

## MASSACHUSETTS HEATING ASSISTANCE RELIEF

### INCREASED NEED FOR ASSISTANCE:

- Home heating oil prices are particularly high due to the war with Iran. The National Energy Directors Association (NEADA) estimates that heating oil costs will be about 50% higher than last winter, with the impact concentrated in the Northeast.
  - Roughly 82% of the nation's heating oil is used in this region.
- As of September 21, 2026, the average price of home heating oil in Massachusetts is \$6.15 per gallon, compared with an average of \$3.52 last year, an increase of 75%.
- Approximately 20% of Massachusetts households use heating oil, especially in older homes and rural areas that do not have access to natural gas distribution for heating.
- It is expected that a heating oil customer may need to pay \$2500 to \$4000 for fuel this winter, depending on the fuel needs of the home and the weather.
- According to NEADA, families that rely on electric heating are also projected to see costs rise by 9%, while households using natural gas are expected to see heating costs increase by 5.8%.

### HOW GOVERNOR HEALEY IS PROVIDING RELIEF:

- Governor Healey is announcing a new heating assistance initiative that will both increase and expand benefits for tens of thousands of Massachusetts residents trying to keep their homes warm in the face of sharply rising heating costs.
- The Massachusetts home energy assistance program (HEAP) supported more than 156,000 households earning at and below 60% of the state median income (SMI) in paying their heating bills last year. This year, HEAP-eligible clients will receive an increased benefit thanks to more state investment.
  - A household of 4 earning up to \$103,000 could be eligible for a deliverable benefit from \$870 to \$1,450 or a utility benefit from \$600 to \$1,000, depending on their annual gross income.
- Governor Healey will also deploy additional state funds to expand home energy assistance to thousands of middle-income households who rely on heating oil and are not eligible for HEAP, specifically households earning between 60-100% of the SMI.
  - A heating oil household of 4 earning between \$103,000 and \$171,000 would qualify for an estimated one-time emergency benefit of up to \$680.

- This one-time infusion of state resources will provide deeply needed assistance to more Massachusetts families during a financially challenging winter for the region.
- For more information and to apply for assistance, visit [Home Energy Assistance Programs](#).

## MASSACHUSETTS HEATING ASSISTANCE RELIEF BY THE NUMBERS

### **INCREASED BENEFITS FOR HEAP-ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS**

Households earning at or below 60% SMI will be eligible for increased HEAP benefits.

| Household size | FY27 60% SMI | Estimated Deliverable Benefit | Estimated Utility Benefit |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1              | \$53,585     | \$870 - \$1,450               | \$600 - \$1,000           |
| 2              | \$70,073     |                               |                           |
| 3              | \$86,561     |                               |                           |
| 4              | \$103,049    |                               |                           |
| 5              | \$119,536    |                               |                           |
| 6              | \$136,024    |                               |                           |

### **ONE-TIME RELIEF FOR MIDDLE-INCOME HOME HEATING OIL HOUSEHOLDS**

Middle income home heating oil households earning above 60% and up to 100% SMI would be eligible for an estimated one-time emergency benefit of up to \$680.

| Household size | FY27 Above 60% SMI | FY27 100% SMI | Estimated One-Time Emergency Benefit for Heating Oil |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1              | \$53,586           | \$89,308      | Up to \$680                                          |
| 2              | \$70,074           | \$116,788     |                                                      |
| 3              | \$86,562           | \$144,268     |                                                      |
| 4              | \$103,050          | \$171,749     |                                                      |
| 5              | \$119,537          | \$199,227     |                                                      |
| 6              | \$136,025          | \$226,707     |                                                      |

## **PROGRAM AND OPERATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

- The Massachusetts home energy assistance program ([HEAP](#)) is a free, federally formula-funded resource to help eligible households pay a portion of winter heating bills.
- Congress annually appropriates HEAP funding to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which allocates a portion of these funds to the state through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (HLC).
- HLC allocates HEAP funds to a network of 19 Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) and the City of Cambridge, who process applications and make payments to utility companies or deliverable fuel companies for clients' heating costs.
- The Healey-Driscoll Administration is investing \$15 million to supplement the federal HEAP funds and an additional \$34 million to provide one-time relief to middle-income heating oil clients.
- The existing infrastructure and partnership with community organizations will be used to distribute the increased assistance to HEAP-eligible clients, as well as the expanded heating assistance for middle-income home heating oil clients (*see above table for income/household eligibility criteria*).
- While the HEAP application opened 10/1, the application for one-time assistance for middle income heating oil households will launch in December.
- In the interim, residents who apply through the HEAP portal and are above the income thresholds for HEAP eligibility will be considered for the middle-income relief benefit launching later this year.