
HEAP Overview and 2024-2025 Program Updates

Importance The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded energy program intended to provide assistance to low-income households in meeting their immediate home energy needs. In New York State, HEAP is comprised of the following four components:

1. **Regular HEAP** is a benefit designed to decrease a household's energy cost. Regular benefits are structured to ensure that the highest benefits are paid to those households with the highest energy costs. This benefit structure takes into account income, energy costs and family size. Regular benefits are available to households paying separately for heat and to households who make undesignated payments for heat in the form of rent.

Also operated under the Regular heating component is the **Clean and Tune (C&T)** benefit, designed to clean and tune an eligible household's primary heating equipment.

2. **Emergency HEAP** is a benefit designed to meet a household's immediate energy needs. The Emergency benefit component has been designed to resolve energy crisis situations including heating fuel shortage and utility shutoff emergencies.
 3. **Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR)** is a benefit available to assist homeowners in repairing or replacing primary heating equipment when the equipment is inoperable or unsafe and is in need of repair/replacement.
 4. **Cooling Assistance Component (CAC)** provides an air conditioner or fan to HEAP eligible households. Information on the 2024-2025 CAC will be released in a General Information System (GIS) message prior to opening in April 2025.
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HEAP Overview and 2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

Overview

Topics in this module include:

- 2023-2024 Program Update Reminders
 - 2024-2025 Program Updates
 - 2024-2025 HEAP Early Outreach
 - Forms and Notices
 - Applying for Regular Benefits
 - Regular Application Processing
 - Emergency Component
 - Cooling Assistance Component
 - Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement
 - Heating Equipment Clean and Tune
 - Case Supervisory Review Process
 - Vendor Information Update
 - Vendor Payment Transfer and Reissuances
 - Working with Vendors
 - Reports
 - Systems Highlights and Case Processing
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2023-2024 Program Update Reminders

2023-2024 Program Update Reminders

23-LCM-18 2023-2024 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) - Released on October 26, 2023, contained the following program changes for the 2023-2024 HEAP year:

23-LCM-12 Revised File and Signature Requirements

Effective for the 2023-2024 HEAP year, all paper HEAP Applications (LDSS-3421) that are processed in New York City's (NYC) Human Resources Administration (HRA) Department of Social Services (DSS) approved local equivalent electronic processing platform can now be signed electronically by eligibility workers and by a supervisor as required and eligibility examiners will not be required to sign or retain a completed copy of the paper LDSS-3421 Agency Use section.

Resource Limit for Heating Equipment Repair and Replace (HERR)

Effective for the 2023-2024 HEAP year, the maximum resource limit for HERR was increased. Applicants for the HERR component must not have more than \$10,000 in available liquid resources.

Resource Limit for Emergency Benefit

Effective for the 2023-2024 HEAP year, the maximum resource limit for the Emergency benefit increased. Applicants for the Emergency benefit component must not have more than \$2,500 or \$3,750 (for households containing an individual age 60 years or older, or under age 6) in available liquid resources.

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2023-2024 Program Update Reminders, *continued*

2023-2024 Program Update Reminders

HEAP Client Notice System (CNS) Denial Codes

Effective for the 2023-2024 HEAP year, HEAP CNS Denial Codes F06, F07, W73, and W74 for Rest of State (ROS) were updated.

- ROS Code F06 - “Ineligible Alien” has been updated to “Ineligible Non-Citizen”
- **NYC Code 89** is the NYC HRA/DSS corresponding denial reason code for “Ineligible Non-Citizen” – an attachment listing all the non-citizen options is sent with the LDSS-3494B HEAP Notice of Eligibility -Denial (LE)
- ROS Code F07 - “Failure to Document Alien Status” has been updated to “Failure to Document Non-Citizen Status”
- **NYC Code 10** is the NYC HRA/DSS corresponding denial reason code for “Failure to Document Non-Citizen Status” Failure to provide the requested documentation”
- ROS Code W73 – The CNS language regarding available resources for Emergency benefits has been updated to “Your available liquid resources of \$_____ exceed the limit of \$2,500/\$3,750.”
- **NYC Code 58** is the NYC HRA/DSS corresponding denial reason code for Emergency excess resources
- ROS Code W74 – The CNS language regarding available resources for HERR benefits has been updated to “Your available resources of \$_____ exceed the limit of \$10,000.”
- **NYC Code 105** is the NYC HRA/DSS corresponding denial reason code for HERR excess resources

HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) Processing Instructions

Race and ethnicity questions were added to the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) to comply with federal reporting requirements.

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2024-2025 Program Updates

2024-2025 Program Updates Overview

A new LCM for 2024-2025 will be released prior to opening. The following program changes will be made for the 2024-2025 program year

Emergency Benefits

Effective for the 2024-2025 HEAP year, two Emergency benefits will be available when the Emergency component opens. These benefits cannot be issued concurrently. Once the first emergency benefit is exhausted, if the household is in a subsequent emergency they may apply for the second Emergency benefit. This applies to both heat and heat-related domestic electric emergencies.

Categorically Income Eligible (CE) Policy for Temporary Assistance (TA) Safety Net Assistance (SNA) Case Types 16/17

For the 2024-2025 program year, only households in receipt of certain federally funded benefits (ongoing SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Code A SSI) will be considered CE for HEAP budgeting purposes and included on the PA monthly Autopay.

PA Case type 16 (Safety Net Assistance-cash and non-cash) and Case Type 17 (Safety Net Assistance-non-cash after receiving SNA on a case type 16 for 24 months) are not federally funded (TANF) benefits and must be excluded from the PA Autopay unless they meet additional eligibility criteria.

- If recipients of PA on case types 16 or 17 are authorized for PA-FS (PA/FS Code 01), these households may receive a HEAP benefit through the PA Autopay. The PA cases that are authorized to receive ongoing SNAP benefits would be considered in receipt of federally funded benefits and may receive either a heat included or heater benefit on the Autopay.
- PA recipients that are on a case type 16 or 17, with a PA/FS code not equal to 01 must have income at or below HEAP's maximum allowable income based on household size.

Additional information regarding this policy will be released under separate cover.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

2024-2025 Program Updates Overview, *continued*

Elimination of the HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829)

Effective immediately, the HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829) has been discontinued. Districts must discontinue use and destroy all copies of the HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829), including any previously approved Local Equivalent (LE). This form is no longer required for HEAP applicants whose income is zero, or whose shelter costs exceed their income. Basic maintenance for these households may be explored during the eligibility interview at the district's discretion as necessary.

The form has been removed from the OTDA E-Forms Website and will no longer be available for downloading or ordering.

The HEAP Low Income Worksheet (LDSS-3829) should be removed from NYC HRA DSS local processing system (HEAP 1.0).

Weatherization Referral Procedures and Form

Weatherization assistance in NYS is administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) and the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Two-way referrals are sent between HEAP and those two weatherization providers.

In addition to the current referral process from districts to weatherization subgrantees use the DHCR WAP #37 Interagency Referral form. A new form was developed for weatherization subgrantees to refer households that may be eligible for HEAP to the local districts. A copy of this HCR-HEAP Interagency Referral form is available on TrainingSpace.

NYSERDA also promotes HEAP to all EmPower+ participants. Every EmPower+ acceptance letter now informs households that they may be eligible for HEAP and instructs participants to visit the OTDA HEAP website to learn more and apply.

All households referred from HCR and/or NYSERDA must complete a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and be income tested using HEAP maximum income guidelines for the current program year.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

2024-2025 HEAP Components New York State expects to administer the Regular, Emergency, Cooling, Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR), and Heating Equipment Clean and Tune (C&T) benefit components during the 2024-2025 program year.

Draft Program Dates **Regular HEAP** is scheduled to open on **Friday November 1, 2024**, and close on Friday, **March 31, 2025**. Applications for Regular benefits must be accepted through **March 31, 2025**. The Early Outreach mailing is scheduled to begin in late **August 2024**.

No notices, Regular benefit payments, or guarantee of Regular benefits, including ten-day hold requests from utility companies based on an anticipated HEAP benefit, may be issued before program opening.

Households experiencing heat or heat-related emergencies prior to program opening must be referred to the Temporary Assistance (TA) program.

Emergency HEAP is scheduled to open on Tuesday, **January 2, 2025**, and is close on Wednesday, **March 31, 2025**. Applications for Emergency benefits must be accepted through **March 31, 2025**, and will not close prior to this date.

No notices, Emergency benefit payments, or guarantee of Emergency benefits may be issued before **January 2, 2025**. This includes ten-day hold requests from utility companies based on anticipated Emergency HEAP payments.

Heating emergencies prior to **January 2, 2025**, must be resolved with Regular benefits. If the heat related emergency cannot be resolved with the Regular benefit the household must be referred to other programs or make payment arrangements with utility companies as appropriate.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

Draft Program Dates,
continued

Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) is scheduled to open on **Tuesday, October 1, 2024**, and operate through **Tuesday, September 30, 2025**.

Heating Equipment Clean and Tune (C&T) is scheduled to open on **Tuesday, October 1, 2024**, and operate through **Tuesday, September 30, 2025**.

Cooling Assistance Component (CAC) is scheduled to open on **Tuesday, April 15, 2025**, and operate through **Friday, August 29, 2025**, or until funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first.

Program dates for all benefit components may be shortened or extended based on federal funding. Districts will be notified by a General Information System (GIS) message if program dates are revised.

Year-Round HERR and C&T

The HERR and C&T benefit components will continue to operate on a year-round basis for the 2024-2025 year. Districts must pay close attention to the date the application was received.

Applications must be claimed against the appropriate program year depending on the date the application is received.

Income Guidelines

The two-tier HEAP income guideline structure remains the same as in 2023-2024, and maximum income amounts have increased by 5-9%.

Maximum income guidelines have been set at 60% of State Median Income (SMI) for household sizes 1-12 and at 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for household sizes 13 and above.

The 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005) contains detailed information regarding HEAP maximum income guidelines. Copies of the 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005) will be available for download and ordering on E-Forms via Centraport.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

Draft HEAP Benefit Amounts

Benefit amounts are subject to change based on approval of the 2024-2025 HEAP State Plan.

The Nominal “Heat and Eat” benefit is \$21. This has not changed since last year.

Heat-Included Renters Benefits are \$45 for Tier II households, and \$50 for Tier I households. There has been no change to these benefit amounts for 2024-2025.

Regular heaters base benefits range from \$400 to \$900 and have not increased for 2024-2025.

Heater households whose income falls within Tier I and/or have a vulnerable household member will receive 1 or more add-ons in addition to their Regular base benefit amount.

The Tier I (gross income must be at or below 130% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the household size; or at least one adult household member must be in receipt of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP), federally funded PA (TANF), or Code A SSI (State and Federal living arrangement A/A). These households are categorically income eligible for HEAP.

The add-on amount for Tier 1 has increased for the 2024-2025 program year to \$61.

The add-on for households with a vulnerable member (under the age of six, age 60 or older, or permanently disabled) is \$35. Households may receive either, or both add-ons to the base Regular benefit amount. The maximum Regular benefit amount with both add on benefits is **\$996**.

