



General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	25DC093 Upstate and New York City
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To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, HEAP Coordinators, TA and SNAP Directors, WMS Coordinators, Accounting Supervisors
From:	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner, Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	HEAP 2025-2026 Opening Date for Emergency Benefit Component
Effective Date:	January 2, 2026
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Attachments:	None

Section 2 – Opening Date and How to Apply

The purpose of this GIS is to provide social services districts (districts) with information about the 2025-2026 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Emergency benefit component. The Emergency benefit component will open on Friday, January 2, 2026. Districts must begin accepting applications for Emergency benefits and may issue guarantees for Emergency benefits on this date.

Emergency benefits are available to assist eligible households with a heating emergency or a heat-related domestic emergency. If regular component benefits are available for an eligible household, they must be used first to resolve heating emergencies. One Emergency benefit of each type is available per HEAP household for the 2025-2026 program year. Temporary relocation for housing emergencies and propane tank deposits to obtain new propane vendors are also available under the Emergency benefit component.

All applicants for the Emergency benefit component may apply via telephone or in person. Districts must make reasonable accommodations for homebound applicants to apply for any HEAP benefit. An authorized representative or individual with documented power of attorney may also apply for all HEAP benefits.

If an eligible household is without heat, districts must resolve the household's life-threatening emergency within 18 hours of the date of application. If an eligible household faces an imminent loss of heat or utility service to operate a heating source, the crisis emergency must be resolved within 48 hours of the date of application.

Section 3 – Eligibility

To be eligible for an Emergency benefit, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- A Regular HEAP benefit must not be available and/or any credit remaining on an account must be insufficient to resolve the applicant's emergency.
- The applicant must be facing one of the following heating or heat-related domestic emergency situations:
 - The applicant's utility service is terminated or scheduled for termination;
 - The applicant's electric utility service necessary to operate the primary heating equipment is terminated or scheduled for termination;
 - The applicant is without heating fuel or has less than one quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) tank of oil, kerosene, or propane; or less than a ten-day supply of other heating fuels;
 - The applicant requires temporary relocation because the district has determined that that living situation is detrimental to the health and/or safety of household members; and/or
 - The applicant is without or has less than one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) tank of propane, their current propane vendor will not make a delivery, and the applicant requires a propane tank deposit with a new propane vendor.
- The applicant must be the customer of record (person who has the energy account in their name) for the utility or deliverable fuel account or someone who was part of the original HEAP household.
- The applicant household must not have more than \$2,500 in available liquid resources. If the household includes someone under age 6 or age 60 or older, the resource limit is \$3,750.
- All applicants for the Emergency benefit will need to be resource tested, regardless of whether the household is in receipt of Temporary Assistance (TA) or Code A SSI benefits. Resource verification for Emergency benefits is based on attestation for all applicants and household members unless the eligibility examiner has reason to doubt the declared amount.

Full Emergency eligibility requirements and procedures are outlined in the [HEAP Manual](#).

Section 4 – Benefit Amounts, Budgets and Payments

Listed below are the HEAP Emergency benefit types with the benefit amounts.

2025-2026 HEAP Emergency Component Benefits

Benefit Type	Benefit Amount
Oil, Kerosene, and Propane	\$900
Wood, Wood Pellets, Corn, Coal, or other deliverables	\$635
Natural Gas Heat Only	\$400
Natural Gas Heat Combined with Heat-Related Domestic Electric	\$585
Electric Heat	\$585
Heat-Related Electric	\$185
Temporary Relocation	Maximum of \$500 per program year
Propane Tank Installation and Deposit	Maximum of \$500 per program year

An Emergency HEAP Budget (Benefit Type 'E – Emergency') must be stored in Automated Budgeting and Eligibility Logic (ABEL), with the appropriate emergency type, and the payment amount associated with the pay type must match the HEAP Emergency benefit amount on the HEAP budget. The payment line "From Date" should be the application date.

A Special Claiming Code must be entered for all HEAP payments on Screen 6 of Welfare Management System (WMS). Special Claiming Code H is required for all HEAP prevention payments. Special Claiming Code G is required for HEAP restoration payments.

All HEAP Emergency benefits must be issued directly to a participating vendor. All district payments, except for NYC, meeting the requirement for issuance through the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) process will be made through OSC. NYC HEAP payments are issued locally. Detailed procedures regarding HEAP payment processing are outlined in [WCL112025 - WMS-CNS Coordinator Guidance - Welfare Management System \(WMS\) Implications for the 2025 – 2026 Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\) Year](#), released November 20, 2025.

Districts should contact their HEAP Bureau liaison if they need additional information.