

Federal Shutdown Ends and HEAP Funding Resumes

Overview

- Massachusetts remains fully committed to ensuring that all eligible households receive the heating assistance they need. With the federal shutdown now over, we are pleased to begin processing applications beyond heating emergencies.
- However, as a result of the federal shutdown, Applicants should anticipate delays in application determinations.
- The utility shutoff moratorium remains in effect as of October 27, 2025.

Details

- We're pleased that federal funding for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) has resumed, ensuring continued support for Massachusetts households in need of heating assistance this winter.
- While this is welcome news, it usually takes time a minimum of 4-6 weeks-for funding to reach Massachusetts. This reflects the time needed for federal funds to be processed and distributed to states.
- Additionally, once received from the federal government, there are then necessary state administrative processes and system updates to take place to award benefits.
- We understand that many families are experiencing further strain as temperatures drop, and we appreciate their patience as we work diligently to review applications and award benefits as quickly as possible.
- Applications already submitted will continue to be processed in the order they were received. Households do not need to reapply or take additional steps if they've already applied.
- If a household is experiencing a heating emergency-such as no heat, less than 1/8 tank of oil, or a termination notice-they should contact their Local Administering Agency (LAA) immediately for assistance.
- HEAP helps income-eligible renters and homeowners pay a portion of their winter heating bills, regardless of how they heat their home: oil, electricity, natural gas, propane, kerosene, wood or coal. Even households with heat included in rent may be eligible.
- This is a grant, not a loan; the funds do not need to be repaid.
- Massachusetts HEAP is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (HLC) and delivered locally by a strong network of Local Administering Agencies (LAAs), who provide trusted, community-based support and help residents apply.
- Households may qualify even if they:
 - Are not receiving public assistance
 - Do not have unpaid heating bills
 - Rent and have heat included in their rent
- To qualify, household income must be below 60% of the state median income, adjusted for household size and other criteria. For example, a household of four earning \$99,573 or less could be eligible for HEAP.
- Payments are made directly to the heating vendor, reducing paperwork and ensuring timely support.
- Residents can apply online at mass.gov/heap or through their local agency for in-person help.