Emergency HEAP benefit amounts range from **\$185 to \$900** depending on the household’s circumstances and have not increased for 2024-2025.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

Draft HEAP Benefit Amounts, continued

Cooling Assistance Component (CAC) benefits are not to exceed **\$800** for a window or portable air conditioner unit and up to **\$1,000** for a wall sleeve air conditioner unit per household, once every 5 years. The maximum benefit amounts remain the same as 2023-2024.

Heating Equipment **Repairs** are not to exceed **\$4,000** per HEAP year. The maximum benefit amount for heating equipment repairs remains the same as 2023-2024.

Heating Equipment **Replacements** may not exceed **\$8,000** and are available to HEAP-eligible households once every 10 years. The maximum benefit amount for heating equipment replacements remains the same as 2023-2024.

Heating Equipment Clean and Tune (C&T) benefits are not to exceed **\$500** per household and are available once every 12 months. The maximum benefit amount for heating equipment clean and tune remains the same as 2023-2024.

The 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005) contains additional detailed information regarding benefit levels. Copies of the 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide will be available for downloading and ordering on E-Forms via Centraport.

Note: A sample of the DRAFT 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005) is in the Appendix for reference only.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

Advance Nominal HEAP 365 Benefits

Advance nominal HEAP 365 payments for the 2024-2025 program year began on April 13, 2024. Nominal HEAP 365 benefits are paid to eligible SNAP recipient households to maximize the household's Heating/Cooling Standard Utility Allowance (HCSUA). Households who are due a benefit greater than \$21 will receive the balance of their heat-included HEAP benefit on the 2024-2025 HEAP Autopay in September.

For further details, please refer to the March 23, 2018, WMS Coordinator Letter - [HEAP Nominal Benefit](#).

Application Processing Timeframes

There are **no** changes to HEAP application processing timeframes.

Districts are required to make eligibility determinations and provide notification of eligibility decisions within 30 business days after the filing of a completed and signed HEAP Application (LDSS-3421).

- Applications that require additional verification or documentation may be pended for up to 10 business days.
- Once an application is pended, the pending timeframe stops the 30 business days allowed for processing. The pending timeframe does not count towards the 30 business day processing timeframe.
- If an application is pended and requires the full 10 business day to return the documentation, the district would have 40 business days to process the application. If the pending documentation is turned in prior to the 10 business days, then the processing timeframe resumes on the day the documentation is returned to the district.

Application Processing Timeframes Example

An applicant applied for a Regular HEAP benefit on 11/1/2024. If this application was not pended, the 30 business day processing timeframe would end on 12/17/2024 (excluding Veterans Day and Thanksgiving) and the applicant would need to be notified of their eligibility decision by this date.

If this applicant was pended the same day they applied, and used the full 10 business days, the 30 business day processing timeframe would now end on 1/2/24 (excluding Thanksgiving and Christmas Day).

If the applicant returned the required documentation on 11/6/24, the applicant used 3 out of the 10 business days for the pending timeframe. The new 30 business day processing timeframe would now end on 12/19/2024.

*processing dates may vary depending on district holiday schedule.

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2024-2025 Program Updates, *continued*

Administrative Allocations

Districts are provided with HEAP administrative funds to meet the staffing and operational needs of their district. Acceptable uses of administrative funds include, but are not limited to staff salaries, staff overtime, temporary staff costs, fringe benefits, indirect costs, and equipment purchases to aid in the administration of HEAP components.

Administration allocations are provided to districts annually. The amounts of these allocations are provided via Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM).

These funds must be obligated between November 1, 2024, and September 30, 2025, and claimed by December 31, 2025. Unclaimed funds cannot be rolled into the following year's administrative allocation.

Notice Production

NYC HEAP notices are created through HEAP 1.0

Subscription and Policy Directives

District staff can subscribe to receive Administrative Directive Memos (ADM), Information Letters (INF), and Local Commissioner Memoranda (LCM) via email by going to:

<http://otda.state.nyenet/directives/listserve.asp>

District staff can subscribe to receive General Information System (GIS) messages and other Employment and Income Support Programs (EISP) notifications via email by going to:

<http://otda.state.nyenet/dta/resources/subscribe.asp>

For complete subscription instructions, please see the participant folder files.

2024-2025 Early Outreach

Early Outreach

Early access to the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) is provided to households who are not included in the Autopay but received a Regular HEAP benefit in the previous program year. Early Outreach application notices must be issued within 30 business days from program opening.

These households must complete, sign, and submit a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421), but may do so prior to program opening. These households can complete the paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) that is mailed to them to apply prior to program opening and return to NYC HRA/DSS via mail, fax, or in-person at a Benefits Access Center (BAC).

ACCESS HRA does not have capability for applicants to apply online for Early Outreach at this time.

2024-2025 Early Outreach Highlights

- All applicants must be income tested utilizing 2024-2025 maximum income guidelines for the household size.
- Earned income, over \$20 in the month of application, including self-employment and rental income, must be documented. Certifiers may request documentation of other unearned income if the information provided on the application does not seem credible.
- All Early Outreach applicants are considered Returning Applicants with simplified documentation requirements and an interview is not required.
- Benefits cannot be guaranteed or issued prior to program opening under any circumstances. Early Outreach applicants in an emergency situation must be referred to other programs. Ten-day holds may not be issued in the case of utility shut offs.
- Notices (either approval or denial) cannot be issued prior to program opening.

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2024-2025 Early Outreach, *continued*

Target Population

NYC's Management Information System (MIS) is used to identify targeted households and will produce and mail out instruction letters and HEAP applications to the targeted households in NYC.

The Early Outreach mail out includes **ALL households** that received a 2023-2024 Regular HEAP benefit on a Low Income (HEAP Only) case type, regardless of household composition and vulnerability.

How are Cases Selected for Early Outreach?

The following criteria was used to select cases for the mail out:

- Low Income (HEAP only).
- The HEAP case must be active on the file production date.
- Closed cases are not selected.
- The case record must contain an issued Regular benefit from the 2023-2024 program year.
- The case record must contain an active applicant/payee

The file is compared against active CA and SNAP cases. Those cases with an applicant/payee who is active on a CA or SNAP case at the time of file production is excluded from the mailing.

What Are We Mailing?

There is one standard application and instructions for all Early Outreach households.

Pre-Filled Information on the Application

The following information will be system generated on the application:

- Applicant's first and last name
- Current address
- HRA return address:

HRA/HEAP
Post Office Box No. 1401
Church Street Station
New York, NY 10008

Note: A sample of the 2023-2024 NYC Early Outreach Application is in the Appendix for reference only. The 2025-2025 NYC Early Outreach Application is still in production.

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2024-2025 Early Outreach, *continued*

Early Outreach Processing Instructions

All applicants must complete the entire HEAP Application (LDSS-3421). Applicants are required to complete the application and provide current information on household members, residence, energy bills, social security numbers for all household members that have one, and earned income over \$20 in the month of application.

- Applications must be date stamped and logged in upon receipt.
- Applications must be reviewed for completeness and for changes from the previous year.
- Incomplete applications and those missing information must be pended.
- Certifiers may attempt to verify or clarify information over the telephone. If information cannot be obtained, a Documentation Requirements (LDSS-2642) form or local equivalent must be sent to the household.

What Happens if the Applicant Loses Their Application or Did Not Receive an Application

Districts should first verify that the applicant was eligible to receive an Early Outreach Application, then they have the following option:

- A HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) may be mailed to the household. This should be marked as an “Early Outreach” application on the top of the application for audit purposes.
- Any household that meets the criteria for the Early Outreach but did not receive an application, may be provided a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) during the Early Outreach period.

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2024-2025 Early Outreach, *continued*

Processing Timeframes for Early Outreach

Processing time for applications received during the Early Outreach period and prior to program opening begins on the date of program opening.

Early Outreach applications received on or after program opening must be processed in date order with all other applications received. There is no priority processing. Processing time begins on the date that the application is received by the certifier.

Eligibility notices for applications returned by the district before program opening must be sent within **30 business days** of program opening. Eligibility notices for Regular HEAP applications received after program opening must be sent within **30 business days** of application receipt.

Note: Samples of the NYC HRA Approval, Denial and Pending notices are in the Appendix for reference only.

HEAP Forms and Notices

Importance Two forms used in the administration of HEAP have been updated for 2024-2025.

- 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005)
- HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool (LDSS-5099)

All HEAP forms are available on the OTDA website under LDSS E-Forms:
http://otda.state.nyenet/ldss_eforms/

Note: Copies of the revised forms for 2024-2025 and the NYS 2024-2025 HEAP Administrative Form Guide listing all mandated and optional HEAP forms are included in the Appendix for reference only.

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2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005)

When is this form used?

The 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005) is optional and is a quick reference worker tool. This form is updated annually and provides certifying agencies with benefit amounts, income eligibility guidelines, information on eligible living situations, acceptable forms of documentation, and documentation requirements.

What revisions were made to this form?

Revisions to this form include:

- Revision date of 7/24
- Updated income guidelines for 2024-2025
- Increased the Tier 1 add-on amount for 2024-2025 to \$61

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HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool (LDSS-5099)

When is this form used?

The HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool (LDSS-5099) is an optional quick reference worker tool. This form provides certifying agencies with system codes and information for HEAP.

What revisions were made to this form?

Revisions to the form include:

- Revision date of 5/24
- Removed reference to program year in form title
- WMS Data Entry (Side 1)
 - Removed payment “to” and “from” date instructions
 - Social Security Number Codes (Screen 2) moved to the first column
 - Added Gender Codes (Screen 3)
 - Added Race/Ethnicity Codes (Screen 3) and directions for entering race:
 - M-Multi-race (enter Y for every race)
 - O-Other (enter U for every race)

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How to Order Forms

How to Order Forms

1. All forms with LDSS or PUB numbers are produced by OTDA and must be ordered. When ordering or reordering any HEAP form, be sure to order sufficient quantities for the entire HEAP season. Districts must also take into consideration the form supply needs of Alternate Certifiers when placing orders. Please check the current supply at the district prior to placing an order. Please allow for up to 4-6 weeks for processing and receiving of all requested documents.

No forms are dropped shipped.

2. HEAP forms are available on the OTDA Intranet website at https://otda.state.ny.net/ldss_eforms/ and may be available for downloading by local districts for reproduction locally, depending on print specifications. All publications in languages other than English and Spanish are available via the intranet only. Requests for printed copies can be placed by either completing and emailing the ordering form, or through the online ordering system via the OTDA Intranet LDSS-E-Forms page.

Email ordering request:

Requests for printed copies should be submitted to OTDA by completing the [OTDA876](#) form and emailing it to: forms.orders@otda.ny.gov.

Online ordering request:

Publications and LDSS forms can also be ordered online by accessing the Bureau of Management Services' Electronic Forms and Publications Online Ordering System at: <https://formorders.otda.ny.gov/>.

If presented with a Login prompt, enter your HSEN ID and password. This system provides users the ability to order forms, envelopes, and publications over the intranet. Once the order is submitted, the user can view the status of their order and will receive system generated emails when their order is processed and shipped.

3. Questions concerning ordering forms should be directed to the Bureau of Management Services (BMS) Document Services at (518) 474-9489.

Note: A sample copy of the OTDA876 form is included in the Appendix for reference only.

How to Obtain a Local Equivalent Form

When is a local equivalent form used?

