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## [DHS-STAKEHOLDERS] Human Services Reminder: Winter Heating Bill Assistance Available

1 message

HS, Secretary's Office <RA-secretaryoffice@pa.gov>  
To: DHS-STAKEHOLDERS@listserv.dpw.state.pa.us

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 26, 2018**

### **Human Services Reminder: Winter Heating Bill Assistance Available**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Department of Human Services Secretary Teresa Miller today reminded Pennsylvanians that the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) application period for the 2018-19 LIHEAP season is still open. Pennsylvanians who used LIHEAP during the 2017-18 season and who received a pre-season application or green postcard may use a simplified application via the myCOMPASS PA app.

LIHEAP provides assistance for home heating bills to keep Pennsylvanians with lower incomes warm and safe during the winter months. Assistance is available for renters and homeowners. DHS began accepting crisis and regular LIHEAP applications on November 1, 2018 and will continue accepting applications through April 12, 2019. Returning LIHEAP customers from the 2017-18 LIHEAP season are also able to apply through the myCOMPASS PA app available on the Apple App Store or Google Play. Returning customers should have received a green postcard with an access code to apply via the app.

"Everyone deserves a safe, warm home that helps them stay healthy and comfortable throughout the winter," said Secretary Miller. "LIHEAP helped make this possible for more than 340,000 Pennsylvania households last year. That number includes thousands of the commonwealth's most vulnerable citizens - children, older Pennsylvanians, and individuals with a disability – helping them make ends meet as heating costs increase."

LIHEAP Cash is a one-time payment made directly to utility companies or fuel providers to help offset winter heating costs. The average cash benefit this season is \$262. Pennsylvanians may request LIHEAP Crisis assistance for home-heating emergencies when their household is without heat or in danger of being without heat. The average crisis benefit for this season is \$404. More than 120,000 LIHEAP Cash and LIHEAP Crisis applications have been approved thus far.

During the 2017-18 LIHEAP season, 344,008 households statewide received \$115,936,887 million in LIHEAP cash benefits. These households received an average season benefit of \$337. LIHEAP benefits are paid directly to the utility company or fuel provider.

On October 24, the LIHEAP Turn-On Supplement prevented 16,547 homes from having their utilities turned off. The Turn-On Supplement paid \$4,732,471 to 19 utility companies in the commonwealth to prevent utility shut-offs for individuals who received LIHEAP during the 2017-18 season, and had a threat of a shut-off or had their utilities shut off. The program's goal is to prevent LIHEAP customers from entering the winter season with shut-off utilities.

Eligibility for the 2018-19 LIHEAP season is set at 150 percent of the federal poverty income guidelines. The chart below shows the maximum income allowed for eligibility based on household size:

Household size	Maximum Income

1	\$18,210
2	\$24,690
3	\$31,170
4	\$37,650
5	\$44,130
6	\$50,610
7	\$57,090
8	\$63,570
9	\$70,050
10	\$76,530

"I encourage everyone who may be eligible or who has loved ones or neighbors that could benefit from this program to apply, especially before the very cold winter months are upon us so they have the necessary resources to stay warm as the weather continues to be unpredictable," said Miller.

If you received LIHEAP during the 2017-2018 season, there may be funds available for you in addition to LIHEAP Cash and Crisis to halt a shutoff or shutoff notice. Applicants should talk to their caseworker about what help they may be able to receive.

In addition to financial assistance, eligible customers may also be able to receive LIHEAP support for emergencies due to broken or faulty heating units, fuel lines, windows, or pipes. Should any of those emergencies occur, customers can contact their caseworker to see if the unit can be repaired or replaced through LIHEAP's Crisis Interface Program.

"When residents struggle with heating emergencies, it hurts the whole community," Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Dennis Davin said. "LIHEAP is a powerful tool for helping those residents and improving our communities. The Wolf Administration is committed to keeping Pennsylvanians safe, healthy, and warm this winter."

Online applications for LIHEAP can be completed at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us) or on the myCOMPASS PA mobile app if you received LIHEAP during the 2017-18 season. Paper applications are available through local county assistance offices, or interested applicants can download and print an application from the department's website.

For helpful tips on keeping warm throughout the winter while saving money on utility costs, visit [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov).

For more information on LIHEAP, visit [www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov).

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