

ABOUT LIHEAP

The purpose of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is to provide home energy assistance to eligible low income households. The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services and the human service zone offices (formerly known as county social service offices) administer the LIHEAP program. Services that are available through LIHEAP are explained within this brochure.



WHO DOES LIHEAP SERVE?

- Households who buy their heating fuel from a fuel dealer or utility company (fuel oil, propane, natural gas, electricity, wood, coal, and kerosene).
- Households whose rent payments include the cost of heat, and they do not live in subsidized housing or receive housing assistance.
- Households who need assistance with non-repairable furnaces and heat costs, that are high due to houses that are older or in poor shape.
- Households who have difficulty paying heating bills due to other rising costs and are in danger of losing their heating source.



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- **Income:** The total adjusted income of all persons living in the household must be counted. Contact your local human service zone office for income guidelines, as these may change from year to year.
- **Deductions:** There are some expenses over which a household may have little or no control, that leave less funds available to spend on heating costs. These are called allowable expenses, and may be deducted from a household's income. These expenses include:
 - Child care
 - Child support
 - Medical expenses
 - 27% income deduction on earned income



When do I apply?

LIHEAP applications are accepted from October 1 - May 31 close of business or until program funds are used up. A new application is required each heating season. Emergency applications can be submitted at any time.



How do I apply?

Online: www.applyforhelp.nd.gov

By Request: Applications are available at your local human service zone office, or your Community Options office.

Need Assistance? A human service zone eligibility worker, a friend, or a relative can assist you in completing the LIHEAP application. A Community Options outreach worker can help with the application process by assisting with completing the LIHEAP application, obtaining verifications, and submitting the LIHEAP application and verifications to the human service zone office. You may also call 1-800-755-2716.

What Services are Available?



HEATING: LIHEAP can pay for a portion of your heating bill used to heat your home during the months your household is eligible. The amount of the benefits depends on your income, the type and size of your home, and the type of heat used to heat your home.

When: During the LIHEAP heating season, which begins October 1st and ends May 31st of each year.

Payments: There are three different methods of payment:

1. If you buy your fuel from a fuel vendor or utility company, your bill will be sent directly to the state LIHEAP office, and the payment will be returned directly to your fuel dealer or utility company;
2. If eligible, you can be reimbursed for bills you have already paid to your fuel vendor for heating fuel purchased since October 1;
3. If your heating costs are included in your rent and you do not live in subsidized housing or receive housing assistance, a payment will be made directly to you each month that you are eligible.



WEATHERIZATION: The weatherization program helps low income people make their homes and apartments energy efficient.

Weatherization seals a home to keep warm air in and cold air out during the winter. The weatherization is done by skilled crews from the seven Community Action Agencies. The weatherization program is funded by LIHEAP. There is no charge for the weatherization program.



FURNACE & CHIMNEY CLEANING:

LIHEAP can pay up to \$250 for the furnace cleaning and tuning (\$275 for fuel oil furnace cleaning and tuning) and/or up to \$150 for the chimney cleaning. Prior authorization by the human service zone eligibility worker is required. Renters: please check with your local human service zone office about this service.

Available Services Cont.



COOLING: A temporary cooling program may be implemented in the event of unusual cooling needs due to weather abnormalities if there are funds available after the regular heating season. Cooling devices are available for eligible recipients who are most vulnerable to heat-related illnesses.



EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE: LIHEAP funds are available when there is a home energy emergency that may threaten the life of your family. Households are encouraged to submit requests before a shut off or other emergency has occurred. Appropriate community and personal resources and personal liquid assets are to be considered before Emergency Assistance is approved. These are explained below:

Fuel: You can be assisted with your co-payment when you have unusual expenses or income changes.

Furnace replacements: Payment for the cost of a furnace is made possible for an eligible individual home owner or eligible renter with verifiable responsibility for maintenance of their furnace (must be pre-authorized). You must look for other sources to pay for the furnace replacement before requesting assistance from LIHEAP. Human service zone eligibility workers refer eligible households that need a furnace replaced to an area Community Action Agency. LIHEAP/Community Action agencies only replace furnaces that: A) are unsafe, B) are not operating, or C) cannot be repaired. Clients may share in the cost of the new furnace.

Consumer Goods: Consumer goods are bought when an emergency occurs and the household needs to purchase or rent supplemental heating or cooling devices, or needs temporary shelter outside their home.

Minor Repairs: Minor repairs can be provided only if the weatherization services cannot be provided.

You must contact your human service zone eligibility worker prior to making minor repairs.

Electric Utilities: Primary responsibility for emergency payment for electric utilities (lights only) will be assumed by Energy Share, which is located in each Community Action Agency. Emergency payment for electric utilities for homes heated by electricity, including lights, will be assumed by LIHEAP. The program cannot issue electric utility payments under any circumstances for persons who do not meet the program requirements.

When: Emergency applications are taken all year.



ENERGY COST REDUCTION DEVICES: If you heat with electricity, consider installing a separate meter for heat, a back-up heating system or a "Demand Controlling Device" so you can qualify for much lower electric heating rates. Funds are sometimes available to help with some installation costs. Ask for more information at your local human service zone office or your electric utility company.

Non-Discrimination

You have the right to file a written complaint if you believe that you or members of your household have been discriminated against by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, political beliefs, handicap, or status with respect to marriage or public assistance. A written complaint may be filed with your local Human Service Zone office; the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services Civil Rights Office, Legal Advisory Unit, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept 325, Bismarck, ND 58505-0250, 701-328-2311 or 711 (TTY); Fax 701-328-2173, email: dhslau@nd.gov; or U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Room 509-F HHH Bldg., Washington, DC 20201 (1-800-368-1019 or TDD 1-800-537-7697; Fax 202-619-3818).

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General Information

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