Local equivalent forms are forms developed by districts and are designed to be used in place of State-mandated forms. Local equivalent forms must contain all of the information required on the State-mandated forms but may also contain additional information required for the district’s own purposes.

Local equivalents may differ in format as well as media from the mandated forms. Districts develop local equivalent forms for many reasons. These include producing forms to accommodate sight-impaired workers; producing different sized forms that better fit in local case folders; producing forms that have the agency address preprinted; and producing electronic forms to be used in place of hard copy forms.

The goal of the local equivalent form approval process is to guarantee that districts are using forms that are legally, programmatically, and systemically accurate and up to date.

Prior approval for local equivalent forms

Requests for local equivalent forms do not need to be resubmitted each program year if the State-mandated form has not changed since your district’s local equivalent form was approved.

However, if a district received prior approval to use a local equivalent form, and that State-mandated form has changed, a new request to use a local equivalent must be submitted, or the district must use the most recent State-mandated LDSS version of the form.

How to obtain a local equivalent form?

- Local district staff will fill out the Request for Approval of Local Equivalent Forms (LDSS-5099)
- Instructions on the form directs districts to submit the form to otda.sm.Local.Equivalent.Requests@otda.ny.gov with a copy of the proposed local equivalent form.

Note: A copy of the Request for Approval of Local Equivalent Forms (LDSS-5099) is included in the Appendix for reference only.

Applying for Regular HEAP Benefits

Regular Benefits

The Regular benefit component is a supplement to assist eligible households in paying a portion of their annual energy costs. Applicant households must be income eligible, reside in an eligible living situation, and at least one household member must be a U.S. citizen, qualified non-citizen, or U.S. National. Fuel type and household vulnerability are also considered. For HEAP purposes, households who pay directly to a fuel vendor or utility company for heat are considered **heaters**. Benefits are based on fuel type and are paid directly to the fuel vendor or utility. Those who do **not** pay directly to a fuel vendor or utility for heat are considered **heat-included households**. Heat-included benefits are authorized to the utility company or paid directly to the applicant through an EBT card or paper check if the applicant has not been issued an EBT card.

Generally, the Regular benefit is available only one time per household in the program year.

Applying for Regular HEAP

Households in NYC may apply for Regular HEAP benefits in three ways:

1. HEAP Mass Authorization Autopay
2. Online via ACCESS HRA
3. Paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421)

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Applying for Regular HEAP Benefits, *continued*

HEAP Autopay

Households in receipt of ongoing SNAP or federally funded CA are eligible for an automatic Regular HEAP benefit if they are HEAP eligible on the date of the HEAP Autopay file creation. NYC conducts a monthly Autopay when the Regular benefit component is open.

SNAP households are considered in receipt of ongoing benefits for HEAP purposes if there is a valid “FS ongoing benefits” payment line on the SNAP case in the month that the Autopay is run.

Non-federally funded CA households may also receive a HEAP benefit through the CA Autopay if they are in receipt of ongoing SNAP benefits. These households must be a case type 16 or 17 with a CA/FS Code equal to 01.

CA recipients that are on a case type 16 or 17, with a CA/FS code not equal to 01 with income at or below HEAP’s maximum allowable income based on household size will also receive a benefit through the HEAP Autopay.

These recipients consent to have their eligibility determined for HEAP through the Autopay process when they complete and submit the Statewide Common Application (LDSS-2921), Recertification Application for CA or SNAP (LDSS-3174), or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Application/Recertification (LDSS-4826).

CA or SNAP eligibility information found in the Downstate Welfare Management System (WMS) is used to identify HEAP eligible CA and SNAP recipients and to system generate a HEAP benefit. Households who incur a direct heating cost will have their benefit paid directly to a vendor/utility provider.

Autopay households who pay indirectly for heat in the form of rent will receive a Tier I heat-included benefit in the amount of \$50.

Autopay households residing in certain living situations are eligible for a nominal HEAP benefit in the amount of \$21.

The most common type of living situation that the applicant will receive a \$21 benefit for is residing in government subsidized housing with heat-included in the rent. For a complete listing of eligible living situations for the \$21 benefit, refer to the HEAP Manual, Chapter 8-Basic Eligibility, F, Living Situation-Eligible Living Arrangements.

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Applying for Regular HEAP Benefits, *continued*

Households who miss the Autopay

Households who become eligible for ongoing SNAP or federally funded CA (TANF) after the Autopay will not be included in the initial HEAP Autopay. These households must apply for HEAP using a paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) or be picked up on a subsequent monthly Autopay run in NYC.

An interview is not required for applicant households in receipt of ongoing SNAP or federally funded CA (TANF) that miss the Autopay.

Once the Regular benefit component is open, any individual may apply for the program by submitting a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421). If an individual receives a Regular benefit on the Autopay, they **must not** receive a duplicate Regular benefit. All subsequent HEAP applications must be processed, and clients must receive an appropriate notice of eligibility.

If the household that missed the autopay submits a paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and they have an open and active federally funded CA/SNAP case, the district can write the payline on the open federally funded CA/SNAP case, and image the submitted HEAP Application into the corresponding case record.

If the household that missed the autopay submits an electronic application via ACCESS HRA, the application is now registered electronically, and requires district action to pay on the open and active federally funded CA/SNAP case. The district should deny the electronic HEAP Application using the HEAP Denial Code “Receiving HEAP in Another Case”, and it should be case noted that the HEAP payment will be made on the other case number.

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Applying for Regular HEAP Benefits, *continued*

**Non-Autopay
HEAP
Applications**

Households who do not receive a Regular HEAP benefit on the HEAP Autopay must apply for benefits using a paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) or online through ACCESS HRA after program opening.

ACCESS-HRA

Households applying for Regular benefits may submit applications online through ACCESS HRA at <https://a069-access.nyc.gov/accesshra/>

Households **may only** use ACCESS HRA to apply for Regular and Cooling benefits.

Regular HEAP Application Processing

Paper Applications

Households who do not wish to apply for Regular benefits online may submit a paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) by mail, fax, or in person at an [HRA Benefits Access Center](#).

Applicants in NYC may obtain a paper HEAP Application:

- In person from a [HRA Benefits ACCESS Center](#)
- By downloading and printing a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) through ACCESS NYC and submitting the completed application to the NYC Department of Social Services/Human Resources Administration (NYC DSS/HRA).
- By calling the NYC HRA One-Number hotline at 718-557-1399, and requesting to have a paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) mailed to the household.

To apply for a Regular benefit, applicants must submit a completed, signed and dated application to either a NYC Benefits Access Center or to the NYC HEAP Central Processing Unit in one of the following ways:

- By mailing the completed signed and dated HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) to HEAP Central Processing, at HRA/HEAP, P.O. Box 1401 Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008
- By bringing the completed, signed, and dated HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) to an [HRA Benefits Access Center](#)
- By faxing the completed, signed, and dated HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) to RightFax: 212-387-1639

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Regular HEAP Application Processing, *continued*

Paper HEAP Applications

Upon receipt by the district or Benefits Access center/Outreach location, all paper HEAP Applications must be:

- Date stamped
- Registered and logged into HEAP Central Processing System (HEAP 1.0), the NYC local equivalent processing system to myWorkspace used for Rest of State (ROS).
- A completed Agency Use section is no longer required for HEAP Applications (LDSS-3421) processed in HEAP 1.0.
- A manual log is required unless the district registers all HEAP Applications in HEAP 1.0.

Online HEAP Applications

The HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) must be dated and signed by the applicant.

Paper applications must have a manual signature and electronic applications must have an electronic signature.

The application must be signed by a member of the household who meets one of the following conditions:

- Has the heating bill in their name
- Has primary responsibility to the vendor to pay the bill
 - For the purposes of HEAP, portable space heaters are not considered primary heating source/equipment
- Is the tenant of a dwelling where heat is included in the rent

If the application is unsigned or signed by someone other than the person mentioned above, the following actions must be taken:

- The application must be pending for 10 business days
- The Documentation Requirements (LDSS-2642) or local equivalent form must be sent to the applicant, along with a copy of the submitted HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and a blank copy of the signature page
- If the signed application page is not returned to the district by the due date, the application should be denied using the NYC HEAP Denial Reason Code 10 “Insufficient Information”.

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Regular HEAP Application Processing, *continued*

Authorized Representative

An authorized representative, including a designated power of attorney, may perform the following tasks on behalf of the applicant:

- complete and file the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421)
- contact the agency, and speak with their worker
- access eligibility information in the applicant’s case file
- complete all forms on behalf of the applicant
- provide documentation, and
- appeal agency decisions

The HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) allows for the designation of an Authorized representative under Section 8: Authorized Power of Attorney documentation or a dated and signed note from the applicant authorizing the individual to apply on their behalf may be used if the authorized representative section of the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) is not completed. A copy of such documentation must be retained in the case record.

The applicant must still sign The HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) under Section 9: Consent and Signature. An Authorized Representative may sign the application on behalf of applicants who are physically incapable of signing the application, or who habitually sign with an X.

Notations regarding the circumstances must be retained in the case record.

The Authorized Representative designation will remain in effect for the current HEAP year unless revoked by the applicant. Each HEAP year the applicant will be asked if they want to designate an Authorized Representative.

Emergency Situations

Appropriate action must be taken to protect the health and safety of applicant households who are without heat, or in danger of being without heat, and emergency resolution timeframes must be met as required.

Available Regular HEAP benefits must be used to resolve emergencies before Emergency HEAP benefits are issued. Regular benefits may be guaranteed to HEAP vendors only when the household is in an emergency situation. The HEAP Guarantee of Payment (LDSS-5000) or utility web tool may be used.

Regular HEAP Application Processing, *continued*

- 30 Business Days** A written notice of eligibility decision, either approval or denial, must be issued to the applicant within 30 business days of the application date.
- The application date is the date that the signed, dated, and completed application arrived at the district or alternate certifier, regardless of method of submission.
- Pending Time** Applications may be pended for documentation or to complete an interview for a maximum of 10 business days.
- Applicants who need to submit additional documentation must be sent a Documentation Requirements (LDSS-2642) or a local equivalent form.
- The 10 business day pending timeframe is not counted in the overall 30 business day processing time.
- One pending period is allowed per HEAP Application (LDSS-3421).
- New vs. Returning Applicants** Documentation and interview requirements for the Regular component depend on whether the HEAP applicant is a new or returning applicant.

New Applicants

New applicants are defined as applicants who did not receive a Regular benefit through the application process during the previous program year in the county where they currently reside. These applicants must:

- Submit a signed, dated, and completed paper HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) or electronic HEAP Application via ACCESS HRA to the district.
- Have an interview, unless the household is in receipt of ongoing SNAP, federally funded CA (TANF) or Code A SSI and missed the Autopay. In NYC, a monthly Autopay is run and the applicant is typically picked up for the Autopay in the subsequent run. A HEAP eligibility interview is not needed for applicants who are considered Categorically Income Eligible (CE).
- If the HEAP applicant applies electronically and the district is making the HEAP payment on an open federally funded CA/SNAP case, the submitted electronic HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) must be denied using NYC HRA/DSS denial reason code 10 “Receiving HEAP in Another Case”, and it should be notated in the case comments in HEAP 1.0 that the payment was made on the other case number.

