Web site: www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss and click on "County Directory."

En Español

LIHEAP es un programa financiado por el gobierno para ayudar a las familias de bajos ingresos a pagar sus cuentas de calefacción y de aire acondicionado. El folleto del programa federal LIHEAP ofrece un cuadro panorámico del mismo que se puede leer en español (www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/liheap/) tanto en formato de texto como en PDF (328KB). Para poder abrir el archivo en PDF tendrá que obtener e instalar Adobe Acrobat Reader, el cual es gratis.