



Connecticut Energy Assistance Program 2018-2019

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HEATING BILL:

Q. Does my heating bill have to be listed in my name?

A. Applicants must document that they are responsible for their home energy costs by providing a current bill or a copy of a bill. In order to be eligible for payment, bills must be in the name of the applicant or a household member who is of majority status, or an emancipated minor. In addition, the bill must be for residential heating services, for charges incurred from November 1st through March 15th for deliverable fuel-heated households and through April 15th for utility-heated households.

Q. I don't have a heating bill because my heat is included in my rent. May I still apply for energy assistance?

A. Even if you do not have any energy bills because heating costs are included in your rent payment, you may be eligible to receive assistance in the form of a one-time payment made directly to the household. Since you must prove your monthly rent costs are greater than 30% of the household's gross income, you will need to submit a copy of a rent receipt or a copy of a rental agreement along with your completed application.

Q. Does energy assistance pay my bill each month?

A. No, the energy program is designed to *help* with your winter heating costs. ***CEAP is not intended to pay the entire cost of home heating.*** If you are applying for CEAP assistance for assistance with a natural gas or electric bill, you should continue to pay on your heating bill. If your household is determined to be eligible, payments are made directly to the utility company. In the case of assistance with oil or propane costs, the program will pay the fuel vendor on behalf of the applicant.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Q. When and where may I apply?

The Energy Assistance Program, which includes a Weatherization Program, is more specifically a *heating assistance program*. CRT begins taking applications as early as August 1st. May 1st is the last day that a household can apply to establish its eligibility for benefits. May 15th is the last day that a utility heated household with a shut-off notice may apply. Residents can call 860-560-5800 to make an appointment. You also may call 2-1-1 Infoline to inquire about the intake site nearest to your residence. If you are low on fuel or have a shut off notice, please be sure to mention it to the energy representative, so you can be scheduled for an appointment as soon as possible.

Q. How do I know if I qualify for CEAP?

A. Eligibility for energy assistance is based on the **annual gross income** and the size of the household.

There is also a liquid assets test (checking, savings, CD's, stocks, bonds, shares, certificates of deposit and individual retirement accounts if the accounts are in the name of a household member who is at least 59-and-one-half years old.) The purpose of the liquid assets test is to try to ensure that winter heating assistance dollars go to households most in need; that is, to people without the financial means to heat their home.

For homeowners the first \$15,000 in liquid assets and for other households the first \$12,000 in liquid assets is disregarded. Any amount over that limit, when added to the annual gross income, must be below the income guidelines. Clients must provide proof of income and assets for all household members who reside with them for the four weeks prior to the application date. If natural gas or electricity is the heating source, the client must

provide a copy of that bill which must be in the name of the applicant, ora household member who is of majority status, or an emancipated minor.

You don't have to worry about figuring this out. The above information is intended to give you as much indication up-front on how you may qualify and help you prepare the documentation that will be required at intake. The best approach is to call 2-1-1 Infoline for referral to an application intake site near you. After you complete the application, an eligibility specialist will determine whether your household is eligible to receive winter heating benefits.

Q. How long does it take for my application to be processed?

A. It can take up to 45 days for applications to be processed. If you have not received any information on your case after 45 days, you may contact the community action agency where you applied to inquire about the status of your application.

Q. If I am in an emergency situation (i.e. Deliverable Fuel: Out of Fuel or less than ¼ of a tank; Utility Heating: Shut Off Notice.), do I still need to wait 45 days for my application to be processed?

A. For customers in emergency fuel/utility shut off situations, the application will be processed for eligibility on the day you complete your application. You will, however, need to provide all required income and asset documentation. Please be sure to inform the energy representative.

Q. How do I apply if I'm homebound?

A. There are times when a home visit or a mail-in application procedure may be necessary to serve an applicant, such as if the individual has a need for a special accommodation because of a disabling condition, etc. Please inform the worker of your needs when you call to schedule an appointment.

DOCUMENTATION:

Q. What happens if I give false information?

A. Your signature on the application means that you have read the application, understand it and swear that all statements made on the form are true, correct, and complete to the best of your knowledge. If you give false information on any of your forms and know it is false, we can charge you with fraud. If you misrepresent your circumstances when applying for energy assistance, you are subject to prosecution and/or replacement of any benefits provided. You are also prohibited from participation in the energy program for the remainder of the current program year and for two program years following the year in which the misrepresentation occurred. When you sign your application, you give the agency the right to request any information, including information about wages that may be required to determine your household's eligibility.