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Regular HEAP Application Processing, *continued*

New Applicants, continued

- An eligibility interview is required for all new applicants and, the applicant has the option to complete this interview either in person at the district/alternate certifier or over the telephone.
- Provide a valid Social Security Number (SSN) for all household members that have a valid SSN. Household members without an SSN must be excluded from the HEAP household count in the HEAP budget, but their income must be captured and included in the HEAP budget.
- Provide documentation of the following:
 - (1) Identity for all household members;
 - (2) Residence;
 - (3) Income (earned and unearned), over \$20 in the month of application for all household members;
 - (4) Vendor relationship; and
 - (5) Vulnerability (if applicable)

Note: Applicants may attest to earned and unearned income equaling less than \$20 in the month of application, and do not need to supply documentation of this income.

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Regular HEAP Application Processing, *continued*

Returning Applicants

Returning applicants are defined as applicants who received a Regular HEAP benefit through the application process during the previous program year and reside in the same county. These applicants must:

- Provide a valid SSN for all household members that have a valid SSN. Household members without an SSN must be excluded from the HEAP household count in the HEAP budget, but their income must be captured and included in the HEAP budget.
- Provide documentation of the following:
 - (1) Earned income greater than \$20 for all household members in the month of application
 - (2) Provide identity documentation for any new household members since the prior year's certification

A HEAP eligibility interview is not needed for applicants who are returning or considered Categorically Income Eligible (CE).

Returning applicants do not need to document unearned income unless the income source is new or if the amount has changed significantly in the past year. If the amount listed by the applicant on the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) differs from the amount entered into the budget, explanatory case notes must be added to the case record.

Returning applicant households do not need to provide documentation that is already on file at the agency, such as identity of established household members, proof of residence, vendor relationship, etc.

However, such documentation on file must be verified by the eligibility examiner, and clearly notated in the case number that contains the documentation, in the Agency Use section of the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) or in case comments in HEAP 1.0 if the application is received electronically from ACCESS HRA.

If the district does not possess proper documentation, the case must be pended so the applicant can provide it.

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Regular HEAP Application Processing, *continued*

Documentation

Applicants may provide documentation to the district via mail, fax, in-person, or electronically where available.

- By mailing the documentation to: HEAP Central Processing, at HRA/HEAP, P.O. Box 1401 Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008
- By faxing the documentation to RightFax: 212-387-1639
- By bringing the documentation in person to an HRA Benefits ACCESS Center
- Electronically uploading and sending the documentation to HRA/DSS HEAP through the ACCESS HRA mobile application.

NYC DSS/HRA must use any documentation available in the agency to avoid requesting duplicates from the household.

It must be notated in the case record if the documentation is in another case record, and note the case number, type of documentation, and date the information was verified.

Budgeting

A budget must be stored for all HEAP applications.

Budgets must be accurate and verified during the supervisory review, paying specific attention to the following:

- Income calculation
- Vulnerability indicator
- Categorical eligibility codes

If a HEAP household is Categorically Income Eligible (CE) due to receipt of ongoing SNAP, federally funded CA (TANF), or Code A SSI, the district may use the information on file on the CA or SNAP budget, and an eligibility interview is not required.

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Emergency Component

**Emergency
HEAP
Benefits**

Emergency HEAP benefits are available to eligible households facing a verified emergency heating or heat-related situation, who have exhausted all available Regular benefits. Households must meet all Regular benefit criteria and may not have resources available to resolve their emergency.

Regular component benefits, if available, must be utilized first to resolve heating emergencies for eligible households.

Temporary relocation for housing emergencies and propane tank deposits to obtain new propane vendors are also available to eligible households under the Emergency benefit component.

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Emergency Component, *continued*

Required Forms for Emergency Applications

Applicants who are eligible for income deeming only need to complete the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (EBBW) (LDSS-3594B) to apply for the Emergency benefit component.

This form must be filled out in its entirety by an eligibility examiner with the applicant, either in person at a Benefits Access Center location or over the telephone.

In order to be eligible for income deeming the household must meet all the following criteria:

- The household received a Regular benefit in the current program year.
 - If the household received their Regular benefit on a federally funded CA or SNAP case, that case must be open and active at the time of application for Emergency.
 - The Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) must be used in conjunction with the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) for households who received a Regular benefit through the Autopay, and whose SNAP, federally funded CA (TANF), or Code A SSI case has closed.
- The household's income has not increased by more than \$200 since applying for the Regular benefit.
- The household's composition has not changed since applying for the Regular benefit.
- The household has not moved since applying for the Regular benefit.

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Emergency Component, *continued*

Required Forms for Emergency Applications, continued

Applicants who do not meet all of criteria above are not eligible for income deeming must apply for an Emergency benefit by completing the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) with full documentation and the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) completed with an eligibility worker in person at an HRA Benefit Access Center or over the telephone.

An eligibility interview is required for all applicants applying with the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421).

The applicant must submit proof of:

- Identification for household members who were not listed on the Regular benefit application;
- Residence;
- Income over \$20 in the month of application; and
- Vendor relationship/customer of record status.

Applications for Emergency Benefits

The eligibility worker must complete the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) with the applicant either in person or over the telephone.

If the applicant applies with only the LDSS-3594B, an eligibility interview is not required. The LDSS-3594B must still be completed by the eligibility examiner with the applicant.

Applicants may apply for this benefit via the telephone, or in-person at an HRA Benefits Access Center.

Applications for the Emergency benefit component may not be submitted online via ACCESS HRA unless otherwise directed by the district.

The applicant for Emergency benefits must be the customer of record or part of the original Regular HEAP household.

Districts are required to provide notification of Emergency eligibility decisions within 30 business days after the filing of a completed and signed application or telephone contact.

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Emergency Component, *continued*

Resources

Applicants for Emergency benefits must not have more than \$2,500 or \$3,750 (if the household contains a member under age 6 or aged 60 or older) in available liquid resources.

A listing of resources is outlined below and defined in the HEAP Manual, Chapter 10- Heat or Heat Related Emergency Component Eligibility Criteria:

- Cash
- Checking and/or savings account balances
- Stocks/bonds
- Certificates of Deposit (CDs)
- IRA accounts, including remaining amounts from a closed out IRA
- Lump sums from sale of property or insurance settlements and balances from any other lump sum not specifically excluded
- 401(k) and other retirement accounts, less the amount of penalties for withdrawal
- Accessible account balances from crowdfunding platforms such as, GoFundMe, Indiegogo, Fundanything, GiveForward, and other fundraising platforms
- Any other available funds not specifically excluded in the HEAP Manual

All members of the household must be resource tested, including qualified non-citizens residing in the household.

All household members must comply with resource rules, including federally funded CA, SNAP recipients, Code A SSI, and categorically income eligible households

Applicants may attest to their household's resources, and documentation is not required unless the eligibility examiner has further questions. This includes situations where the attestation contradicts information on the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421), information on file, or information from another verifiable source contradicts the person's attestation.

continued on next page

Emergency Component, *continued*

Customer of Record

In order to be eligible for a heat or heat-related domestic Emergency benefit, the applicant must be the customer of record.

A customer of record is the person(s) who has an account in their name with an energy vendor.

The following are also considered to be customer of record:

- The legal spouse who currently resides with the customer of record.
- The surviving legal spouse of a deceased customer of record (proof required).
- An individual whose Emergency benefit will re-establish the account in their name.
- A household may still qualify for Emergency benefits if the customer of record is a qualified non-citizen, and the household is otherwise eligible.

If the customer of record is not available to apply, applicants for Emergency benefits who are not the customer of record may still apply as long as the applicant was part of the household for the Regular benefit and remains part of that household. The customer of record must also remain part of the household.

Emergency Situations

In order to be eligible for Emergency benefits, the household must be facing a heat or heat-related emergency.

Emergency heating situations are categorized as **crisis** or **life-threatening** and must be verified and documented on the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) before benefits are authorized.

Emergency resolution timeframes vary depending on the type of emergency.

If an applicant states they are in a life-threatening emergency due to a living situation deemed by the district to be detrimental to the health and/or safety of household members, then the district should process the application timely and consider temporary relocation, when temporary relocation is available.

Utility moratoriums and warm weather do not affect eligibility for Emergency HEAP benefits.

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Emergency Component, *continued*

Crisis Emergencies

A crisis emergency is when loss of heat is imminent. Imminent loss of heat is defined as any of the following:

- Household has less than ¼ tank for oil, kerosene, or propane
- Household has less than a 10 day supply for other deliverable fuels
- Household's heat or heat-related domestic utility service is scheduled for termination or disconnection

Crisis emergency processing timeframe: An Emergency benefit for a HEAP eligible household should be used to resolve a crisis emergency within 48 hours of application or telephone contact when the Emergency component is open.

A telephone request for Emergency benefits made by a recipient of a Regular benefit for the current program year is considered to be an application and the processing timeframe begins on the date of the telephone request.

Life-Threatening Emergencies

A life-threatening emergency is when a HEAP applicant or recipient household is without heat or utility service to operate a heating source. This may occur when the household has run out of deliverable heating fuel or when utility service has been terminated.

Life-threatening emergency processing timeframe: An Emergency benefit for a HEAP eligible household should be used to resolve a life-threatening emergency within 18 hours of application or telephone contact when the Emergency component is open.

A telephone request for Emergency benefits made by a recipient of a Regular benefit for the current program year is considered to be an application and the processing timeframe begins on the date of the telephone request.

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Emergency Component, *continued*

Emergency Verification

Utility emergencies must be verified and documented in the case record using the utility company's online web tool, collateral contact with the utility company, the customer's bill with a termination date, or a termination notice.

If an online webtool is used to verify a utility emergency, a copy of the webtool showing the termination date and active status or shutoff date must be printed and added to the case record, or the date the information was accessed, and the shutoff date must be clearly notated on Verification Section, Utility on the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B).

To verify deliverable heating fuel emergencies, a current vendor statement or collateral contact with the vendor is required. The vendor must attest that the applicant cannot obtain a heating fuel delivery with any credit remaining on their account, and that the applicant is out of fuel, or has less than a 10 day supply or less than $\frac{1}{4}$ tank of fuel. The vendor attestation may be based on the date of their last delivery and heating fuel usage. The date of the collateral contact with the vendor must be clearly notated under the Verification Section, Non-Utility on the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B).

Note: The applicant's customer of record status must also be verified with the vendor during this process of emergency verification.

Emergency Component, *continued*

Emergency Resolution

Districts must provide and document some form of assistance to resolve the household’s emergency heat or heat-related situation within 18/48 hours.

The district must clearly notate under the Agency Use section of the LDSS-3594B, the date of the emergency resolution and the action that was taken by the district to resolve the emergency within the specified timeframes.

The emergency resolution date is the date that the district action was taken.

Emergency resolution may include:

- Guaranteeing a benefit to the vendor to make a delivery
 - If a Guarantee of Payment (LDSS-5000) is sent to ameliorate the heating emergency, then the district must confirm that the vendor is able to provide a delivery within the 18 or 48 hour timeframe.
 - If not, then the guarantee of payment is not considered to be resolving the emergency situation.
 - The district action that was taken to resolve the emergency should be clearly notated in the case record, in addition to if the applicant was willing to wait for a delivery outside the timeframes for a required action by the district.
- Guaranteeing a benefit to the utility company to restore service or prevent termination
- Access to safe supplemental heat, e.g. space heaters, woodstove
- Temporary relocation to a friend or relative’s home
- Temporary relocation to emergency housing provided by the district
- Referral to CA
- Referral to community resource

Worker and Supervisor Signatures

The Agency Use section of the Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) must be completed in its entirety, even if the application is processed electronically in HEAP 1.0.

