

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FACT SHEET

What is the Energy Assistance Program?

The Energy Assistance Program consists of three components:

Fuel Assistance: This component helps eligible households with the costs of heating their homes.

Crisis Assistance: This component helps households in heating emergency situations with primary heat security deposits, utility heating bills, repair/replacement of heating equipment, or primary heating fuel.

Cooling Assistance: This component helps with cooling equipment repairs or purchases and with payment of the electric bill to operate cooling equipment.

Who is eligible for the Energy Assistance Program?

In order to be eligible for any of the components, certain citizenship criteria must be met and a household's **income must be less than the maximum** allowed for the number of people in the home.

Other requirements are as follows:

Fuel Assistance: You must be responsible for paying the heating bill.

Crisis Assistance: You must have a heating emergency.

Cooling Assistance: You must have or be in need of cooling equipment and there must be an elderly person, a person living with a disability, or a child under 6 living in the home.

When is Energy Assistance Available?

Applications are accepted online (at <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/>), by calling the Enterprise Customer Service Center at (855) 635 – 4370, and at the local department of social services as follows:

Fuel Assistance: the second Tuesday in October through the second Friday in November.

Crisis Assistance: November 1 through March 15 for equipment related assistance and security deposits.

First workday in January through March 15 for purchase of primary home heating fuel and payment of primary heat utility bills.

Cooling Assistance: June 15 through August 15; August 15 is a Sunday in 2021, the last day will be August 16.

ALL BENEFITS ARE BASED ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.

How long will it take to process my application?

Fuel Assistance: as soon as possible but no later than late December.

Crisis Assistance: as soon as all requested information is provided.

Cooling Assistance: as soon as all requested information is provided.

What if I'm dissatisfied?

You may request an agency conference to discuss any action with which you disagree. You may also request an administrative hearing by the State Department of Social Services when funds are available and your application is denied, or you are refused the right to apply during the application period, or your application is not acted on or is closed prior to benefit determination. A hearing must be requested within 30 days of the negative action.

The hearing request may be submitted to the local agency or to:

Hearing and Legal Services Manager
Appeals and Fair Hearings Unit
Virginia Department of Social Services
801 East Main Street,
Richmond, VA 23219-3301

If you suspect Fraud or Abuse of any kind, report it to your Local Department of Social Services or call 1-800-552-3431.

NEED HELP WITH HEATING OR COOLING?

See if you might be eligible at <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/>.

Applications for help with your heating and cooling bills or equipment needs are accepted online (at <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/>), by calling the Enterprise Customer Service Center at (855) 635 – 4370, and at your local department of social services.

Fuel assistance helps with home heating costs; but can also be used for furnace re-starts, late charges, delivery charges, installation charges, and connection or re-connection fees. **Applications are accepted online, through the Enterprise Customer Service Center, and at local departments of social services from the second Tuesday in October through the second Friday in November.** Benefits are determined and authorizations for deliveries or service are sent to vendors in December.

Crisis assistance is intended to meet a household's emergency heating need, when no other resource is available.

- **Applications are accepted online, through the Enterprise Customer Service Center, and at local departments of social services from November 1 through March 15** for the following: one time only heat security deposit and/or heating equipment repair/purchase. **Assistance is based on the availability of funds.**
- **Applications are accepted online, through the Enterprise Customer Service Center, and at local departments of social services from the first workday in January through March 15** for the purchase of home heating fuel and the payment of heat utility bill. **Assistance is based on the availability of funds.**

Cooling assistance provides purchase or repair of cooling equipment and/or payment for electricity to operate cooling equipment. To be eligible, a household must contain at least one vulnerable individual who is age 60 or over, is living with a disability, or is under age 6. **Applications are accepted online, through the Enterprise Customer Service Center, and at local departments of social services from June 15 through August 16. Assistance is based on the availability of funds.**

Eligibility criteria for assistance include:

- Must be resident of the locality in which application is made
- Must have a heating or cooling expense responsibility
- Monthly gross income may not exceed:

Household Size	Maximum Income		Household Size	Maximum Income
1	\$1,610		11	\$7,285
2	\$2,178		12	\$7,853
3	\$2,745		13	\$8,420
4	\$3,313		14	\$8,988
5	\$3,880		15	\$9,555
6	\$4,448		16	\$10,123
7	\$5,015		17	\$10,690
8	\$5,583		18	\$11,258
9	\$6,150		19	\$11,825
10	\$6,718		20	\$12,393

If you suspect **Fraud or Abuse of any kind**, report it to your Local Department of Social Services or call 1-800-552-3431.

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). The WAP reduces household energy use through the installation of cost-effective energy savings measures, which also improve resident health and safety. Common measures including sealing air leaks, adding insulation, and repairing heating and cooling systems. DHCD works with a network of nonprofit organizations around the state, who directly implement the program. More information is available at <https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/wx>