Q. What do I need to bring with me to the appointment once the program starts?

A. You would need to provide proof of gross income and assets from all sources for every household member for the four weeks prior to the application date. A household may choose to document 52 weeks instead of 4 weeks. For those households who choose the **52-week option**: a. The household must document the 52 weeks immediately prior to the date of application or reapplication, and b. The household must document the 52-week period for all household members who received income during that period. (The household cannot choose to document 52 weeks for some members and only 4 weeks for others).

If you heat with natural gas or electricity, you must provide a current utility bill (or copy) in your name or in the name of a household member who is of majority status or in the name of an emancipated minor. If your heat is included with your rent, you must provide proof of how much **you actually pay** for rent (i.e. the amount that is **your** portion of the total rent).

Income verification may include the following:

EMPLOYMENT: copies of your four most recent consecutive weekly pay stubs or a statement from your employer on company letterhead signed by either the employer or the payroll department stating your gross wages for the last four weeks.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT: your latest filed federal income tax return with all attachments and a Self-Employment Worksheet (DSS form which must be completed for the entire 6 month or 12 month period prior to the application date) and which must be filled out and notarized.

FIXED INCOME: income verification may include one or more of the following types:

- Report of Confidential Social Security Benefits, Form 2458, available at the local Social Security office, OR a copy of your Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) check, OR a statement from the bank if you have a direct deposit, OR your most recent Social Security Award Notice, Form SSA-4926SM. State Assistance Financial Benefits (TFA, State Supplement, etc.) - a current budget sheet showing the monthly benefit amount awarded, etc.
- Dividend or Interest - statements for the most recently completed period (if more than \$10.00 per month).
- Veterans' Assistance- V.A. Award Letter for Veteran's Benefits (including pensions), OR a copy of the check, OR a statement from the bank if you have direct deposit
- Unemployment Compensation Benefits - Printout of Unemployment Compensation Benefits from the Department of Labor (DOL) or from the DOL website at: www.ctdol.state.ct.us.
- Workman's Compensation or Disability Insurance (short-term or long-term) statement showing benefits and the period covered.
- Subsidized Adoption Benefits - copy of current checks, award letters, etc
- Pensions or Annuities – Pension or annuity check stubs OR a letter from the payor on the letterhead of the payor stating the gross amount .
- Divorce decree or Family Relations Court letter or lawyer statement verifying the amount and frequency of alimony and/or child support OR Child Support Enforcement letter or printout OR bank statement if payments go directly to bank account OR statement from legally liable relative if voluntary cash support payments or alternate means of support in lieu of child support payments are made directly to you.
- Rental Income - Rent receipt(s) for rental income OR your tenant's lease OR photocopies of check(s) OR statement(s) from tenant(s) verifying rent.

- Contributions - Statement(s) indicating the amount and frequency of payments from friends or relatives who are contributing to your household's support, signed by them.
- Asset verification may include statement(s) from every institution that you or any other household member(s) have an account with. Liquid asset accounts include: checking, savings, CD's, stocks, bonds, shares, certificates of deposit and individual retirement accounts if the accounts are in the name of a household member who is at least 59-and-one-half years old.

Q. How many months of bank statements do I need to bring? Do I need to bring every page? Each of my bank statements is very long. What part of them should I bring?

A. Please bring all pages of latest banking statement received. Copies of checks are not necessary.

Q. I have income from several sources. Do you have a list of what documentation I need to bring to support each kind?

A. If the income is earned income, documentation of the four weeks of gross income is required. If it is monthly income such as Social Security, either a bank statement or an award letter is required. [Intake representative will also be able to provide you with this information. Program eligibility is determined on household gross income and number of persons in household. This information is required for each season.

Q. Sometimes funds are transferred to my account from sources other than Social Security (such as PayPal, Venmo, etc.) What documentation do I need to bring to support the source and use of the funds that are the subject of those transfers?

A. You would need to provide a current printout of the entire statement from that source with the detail about the income listed. In many cases, you are able to obtain these printouts online.

FUEL DELIVERY

Q. I've already been approved for energy assistance in the form of fuel delivery, and I need a fuel delivery. What do I need to do?

A. Please call [860-560-5800](tel:860-560-5800) to use the automated attendant when requesting fuel deliveries. You can leave messages on this line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This line is monitored 6-9 times daily. On weekends and holidays a designee monitors this line and is able to make those authorizations. Emergency coverage during weekends and holidays is also coordinated with Infoline 211.

Don't wait until you are out of fuel to make the call!!! It is important that you call when you are at ¼ of a tank of fuel. While we notify your fuel vendor on the day you call, it takes some time for your fuel vendor to schedule a delivery to your home. In addition, if you have exhausted your benefits, this gives the energy representatives time to contact you to see if you qualify for any additional benefits.