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Cooling Assistance Component Benefits

Cooling Assistance Component Benefits (CAC)

Cooling Assistance Component (CAC) benefits are available to HEAP eligible households containing at least one individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat and verified in writing by a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.

Households that are unable to obtain required documentation within the requested timeframe may attest to having a medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat and that they are experiencing a hardship in obtaining medical documentation.

Households containing a vulnerable member (under age 6 or aged 60 or older) that meet all other component eligibility criteria may receive a CAC benefit without a corresponding medical need.

Full eligibility criteria for the Cooling Assistance Component benefit will be released via GIS prior to Cooling opening in April 2025.

Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) Benefits

**HERR
Benefits**

Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) benefits are available to assist HEAP eligible households with the cost to repair or replace the applicant’s primary heating equipment. The applicant must own their dwelling for the 12 months prior to the month of application, and the heating equipment must have been documented by a participating vendor to be inoperable or unsafe, and in need of repair and or replacement.

Heating equipment replacement is also available, under limited circumstances and with medical documentation, to replace systems that are detrimental to a household member’s health. Documentation must be in writing from a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner and must specify the reason why the current heating system is detrimental to the household member’s health.

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HERR Benefits, *continued*

Applications for Heating Equipment Repair/ Replacement (HERR) Benefits

The application for the HERR benefit component is the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421). Eligibility workers at the district must also complete the Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Screening Form (LDSS-5010).

The HEAP Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Screening Form (LDSS-5010) is a mandatory form designed to assist districts in assessing the heating equipment situation. The form should be used to screen to determine if applying for HERR is appropriate for the emergency situation. The form is not a substitute for any other required forms and cannot be used to determine eligibility.

The Heating Equipment Repair Replacement Worksheet (LDSS-4867) must be completed **in its entirety** by the district with the applicant, either in person at an HRA Benefits Access Center or over the telephone.

The Agency Use section of the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421), with worker and supervisor signatures must be completed and contained in the case record.

Applications for HERR can be submitted by mail, fax, or in-person including those from Cash Assistance (CA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, using the current version of the New York State (NYS) HEAP Application (LDSS-3421).

In-person applications and interviews are no longer required but are still an option if the applicant prefers this method of application.

If the applicant is applying by mail, the district must have a local process in place to track incoming HERR applications for timely emergency resolution.

Applicants for HERR must have an interview, either in person, or over the telephone.

Applicants may not apply for HERR benefits via ACCESS HRA.

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HERR Benefits, *continued*

Emergency Resolution

No-heat emergencies due to non-working or unsafe primary heating equipment are considered **life-threatening** emergencies and must be resolved within 18 hours of applying for benefits.

Verification of timely emergency resolution must be notated in the case record. This resolution date, as well as how the heating emergency was resolved, must be clearly stated under the Emergency Resolution section of the Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Worksheet (LDSS-4867).

| EMERGENCY RESOLUTION | |
|--|--|
| Action to resolve the emergency situation must be taken within 18 hours of application date if the household is without heat or within 48 hours if loss of heat is imminent. | |
| How was the emergency resolved within the 18/48 hour timeframes for the HEAP ELIGIBLE household? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heating equipment repaired | <input type="checkbox"/> Heating equipment replaced Work completed on _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to alternate temporary housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe supplemental heat <input type="checkbox"/> Household relocated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |
| If the applicant is not eligible for HEAP or eligibility cannot be determined within the required timeframes, how was the emergency resolved? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to community organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred to TA <input type="checkbox"/> Safe supplemental heat <input type="checkbox"/> Access to temporary alternate housing |
| Date of Resolution: _____ | |

The date of resolution is not necessarily when the heating equipment was repaired or replaced, but when the applicant is provided with alternate temporary housing, household relocation, or is documented as having safe supplemental heat in the household.

Signatures

HEAP Applications (LDSS-3421) must be signed by the worker and supervisor. All HERR applications require a worker and supervisor signature even if they are processed electronically in HEAP1.0.

All applications for HERR must be reviewed by a county employee at least one level above the county employee certifying the application for assistance. It is recommended that the district’s designated HEAP Coordinator perform review and sign off on all HERR benefit applications unless the HEAP Coordinator determined eligibility. In that case, a supervisor one level up must sign off on the case.

Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Benefits

Heating Equipment Clean & Tune Benefits

The Heating Equipment Clean and Tune (C&T) benefit is available to assist HEAP eligible homeowners with the cost of cleaning the primary heating equipment.

This may also include chimney cleaning, minor repairs, installation of carbon monoxide (CO) detectors or programmable thermostats, if needed, to allow for the safe, proper, and efficient operation of the heating equipment

Applications for C&T Benefits

Applicants that received a current program year Regular HEAP benefit in an amount of \$50 or less are not eligible for the C&T benefit. However, such applicants who move into an eligible living situation may apply for this component using both the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and the HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit (LDSS-5081).

Applicants may apply for C&T benefits by completing only the HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit (LDSS-5081) if they:

- Received a Regular heater HEAP benefit in the current program year **AND** have not moved since receiving a current program year Regular HEAP benefit;

OR

- Are currently in receipt of ongoing SNAP or federally funded CA benefits and meet all eligibility criteria to receive a Regular HEAP benefit.

Applicants applying with only the LDSS-5081 are not required to have an eligibility interview. All other applicants must have an interview.

Applicants must complete both the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and the HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit (LDSS-5081) if they:

- Did not receive a Regular HEAP benefit in the current program year;
- Were in receipt of ongoing SNAP or federally funded CA (TANF) at the time of receiving their Regular benefit, but are no longer in receipt of ongoing SNAP or federally funded CA benefits; or
- Received a Regular benefit greater than \$50 in the current program year, but subsequently moved to a living situation which no longer qualifies them for a Regular benefit

Applicants required to complete both forms must provide full documentation with their HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) and must have an eligibility

interview. Interviews may be completed in person at an HRA Benefits Access Center or over the telephone.

Applicants may not apply for Clean and Tune benefits online through ACCESS HRA.

Eligibility examiners must complete Agency Use section of the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421).

Signatures

The Agency Use section of Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Request for Benefit (LDSS-5081) must be completed in its entirety. Worker signatures are always required, and supervisory signatures are required when a CSR plan is not used by the district for HEAP.

Clean and Tune Applications processed in HEAP 1.0 require a completed Agency Use section on the LDSS-5081 and this must be imaged and retained in the case record.

Agency Use Section

Did the applicant receive a Regular HEAP benefit in the current program year? Yes No

Has the applicant moved since receiving their Regular HEAP benefit? Yes No

Only answer the following if the Regular benefit was paid on a Temporary Assistance (TA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) case:

Has the TA or SNAP case closed since the applicant received their Regular HEAP benefit? Yes No

Pended Start: _____ End: _____

Denied Reason: _____

Approved Date: _____

Vendor Name _____ Vendor Number _____

Comments: _____

Worker Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Required Signatures on HEAP Forms

The Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B), Cooling Assistance Request for Benefit (LDSS-4992), and the Clean and Tune Request for Benefit (LDSS-5081) must be signed by the worker and supervisor in the Agency Use section.

Worker signatures are always required, and supervisory signatures are required when a CSR plan is not used by the district for HEAP.

If a HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) is required for any benefit application, districts must complete the Agency Use section of the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) with appropriate worker and supervisor signatures, with the exception of Regular applications processed in HEAP 1.0.

Vendor Information Update

**Utility and
Non-Utility
Vendors**

There are no changes to the Utility and Non-Utility Vendor Agreement for the 2024-2025 program year. Utility and Non-Utility vendors must have a signed Vendor Agreement on file with the NYS OTDA HEAP Bureau to participate and receive payments.

**HERR
Vendors**

There are no changes to the current Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) Vendor Agreement for the 2024-2025 program year. This Vendor Agreement is also used for Heating Equipment Clean and Tune vendors.

The vendor selects “OTDA Clean and Tune” on the agreement to participate in the Clean and Tune component. Vendors must have a signed vendor agreement on file with NYS OTDA HEAP Bureau in order to participate in the program and receive HERR and/or Clean and Tune benefit payments.

**Cooling
Vendors**

There are no changes to the current Cooling Assistance Component Vendor Agreement for the 2024-2025 program year. Vendors must have a signed vendor agreement on file with the NYS OTDA HEAP Bureau in order to participate in the program and receive payments

Note: Copies of the Vendor Agreements are in the Appendix for reference only.

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Vendor Information Update, *continued*

Transmitting HEAP Forms to Vendors

On May 31, 2022, [GIS 22TA/DC051 - Transmitting HEAP Forms to Vendors](#) was released, which permits districts to transmit Personally Identifiable Information (PII) via email if appropriate protections are in place.

PII includes any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, address, social security number, date of birth, mother's maiden name, or any other identifiable information that is linked or may be linked to an individual.

Local district management and staff are required to ensure that access to confidential, personal, private, and/or sensitive data is strictly limited to authorized individuals for authorized purposes only.

If a district must communicate with a vendor by email containing PII, the email must be encrypted. Districts must first confirm with their information technology (IT) and legal professionals to ensure appropriate protections are in place.

The protection of reference applies to any HEAP form shared between the district and the vendor. This includes the HEAP HERR Job Proposal (LDSS-4867A), HEAP Guarantee of Payment (LDSS-5000), HEAP Vendor Refund Form (LDSS-5043), HEAP Cooling Assistance Services Invoice (LDSS-5044), HEAP Heating Equipment Clean and Tune Services Invoice (LDSS-5083).

continued on next page

Vendor Information Update, *continued*

HEAP Participating Vendor List

The HEAP database for commodity vendors is continually updated and available to districts through Centraport.

District passwords for the participating vendor list will remain the same, unless the district requires a new password. Contact your OTDA HEAP Bureau liaison for your user ID or password.

Erroneous Payments and Unused Credits

The vendor agrees to comply with program timeframes and submit all payment claims by September 30th of the current program year or within 30 days of services rendered, whichever is later. If the district does not receive the claim within the established time period, payments will not be made.

HEAP credits remain on a customer's account until exhausted or the account closes. Unused credits that have been on a customer's account for 24 months after the vendor has received payment must be returned to the district. Any credits remaining on a closed account must be returned to the district within 30 days of the account closing.

The vendor must return payments upon request by the OTDA/district within five business days of the request unless the payment was used to obtain fuel or to provide services approved by the district.

Vendor Payment Transfer and Reissuances

Reissuing Unused Credits

Regular benefit credits may only be reissued to a new heating vendor when the recipient is the customer of record for a new heating or heat-related domestic electric account.

Emergency credits may only be reissued to a new heating vendor when **ALL** of the following conditions are met:

- The recipient closes the original account;
- The recipient is the customer of record for a new heating or heat-related domestic electric account; and
- The recipient is still in an emergency situation

HEAP credits must never be issued directly to the household.

Deceased Applicants

Regular benefits that have been authorized for an applicant who dies before a delivery is made or before the utility account is credited may be reissued to another adult household member.

