

MA Energy Assistance Programs for Income Eligible Residents



If you are an income-eligible resident of Massachusetts, there are a number of programs that can help you manage your energy bills, especially during New England's coldest months.

2014 Income Eligibility Amounts:

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD	ANNUAL INCOME
1	\$32,065
2	\$41,932
3	\$51,798
4	\$61,664
5	\$71,530
6	\$81,396
7	\$83,246
8	\$85,096

HOW TO QUALIFY

To qualify, your household gross annual income must fall at or below the amounts shown in the chart to the right. Applicants for Energy Assistance Programs should contact their local community agency. They will advise you of the necessary documents to verify income eligibility.

*For the most current income-eligibility amounts, visit www.mass.gov/hed/community/energy/ or call 866-537-7267.

To find your local community agency, please call 866-537-7267 or visit mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/cold/coldrel.pdf

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

Fuel Assistance

Fuel Assistance (called LIHEAP—Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) helps pay your main heating bills whether you are a homeowner or renter. The program makes direct payments to your utility or fuel dealer whether for oil, propane, gas, electricity, wood, or coal. If you are a renter whose landlord pays for the heat, you may be eligible to receive a payment from LIHEAP to help with your rent.

Discounted Gas and Electric Rates

All state regulated Massachusetts gas and electric utilities offer a Low Income Discount Rate. Most households receiving Fuel Assistance are enrolled automatically. You are also eligible if you receive TANF, EAEDC, food stamps, MassHealth, WIC, or another income-related program, but you will need to apply to the utility directly.

Payment Plans and/or Arrearage Management Programs

Massachusetts gas and electric utilities will work with you to spread out payments on overdue portions of your bill. Utilities also offer an Arrearage Management Program in which past due balances can be forgiven if you keep to a structured payment plan. To take advantage of these programs, contact your utility.

Energy Efficiency and Weatherization Assistance Programs

Massachusetts gas and electric utilities and Cape Light Compact offer a FREE program to help reduce your energy bills. It all starts with a FREE Energy Assessment of your home to determine possible energy savings opportunities. You will receive energy efficient light bulbs, water conservation materials, and possibly a new refrigerator, freezer, heating system (or system repair or tune up), and/or window ac if the existing appliance is determined to be inefficient. Free services may also include attic and wall insulation, weather-stripping and air sealing. These services are available whether your home is heated with oil, gas, electricity, wood, or propane. You can be a homeowner, or else a tenant or landlord of a building in which at least half of the units are income-eligible. To learn more or to apply for this service, contact your local community agency. Landlords of buildings with 5 or more units should call 617-348-6425 or apply at LEANMultiFamily.org.

OTHER PROTECTIONS



Protections from Utility Shut-off

- 1. Winter Moratorium** - Gas and electric utilities will not terminate heat-related service from November 15 through March 15 (sometimes extended to a date in April), so long as service was not shut off for non-payment before November 15.
- 2. Serious Illness** - Gas and electric utilities will not terminate service if anyone in the household (adult or child) has a serious illness. The serious illness can be physical (such as pneumonia), mental (such as bipolar disorder), short-term (such as the flu), or long-term (such as cancer).
- 3. Child under 12 Months** - Gas and electric utilities will not terminate service if anyone in the household is under 12 months old.
- 4. Elderly** - Gas and electric utilities will not terminate service if all adults are age 65 or over and experiencing a financial hardship in paying bills. If the elderly household is not experiencing a financial hardship, the utility company cannot terminate service without obtaining the permission of the Department of Public Utilities.

To learn more, please contact your local gas and/or electric service providers or your local community agency.

Other Sources of Heating Help

- The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), often administered by your local fuel assistance agency.
- The Good Neighbor Energy Fund provides a one-time grant to people who are in temporary financial crisis, but are not income-eligible for Fuel Assistance. Contact the local Salvation Army or call 1-800-334-3047 (or 1-800-262-1320 in area code 413) for this and other help.
- The Citizens Energy Corporation (citizensenergy.com) may be able to offer a one-time delivery of oil at a discounted rate. Call 1-877-563-4645.
- Catholic Charities, the United Way, your city or town, or other local organizations may also be able to help.
- Dial 211 for information on other Massachusetts social services.

**To find your local community agency, please call 866-537-7267
or visit mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/cold/coldrel.pdf**



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