

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP)

INCOME INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY WAIVER, AND PENALTY PROVISION

The **Home Energy Assistance Program** (commonly called LIHEAP, HEAP, Fuel Assistance) provides money to help pay part of your home heating costs. The information on your HEAP application may be used to determine your household's eligibility for a number of programs administered by MaineHousing and your local Community Action Agency. Each program may have different income and program eligibility requirements. Eligibility for one program does not automatically guarantee eligibility for all programs.

If you are eligible for HEAP, you may also qualify for the programs described below as well as other programs (not listed here) designed for low-income households.

- (1) **Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP)** provides assistance for the repair or replacement of malfunctioning or non-working primary heating systems.
- (2) **Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP)** provides emergency fuel assistance if your health and safety is threatened by a heating crisis during the winter months.
- (3) **Low Income Assistance Plan (LIAP)** helps homeowners and renters with their electric utility bills.
- (4) **Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)** provides grants to low-income homeowners and renters to reduce energy costs by improving home energy efficiency.

To determine and confirm your eligibility to participate in various programs, MaineHousing and your Community Action Agency will need to provide your personal information and personal information of other members of your household to state and federal agencies. MaineHousing and your Community Action Agency will in turn obtain information about you and other members of your household from those agencies and others. You and other household members must sign a release authorizing such information sharing. In addition, the release will permit MaineHousing and your Community Action Agency to inspect the heating fuel and utility billing and payment records for your current home for up to five years prior to and up to five years after the date of your application for purposes of determining eligibility and evaluating the effectiveness of any weatherization work performed.

You may be held civilly or criminally liable under federal or state law for knowingly making fraudulent statements or for using HEAP fuel in a manner that is inconsistent with MaineHousing or federal requirements.

APPEAL INFORMATION

An applicant has the right to appeal and to receive an informal review and in some cases a fair hearing. An applicant must submit a written appeal request for an informal review no later than:

- (1) Thirty (30) calendar days from the postmarked date of the benefit or denial notification;
- (2) Ninety (90) calendar days from the date of application, if the application has not been approved or denied, or
- (3) Ninety (90) calendar days from the postmarked date of the request for refund of an overpayment.

Written requests for appeal may be mailed to MaineHousing, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330; or emailed to LIHEAPcompliance@mainehousing.org.

Informal Review: Informal reviews are intended to provide a minimum hearing requirement and are not as elaborate as fair hearings. An applicant may request, in writing, an informal review for any dispute.

The informal review will be conducted by a person other than the one who made or approved the decision under review or a subordinate of this person. MaineHousing will review the file, conduct necessary research, and give the applicant an opportunity to present written or oral objections to the decision under review. In rendering a decision MaineHousing will evaluate the accuracy of the calculations, the level of documentation provided by the applicant, and the accuracy of the decision. MaineHousing will communicate the results of the review to the applicant.

Fair Hearing: MaineHousing will provide an applicant an opportunity for a fair hearing if the applicant's claim for assistance has been denied, or not acted upon with reasonable promptness, or the applicant disputes the benefit amount. MaineHousing will also provide an applicant an opportunity for a fair hearing if the applicant is required to refund an overpayment.

NONDISCRIMINATION

A person with a disability who is applying for or receiving assistance under HEAP has the right to a reasonable accommodation. A reasonable accommodation is a change or waiver of a policy, procedure or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to participate in the program. MaineHousing will provide appropriate communication auxiliary aids and services upon request. MaineHousing will also provide this document in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the EHS Program Compliance Officer, Maine State Housing Authority, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330, Telephone Number 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only), (207) 626-4600 (voice), or 711 (Maine Relay).

MaineHousing and the Community Action Agency do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, familial status or source of income in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, and activities.

MaineHousing has designated the following person responsible for coordinating compliance with applicable federal and state nondiscrimination requirements and addressing grievances: Louise Patenaude, Maine State Housing Authority, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330, Telephone Number 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only), (207) 626-4600 (voice), or 711 (Maine Relay).