If there are no other adult HEAP household members, the Regular benefit must be returned to the district and cannot be reissued.

Emergency benefits that have been authorized for an applicant who dies before a delivery is made or before the utility account is credited may be reissued to another adult household member only if they are in an emergency situation.

(1) If a credit from a previous benefit remains with the vendor, it may be used by other household members.

(2) If there are no other household members, the Emergency benefit must be returned to the district and cannot be reissued. Regular benefit credits may only be reissued to a new heating vendor when the recipient is the customer of record for a new heating or heat-related domestic electric account.

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Vendor Payment Transfer and Reissuances, *continued*

Change of vendor/closed accounts

When an account is closed, any credits remaining from a **Regular benefit** must be returned to the district and may be transferred to another vendor as long as:

- (1) Credits belong to the applicant of record
 - If the recipient no longer has a heat or heat-related expense, the benefit must not be reissued.

When a recipient closes an account and the **Emergency benefit** is not issued to the correct vendor, the benefit must be returned to the district and may be transferred to another vendor, as long as:

- (1) The recipient closes the original account; and
- (2) The recipient is the customer of record for a new heating or heat-related account.

When an account is closed, any credits remaining from an **Emergency benefit** must be returned to the district and may not be transferred to another vendor unless:

- (1) The recipient closes the original account;
- (2) The recipient is the customer of record for a new heating or heat-related account; and
- (3) The recipient is still in an emergency situation

Regular and Emergency benefit credits are never cashed out to the recipient.

Working with HEAP Vendors

HEAP Vendor Agreements Vendors and energy suppliers who want to participate in HEAP must sign a Vendor Agreement which outlines the provisions that the vendor or energy supplier must follow. A signed Vendor Agreement must be on file with the HEAP Bureau before any HEAP vendor payment is issued to the vendor.

Note: Copies of all HEAP Vendor Agreements are located in the Appendix for reference only.

Vendor Treatment of HEAP Households Vendor Agreements include provisions that ensure HEAP households are not:

- Treated adversely
- Discriminated against either in cost of goods supplied, or services provided
- Subject to billing with any bias

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

HEAP Vendor Payment and Delivery

Upon receipt of funds or guarantee of payment from the district, HEAP vendors must make:

- All deliveries for the amount of the HEAP benefit
- Arrangement for emergency delivery

Additional Vendor Agreement Provisions

- Vendors must notify OTDA HEAP within five business days if the company is sold or there is a change of any kind
- Vendors must maintain fiscal records for the current year and at least three additional program years
- Vendors must not charge fees in excess of:
 - \$100 for off-route deliveries
 - \$190 for after-hours deliveries
- The following allowable fees require customer consent before they can be removed from the HEAP benefit
 - Leak tests
 - Prime and start
 - Mileage fees
 - Off-route/After-hours delivery fees

Issuing Payments Per the Guarantee of Payment (LDSS-5000)

After a guarantee is sent and the vendor makes a delivery, HEAP must honor the payment.

If an incorrect vendor receives a guarantee and makes a delivery and then a guarantee is sent to a different vendor:

- The incorrect vendor should be paid
- Make every attempt to recover the erroneous payment from the applicant using your district process
- Any unrecovered payment would be tracked as an erroneous payment

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

HEAP Vendor Refunds

The HEAP Vendor Refund Form (LDSS-5043) is used for all HEAP vendor refunds, including returning credits and account closures.

If a district is unable to resolve a refund dispute with the utility provider or a deliverable vendor, contact the district's HEAP Bureau liaison for further direction.

Wood Vendor Provisions

- All firewood must be seasoned and ready to burn.
- Green (unseasoned) firewood can be delivered upon client request, but never for an emergency delivery.
- Wood vendors who charge a posted delivery fee may charge HEAP clients no more than the lowest rate charged to any customer.
- Wood vendors must provide a receipt that lists the following:
 - The date of delivery
 - The price
 - The quantity of wood delivered
- Customer signature is recommended on the receipt to confirm the following:
 - Successful delivery
 - That the condition of the wood was satisfactory

Propane Vendor Provisions

A customer is defined as an individual or household at which the vendor has placed tanks that are connected to the residential consumer heating equipment.

Vendors are not allowed to refuse a delivery or unhook a tank in order to not deliver; the customer is their responsibility.

If a vendor chooses to terminate the customer relationship:

- The vendor must disconnect and remove their tank(s).
- The district should assist the household in finding another vendor.
- Metered propane accounts are only eligible for an emergency benefit if the vendor has the capability to lock the tank

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Oil/Kerosene/ Blend Vendor Provisions

Pricing Options:

- Margin Over Rack (MOR)
 - Option A – applied to the HEAP Benefit only
 - Option B – applied to all deliveries
- Discount Off Retail (DOR)
 - Option C – Applied to the HEAP benefit only
 - Option D – Applied to all deliveries
- Option E – Verified service contract customers only
- Service contracts must be comparable to contracts offered by other vendors in the service area. The contracts must include:
 - A purchase cost paid by the customer specifically for the contract.
 - A provision that would void the service contract, with no refund to the HEAP customer, if the customer takes a delivery from an alternate supplier.
 - Ongoing service coverage beyond a single heating system cleaning.

Vendors must submit a copy of the terms and conditions of the service contract offered to customers with the signed Vendor Agreement

Cooling Vendor Job Specifications

The total cost of a cooling installation cannot exceed the maximum allowed for that unit, including the following:

- A pre-installation on-site assessment
- An air conditioning (AC) unit or fan
- Installation
- Labor
- Minor essential repairs
- Removal and proper disposal of the old unit
- Program support
- Administrative costs

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Cooling Installations

Vendors must work directly with the recipient to schedule an on-site assessment, installation, and to resolve any issues that arise during or after the installation of the AC unit.

Air conditioner installations are limited to:

- Energy Star rated window units, unless pre-authorization from the district was obtained
- Existing sleeve installations
- Portable air conditioners
- Fans, when an AC unit cannot be safely installed

Cooling Vendor Agreement Requirements

Per the vendor agreement, cooling vendors must:

- Assess the dwelling to determine appropriate living space for the optimal creation of a cooling room.
- Calculate the BTUs of the cooling room to ensure the purchase and installation of an appropriately sized air conditioning unit.
- Include electrical load assessment of the dwelling and the circuit on which the equipment is to be connected prior to purchasing and installing a unit.
- Notify the district if the household has an operable AC unit that is less than five years old.

Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Vendor Agreements

HERR vendor agreements ensure the following:

- All work must be performed in compliance with local codes, standards, and manufacturer's instructions
- If permits are required, vendors must file for and obtain all permits prior to the start of the work. Subsequently, once work is completed, the vendor must obtain all necessary signoffs on the permits
- Vendors must not sub-contract any portion of the repair or replacement work

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Repair and Replacement Specifications

- A system overview of the heating equipment and its proper operation and maintenance must be provided to the customer (including programming the thermostat if a programmable thermostat was installed).
- Work must be completed within five business days of authorization from the district.
- Final bills must be itemized and submitted within 15 business days of services rendered.
- Manufacturer and workmanship warranties that cover a minimum of one year from the date of installation are required and must be registered with the manufacturer and a completed copy provided to the customer.
- Removal and off-site disposal of all waste materials is the responsibility of the vendor.

Utility Vendor Reminders

- Regular and Emergency heater benefits must be issued separately.
- A Regular heat-included benefit of \$21, \$45, or \$50 may be issued at the same time as a heat-related domestic electric benefit.
- Paper shutoff notices are not required

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Shared Meter and Sub Metering

Shared meters measure gas, electric, or steam service provided to a dwelling.

Once a shared meter situation is identified by a certifier, the district must determine HEAP eligibility using the following steps:

1. Determine if the household meets all eligibility criteria
2. Initiate a referral for a shared meter investigation
3. Commit and authorize the HEAP benefit, pending the outcome of the investigation
4. Once the outcome is determined, take one of the following actions:
 - If a shared meter does not exist, ensure the HEAP benefit was authorized
 - If a shared meter does exist, a redetermination and payment resolution may take place

Sub Metering allows a multi-tenant property to bill tenants for individual measured utility usage.

Home Energy Fair Practices Act (HEFPA)

The Home Energy Fair Practices Act (HEFPA) established certain standards to extend the rights of residential utility customers. These standards include the following:

- Accounts coded as Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD), medical emergency, or life support system are protected
- Agreements may be terminated by the utility if the customer does not comply with the requirements

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Issuing HEAP Utility Benefits

Regular HEAP Utility Benefits

- When the account is current, utility benefits may establish a credit on the customer's account.
- Utilities are not required to provide 30 days of prospective service for non-heating benefits (\$21, \$45, or \$50).
- Guarantees may be emailed if properly encrypted.

Emergency HEAP Utility Benefits

Prior to issuing a HEAP benefit district workers should:

- Verify direct vendor relationship for Regular HEAP
- Verify the applicant is the customer of record for Emergency HEAP
- Report accounts coded incorrectly or in a minor's name to the utility and ensure those accounts are resolved
- Ensure proper benefit payment by double checking the amount guaranteed

HEAP benefits guaranteed by phone, webtool, or fax for the utility will provide 30 days prospective service

If accepted by the utility provider, HEAP benefits can be used to restore or establish service

A final termination notice is not required to guarantee an Emergency benefit

Accepting HEAP Benefits

The utility may either accept or decline HEAP on behalf of an applicant for service, who is a non-current customer or who has been disconnected.

For current customers, the utility may not decline HEAP.

Once HEAP is accepted, the following conditions apply:

- Households must be provided 30 days prospective service
- HEAP benefits are credited to the customer's current account only
- Payments must not be applied to accounts held in abeyance under HEFPA

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Terminated Service

Utilities may refuse to accept Regular or Emergency HEAP benefits for applicants trying to establish or restore service. If this happens:

- Contact the utility representative to attempt to establish or restore service on behalf of the applicant
- Contact your HEAP Bureau liaison for assistance working with the utility
- If the utility still refuses to provide benefits the applicant should be referred to TA or other community resources

Ten Day Utility Holds

If a household is facing imminent utility termination and the district is unable to determine eligibility prior to the shut off date, the district may issue a 10 day utility hold.

When issuing a 10 day utility hold, the following criteria apply:

- The 10 day hold reduces the 30-day prospective service
- The hold must not be used prior to program opening
- No unnecessary holds or abuse of this privilege is allowed

Alternate Ways to Avoid Shutoffs

- Utility Energy Affordability Program (EAP)
- Deferred payment agreements
- Monthly budget plans
- Energy efficiency services through NYSERDA or Weatherization
- Education

**Verifying
Non-Utility
Emergency or
Utility
Emergency**

A non-utility emergency or utility emergency should be documented on the HEAP Emergency Benefit Budget Worksheet (LDSS-3594B) under the verification section.

Non-Utility Emergencies can be verified in one of following ways:

- Collateral contact with the vendor
- Written statement from a vendor

Utility Emergencies can be verified in one of the following ways:

- Utility Webtool
- Collateral contact with the utility provider
- A bill or termination notice from the utility provider

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Utilizing Utility Webtools

Utility Webtools provide district staff with:

- Shut-off status
- Collection status
- Payment agreement vs Pending payment agreement

| Details | Elec. Bill Hist | Gas Bill Hist. | Payment Hist. |
|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Bill Details | | | |
| Connect Date: 08/30/2010 | | | |
| Disconnect Date: n/a | | | |
| Current Balance: \$3,028.97 | | | |
| Due Date: 04/11/2012 | | | |
| Account Status: Active | | | |
| Proposed Budget Amount: \$409.00 | | | |
| Budget Status: Inactive | | | |
| Heat Type: Other | | | |
| Energy Costs: Electric: \$4,775.01 (last 12 months) | | | |
| Gas: \$128.04 (last 12 months) | | | |
| Collection Activity | | | |
| Payment Agreement Default Date: 11/02/2011 | | | |
| Payment Agreement Defaults: 006 | | | |
| Disconnect Notice Issued: 11/04/2011 | | | |
| Collection Status: Active Collections | | | |
| CNP Field Order Issued: | | | |
| 72-Hour Notice Issued: Yes | | | |
| Hold History | | | |
| Regular HEAP/Fuel Grant: Expires 01/11/2012 , \$300.00 | | | |
| Emergency HEAP/Fuel Grant: Expires 02/29/2012 , \$560.00 | | | |
| Assistance Programs | | | |
| Program Type: DSS Other | | | |
| Start Date: 04/18/2011 | | | |
| End Date: n/a | | | |
| Case Number: H231539 | | | |

Note: Copies of the HEAP Utility Vendor Agreement and the HEAP Muni Escrow Vendor Agreement are in the Appendix for reference only.

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Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Using HEAPOIL

HEAPOIL is a report that lists HEAP participating vendors. The report can be accessed by both districts and the public utilizing the following link:

http://www.heapoil.org/admin/reports/OTDA_ParticipatingDealersReport.jsp

District User Reminders

- Username and password must be kept confidential and only shared with staff on an as-needed basis.
- Confidential information is contained in the administrative view of HEAPOIL, e.g., the Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Statewide Financial System (SFS) number.
- When printing the vendor screen for an applicant, be sure that it is from the public view of HEAPOIL.

HEAP Oil Component Report: Participating Vendors


Pick a report below

| |
|---|
| All Vendors/LDSS List |
| Participating Vendors/HEAP Applicant List |

District User Signin

HEAP Oil Component Report: Participating Vendors

Pick a report below

| | |
|---|--|
| All Vendors/LDSS List | |
| For Internal LDSS Use Only | |
|  | Username |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| Select a county | Password |
| Albany | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="button" value="Go >>"/> |
| Participating Vendors/HEAP Applicant List | |

Working With HEAP Vendors- For Training Purposes Only



continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Access for Public Users

How to Apply for Programs & Services

- Fair Hearings
- Child Support Services
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Temporary Assistance
- Home Energy Assistance Program**
- SSI/Social Security Disability
- Forms and Applications

[District Contact](#)

In writing:
When the HEAP Regular benefit is open, print and mail the completed [HEAP application](#).

- Outside of New York City mail it to your [HEAP Local District Contact](#), or
- New York City residents can mail it to: NYC DSS/HRA/HEAP, PO Box 1401, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008

Notes:

- Remember to sign your name on page 5 of the [HEAP application \(LDSS-342\)](#).
- If you qualify for HEAP you will be notified no later than 30 business days from the date the local district received your HEAP application.
- The HEAP application is also available in several [other languages](#) and [alternative formats](#).

For more information, visit the [HEAP](#) webpage.

Locate your Local HEAP Vendor

View the Vendor database and select Participating Vendors.

HEAP Oil Component Report: Participating Vendors

Pick a report below

All Vendors/LDSS List

Participating Vendors/HEAP Applicant List

Select a county: Albany

Select fuel type: Oil/Kero/Blend

Go >>

continued on next page

Working with HEAP Vendors, *continued*

Working Through Vendor Issues and Vendor Audits

Maintaining good working relationships with vendors is essential to serving HEAP households. To do this, HEAP workers should not only utilize tools, resources, and best practices when working with vendors, but also understand the vendor audit process and outcomes.

The HEAP Vendor Audit

- The HEAP vendor audit is conducted annually by OTDA Audit and Quality Improvement (A&QI) staff
- 40 deliverable vendors (35 Rest of State (ROS) and 5 NYC) are selected statewide and asked to provide full access to their records
- Only one utility vendor is selected yearly
- Vendors must cooperate with OTDA in establishing a mutually acceptable time frame to provide requested information

HEAP Vendor Audit Outcomes

- Any findings are provided in a final letter to the vendor.
- If violations of the vendor agreements are found, the vendor must agree to take corrective action within designated time frames.

continued on next page

HEAP Reports

Pending Reports

Pending reports for the 2024-2025 Regular benefit component will begin on Friday, September 6, 2024.

Pending reports for 2024-2025 HERR and Clean and Tune benefit components will begin on Friday, October 4, 2024.

Districts must continue to report pending applications in eReports for all benefit components on a weekly basis on the HEAP Pending Case Report, which may be accessed via Centraport.

Districts must include the number of applications that fall into any of the following categories:

- Applications that have been received, but do not have a transaction through HEAP 1.0 or WMS (either a payment or denial transaction);
- Cases that are waiting for an interview or documentation and/or have not had eligibility determined;
- Cases where eligibility has been determined, but the HEAP 1.0 or WMS transaction has not yet been conducted; or,
- Applications awaiting district certification at Benefit Access Centers (BAC).

Monthly Caseload Statistics

Historical HEAP statistics are available to the public on OTDA's website <http://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/>. HEAP data is found on tables 25, 26, and 27, and program year-end data can be found in the September report each year.

Cognos Reports

Commissioners and designated staff can use the Commissioners' Dashboard to access reports and information. The Commissioners' Dashboard can be accessed in Cognos.

HEAP Weekly Obligations Report by District can be accessed through the Commissioners' Dashboard.

Systems Highlights and Case Processing

Importance Systems improvements are made on an ongoing basis to increase accuracy and efficiency of information management. These enhancements result in changes to previous procedures and are important to review.

This module highlights key procedures that the New York City Human Resources Administration Department of Social Services (HRA DSS) must review prior to the new HEAP year and instructs staff on the effective use of the HEAP Central Processing System (HCPS) HEAP 1.0 for HEAP.

Overview Topics in this module include:

- NYC HEAP Central Processing Systems Highlights
- System Updates and Reminders
- NYC HEAP Mass Authorization Highlights
- NYC HEAP Non-Autopay Application Highlights
- HEAP Vendor Payments

Objectives By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Outline systems highlights and the Autopay process for 2024-2025
- Resolve administrative issues related to HEAP vendor payments.
- Describe the ACCESS NYC online pre-screening tool.

For Further Information and Assistance For further information and assistance, please contact an OTDA HEAP Bureau liaison at (518) 473-0332.

continued on next page

NYC HEAP Central Processing System (HEAP 1.0) Highlights

Payments for Previous HEAP Year

The New York City HRA DSS may continue to authorize payments for the 2023-2024 HEAP year.

Reissuance of Regular HEAP benefits for the 2023-24 program year is permitted through September 30, 2024.

Reissued payment records are notated in the comment section of the HEAP 1.0 and includes the following:

- Benefit amount
- Date of reissuance
- Reason for reissuance

Note: Payment claiming for the 2023-2024 HEAP year must be submitted **no later than December 31, 2024.**

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NYC HEAP Central Processing System (HEAP 1.0) Highlights, *continued*

Payments for Current HEAP Year

No notices, payments, or guarantee of payments may be issued until program opening.

Edits to Payment Lines

NYC's Management Information System (MIS) creates all HEAP payments for NYC HRA DSS HEAP.

A vendor name and customer account number must be updated on the vendor screen within the HEAP 1.0.

Vendor Information

Heater benefits will be issued to the vendor based on the following information entered in HEAP 1.0:

- Vendor ID and customer account number for CA cases with restricted heat, or
- Vendor ID and the customer account number provided on the HEAP application by the applicant

Customer Account Numbers

If a HEAP vendor does not use customer account numbers, the Case Number can be used. It is permissible to use the client's last name and phone number if they are provided by the vendor.

For fuel accounts that have no customer account number, NYC uses the first four letters of the last name and the first four characters of the address for the case number.

Note: Use of the client's full name or Social Security Number as the customer account number is prohibited.

Regular and Emergency Payment Types

Regular and Emergency HEAP payment types are selected from the drop-down box choices based on the vendor of issuance code.

Emergency payment selections in the Emergency screen identify the emergency as one of the following:

- Life Threatening (if eligible, emergency must be resolved within 18 hours)
- Crisis (if eligible, emergency must be resolved within 48 hours)

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System Updates and Reminders

**HEAP Heater
Benefit
Balance
Payment
Issuance**

In situations where a HEAP eligible applicant household with primary responsibility for the heating bill includes a renter whose heating cost is included in their rent, and who received a heat-included HEAP benefit of \$21, \$45 or \$50 are to be issued the balance of the Regular benefit based on their household’s heat type, income, and presence of a vulnerable individual.

**Emergency/S
pecial
Claiming
Code G**

A Special Claiming Code must be entered for all HEAP payments. In order to distinguish whether a HEAP payment is used to prevent loss of heat to the household, or whether a HEAP payment will restore heat to the household, the designation “H” or “G” must be used in the Special Claiming Code field.

All HEAP payments, including those for Early Outreach, must use the appropriate Special Claiming Code as follows:

- Special Claiming Code H – is required for all HEAP prevention payments
- Special Claiming Code G – is required for HEAP restoration payments.

continued on next page

System Updates and Reminders, *continued*

| NYC HEAP Special Claiming Codes Prevention & Restoration | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| * Special Claiming Code | HEAP Payment Type | Restoration (Claiming Code G – HEAPRSTR) | Prevention (Claiming Code H – HEAP) |
| H or G | HEAP Regular Benefit Heat Included | √ | √ |
| G | Heating Equipment Repair/Replacement Estimate | √ | |
| H or G | HEAP Regular Benefit Heater | √ | √ |
| H | HEAP Cooling | | √ |
| G | Emergency Benefit - Repair Heating Equipment | √ | |
| G | HEAP Emergency Benefit - Shelter/Relocation | √ | |
| G | Emergency Benefit - Replace Heating Equipment | √ | |
| G | Emergency Benefit - Propane Tank Deposit | √ | |
| H or G | HEAP Supplement | √ | √ |
| H or G | HEAP Emergency Benefit - Additional Benefit | √ | √ |
| H or G | HEAP Reissue | √ | √ |
| H | HEAP Clean & Tune | | √ |
| H or G | HEAP Additional Benefit | √ | √ |
| H or G | HEAP Emergency Benefit - Non Utility | √ | √ |
| H or G | HEAP Emergency Benefit - Domestic Heat Related Utility | √ | √ |
| H or G | HEAP Emergency Benefit - Utility | √ | √ |
| H | Nominal Payment | | √ |

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System Updates and Reminders, *continued*

Claiming Code H in HCPS

The screenshot shows a web application interface with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Inbox', 'Log In', 'Eligibility', 'Certification', 'Reports', 'Tools', and 'Inquiries'. The main content area is a form for an applicant named 'Barnes, Ladonna' with SSN '000-00-0000'. The form includes fields for 'Site Date' (05/04/2020) and 'Heap Date' (05/04/2020). Other fields include 'Application Type' (MALIN), 'Applicant Gender' (Female), 'Notice Language' (English), 'Spoken Language' (English), 'Housing' (RENTER-Private house, Apartment or Mobile Home), 'Alien Citizenship Dec' (Statement of Declaration), and 'Does Applicant Household own the residence they currently live in?' (No). The 'Select Special Claiming Code' dropdown is set to 'H - HEAP (Prevention)'. Below the form, there are sections for 'Scanned and uploaded the supporting documents?' and 'Admin Decision Dec'.

Claiming Code G in HCPS

The screenshot shows the same web application interface as above, but with the 'Select Special Claiming Code' dropdown set to 'G - HEAPRSTER (Restoration)'. All other fields and the overall layout are identical to the previous screenshot.

Continued on next page

System Updates and Reminders, *continued*

Budgets

The HEAP 1.0 will automatically calculate a budget, a benefit amount, and generate a payment line based on income, household size, vulnerability, fuel type, and benefit type.

Client Notices

Client notices are generated through HEAP 1.0 and MIS. System highlights for client noticing include:

- NYC HRA DSS local equivalent notices (Approval, Denial and Pending) have been updated to reflect current HEAP policy.
- NYC HRA DSS Denial and Pending Notice reason codes have also been revised to reflect current HEAP policy.
- When processing a denial notice, system logic selects the appropriate denial reason code based on the eligibility factors.
- Manual notices, although generally not utilized, are available in the event of system failure.

Note: NYC local equivalent notices will be updated for the 2024-2025 year prior to program opening. Copies of the 2023-2024 NYC Local Equivalent notices are included in the appendix for reference only.

Continued on next page

System Updates and Reminders, *continued*

WMS Screens

Downstate WMS is used by HEAP staff for verification and inquiry purposes.

The following WMS screens and the information contained within must be reviewed and compared to validate the applicant provided information:

- **Benefits Issuance History Inquiry:** shows monthly income from Temporary Assistance (TA) and HEAP benefits (this screen is usually 2-3 pages, but may have additional pages)
- **Case Composition – Suffix Summary:** indicates who is a holder of the case.
- **Case Composition – Individual Summary:** shows all case members with date of birth and SSN.
- **Budget History Actual Needs & Suffix Summary:** shows shelter type, fuel type, and family income.
- **Address History:** shows customer's address movement
- **Client Information:** shows open and close date, Social Security number, type of benefit(s)
- **Cases at Street Address as Input:** shows the history of customers at an address

Record Retention

HEAP 1.0 tracks applications, notices, and vendor payment dates. All electronic records are stored in HEAP 1.0 and the HRA One Viewer and are retrievable for fair hearings, audits and other purposes as needed.

All HEAP case records are retained for six program years, including the current program year, except for Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement (HERR) cases, which must be retained for ten program years.

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NYC HEAP Mass Authorization Highlights

Autopay Schedule

The NYC HEAP Autopay outreach process will continue for the 2024-2025 HEAP program year. The Autopay will include:

- Cases in active receipt of federally funded Cash Assistance (CA) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits.
- Cases in active receipt of ongoing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Note: No payments or guarantee of payments may be issued prior to program opening. Payments for eligible cases on the initial Autopay must be issued no later than December 31, 2024.

Additional NYC HEAP Autopay Outreach

The feasibility for an additional NYC HEAP Autopay to active CA and SNAP households will be determined based on available HEAP funding.

The schedule for additional NYC HEAP Autopays will be created after the Regular component opens in November.

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NYC HEAP Mass Authorization Highlights, *continued*

Autopay Payment Issuance

Payment issuance is controlled by the NYC HRA DSS MIS. MIS runs an Automated Logic Program (ALP) to do the following:

- Create a computer file of CA and SNAP cases that meet the HEAP eligibility criteria on the date the computer file is run
- Create and calculate a budget and payment line for those cases
- Generate the payment file that lists:
 - Program year
 - Recipient name, address, and benefit amount
 - Total number and amount of benefits authorized
- The payment file is then passed through to NYC's check printing system that generates all checks.
- Utility vendor payments with the exception of LIPA and Keyspan are sent through an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), and fuel vendor payments, and third party billing companies are issued via paper check.

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NYC HEAP Mass Authorization Highlights, *continued*

Payment Authorization

The ALP file for all payments is reviewed by the NYC HEAP Director. The final authorization for payment release is granted by the NYC HEAP Director.

Payment Processing

A weekly payment file is created based on vendor, client, and payment amount.

Once payments commence, a weekly payment report is generated on Thursdays for uploading into HEAP 1.0. The report is reviewed the following Monday and processed on Tuesday. Payments are issued on Wednesdays.

If there are any payment errors, that payment is reviewed manually and processed by HEAP Central staff.

Pre-Autopay Reconciliation

Prior to the Autopay, NYC HRA DSS must review and update potential Autopay eligible CA and SNAP cases with correct vendor IDs, account numbers, shelter types, and fuel types. This process is used to ensure the following:

- SNAP and federally funded PA (TANF) recipients who are eligible for a HEAP payment at the time of the Autopay creation date are issued:
 - A correct payment.
 - A timely and correct notice of decision.
- Payment is transmitted correctly to the vendor or issued to the client.

Autopay Criteria

Eligible households in active receipt of ongoing SNAP and federally funded CA benefits, which either pay separately for heat or make undesignated payments for heat in the form of rent, are included in the monthly Autopay.

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NYC HEAP Mass Authorization Highlights, *continued*

Autopay Payment to Clients

Payments for cases in which the heat is included in the rental cost included on the Autopay are issued directly to SNAP and federally funded PA recipients through:

- EBT, or
- Direct check.

Autopay Payment to Vendors

Payments are issued to vendors for Autopay cases through one of the following:

- Directly to the vendor through:
 - Direct deposit to National Grid and ConEdison
 - Paper checks to fuel vendors, third-party billing companies, LIPA and Keyspan
- As a two-party check (issued to oil and kerosene vendors selecting option E-pricing methodology)

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NYC HEAP Non-Autopay Application Highlights

Non-Autopay Applications

Cases that are not part of the Autopay must submit a completed HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) directly to HEAP Central or at a HRA Benefits Access Center. There are community outreach locations in each borough that can assist with completion of the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421), but cannot submit the application on behalf of the applicant.

A list of the community outreach locations for the 2024-2025 HEAP year will be available prior to program opening.

Reconciliation

The electronic process of reconciliation compares the information provided on the current year's application by a returning applicant to the previous season's application to review for changes. Discrepancies identified by this process must be explored and documented in the case record.

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NYC HEAP Non-Autopay Application Highlights, *continued*

Non-Autopay Authorization Review

All non-Autopay authorizations for a completed HEAP Application (LDSS-3421), are reviewed through HEAP 1.0 edits for the following:

- Accuracy of eligibility
- Benefit amount
- Proper vendor authorization
- Production of notice of eligibility decision within thirty business days of the application date

All HEAP final authorizations as a result of the Autopay and HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) processes must pass the following HEAP 1.0 edits to ensure benefit correctness:

- Multiple payments
- Payments exceeding the benefit amount limits as defined by NYS OTDA
- NYC Housing Authority match
- Death match

Any payment that does not pass all system edits is rejected and passed to HEAP Central in a report, and the case then subject to an additional level of review.

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NYC HEAP Non-Autopay Application Highlights, *continued*

ACCESS NYC

ACCESS NYC is an online gateway that allows New York City residents to pre-screen anonymously for over thirty-five city, state, and federal human service benefit programs, including HEAP.

Visitors to the online screening tool are asked to enter household information and are then provided with a list of benefit programs for which they may be eligible.

Visitors to ACCESS NYC can perform the following tasks:

- Print out a partially completed application forms for various programs including HEAP. The applicant must manually complete and submit the HEAP Application (LDSS-3421) by mail, fax, email or in person at a HRA Benefits Access Center. There is no electronic submission of a HEAP application in NYC.
- Search for benefit office location information
- Create an account to access their information at a later time.
- Pre-screen for various benefit programs

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HEAP Vendor Payments

Participating Vendor List

Vendors participating in HEAP must have a signed HEAP Vendor Agreement on file with New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance in order to receive HEAP Payments. NYC HRA DSS must check the NYS OTDA HEAP Participating Vendor List when processing applications to ensure that only participating vendors are issued benefits.

The Participating Vendor List is located in the CentraPort vendor portal and will be updated and available to HRA DSS for Early Outreach application processing.

Vendors who are not on the NYS OTDA HEAP Participating Vendor List and who want to be a HEAP vendor must be instructed to contact the OTDA HEAP Bureau at 1-866-270-4327 (1-866-270-HEAP) to submit a completed Vendor Agreement. Once the agreement is approved by OTDA, the vendor will be added to the Participating Vendor List.

HRA DSS passwords for the NYS OTDA HEAP Participating Vendor List will remain the same. Contact your OTDA HEAP Bureau liaison at (518) 473-0332 if you need a new password.

Remittance Information

The following remittance information is included with each payment:

- Customer name
- Customer address
- Benefit amount
- Benefit type

Missing Vendor Check Inquiries

When NYC HRA DSS is advised by a vendor that they have not received a HEAP payment, the vendor is directed to contact HEAP Central staff for resolution.

Vendors may call the HRA DSS HEAP One Number at (718) 557-1399.

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HEAP Vendor Payments, *continued*

Vendor Refunds

All vendor refunds will continue to be handled through NYC HRA DSS. HRA DSS staff and participating HEAP vendors must use the OTDA approved HEAP Vendor Refund Form (LDSS-5043), to help make the refund process uniform.

Note: A sample copy of the HEAP Vendor Refund Form (LDSS-5043) is included in Appendix for reference only.

Returned Checks

HEAP payments that need to be returned to NYC HRA DSS should be sent to the following address:

NYC HRA DSS HEAP
P.O. Box 1401
Church Street Station
New York, NY 10008

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Appendix

- DRAFT 2024-2025 HEAP Desk Guide (LDSS-5005)
 - Sample 2023-2024 Early Outreach Application- redacted
 - Sample 2023-2024 HEAP Notice of Eligibility Decision Notice -Approval Notice LDSS-3494A LE (Rev 520) (HRA-208a (E) 8032023
 - Sample 2023-2024 HEAP Notice of Eligibility Decision Notice-Denial Notice LDSS-3594B LE (rev 723) (HRA-208b) (E) 05022024
 - Sample 2023-2024 HEAP Documentation Requirements-Pending Notice LDSS-2642 LE (Rev 812) (HRA-208) (E) 080320236.
 - DRAFT HEAP Systems Quick Reference Tool (LDSS-5099) Training Only
 - New York State 2024-2025 HEAP Administrative Form Guide
 - Request for Documents or Publications (OTDA-876) (Rev 2-22)
 - Request for Approval of Local Equivalent Forms (LDSS-5199)
 - HEAP Deliverable Non-Utility Vendor-Agreement
 - HEAP Cooling Vendor Agreement
 - HERR Vendor Agreement
 - HEAP Municipal/Esco Vendor Agreement (Rev 10/07)
 - HEAP PSC Regulated Utility Vendor Agreement
 - HEAP Vendor Refund Form (LDSS-5043)
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