

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When can I apply for HEAP?

A. The 2025-2026 Regular HEAP benefit is scheduled to open on Monday, 17 November 2025. The 2025-2026 Emergency HEAP benefit is scheduled to open on Friday, 02 January 2026. Close dates for all components are to be determined based on available funding.

Q. Where can I apply for HEAP?

A. You can apply for HEAP in person, at either one of our offices. You can also request to have an application mailed or emailed to you. Or you can apply on-line at mybenefits.ny.gov. Please keep in mind that if you choose to apply online, we do not monitor or process these applications. All online applications will be reviewed by Albany County DSS.

Q. If I receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance (TA) benefits, do I still need to apply for HEAP?

A. If you are an active SNAP or TA recipient, you might not need to apply for HEAP. SNAP and TA recipients are automatically *income eligible* for HEAP but are not necessarily an automatic recipient. If you have an ongoing SNAP or TA case, and there have been no recent changes, you might be on the auto-pay list for HEAP. If you are not on the auto-pay list, you will need to complete an application. Please contact our office before completing an application so we can tell you how to proceed. Submitting unnecessary applications can cause confusion and delays in receiving your HEAP benefit.

Q. I received a HEAP application in the mail that was partially completed. Why did I get this?

A. If you received a partially pre-filled application, this is an “early outreach” application, and it means you received a HEAP benefit last program year. These applications are automatically sent to qualifying households before the season fully opens to the public. Please complete any blank spaces and gather any necessary supporting documentation. Please return all applications and documentation **to our main office** (CCE Albany: 24 Martin Road; Voorheesville NY 12186). If your early outreach application has a different return address on it, please disregard that address and proceed with mailing it to our Voorheesville address.

Q. Why did my neighbor/friend/family member get an early outreach application, and I did not?

A. There could be several reasons. Not everyone who received a HEAP benefit last year is guaranteed to receive an early outreach application. Typically, households that contain someone who is permanently disabled, over the age of 60 or under the age of 6 receive early outreach applications first. Also, early outreach applications are mailed out in batches, not all recipients get them at the same time. If you have not received an early outreach by 03 November 2025, please contact our office and we can send you a regular application.

Q. Who must be included on my HEAP application?

A. Unlike some other assistance programs, HEAP looks at **all** household members. Anyone who uses the address as their primary residence must be listed on the application. Additionally, income from all individuals must be recorded; this includes non-taxable forms of income.

Q. How long will it take to receive my regular HEAP benefits?

A. Regular HEAP applications should be processed within 30 business days from the date DSS receives the application. While a determination of eligibility will be made during this time, it might take your vendor slightly longer to receive the actual funds. All vendors will be notified of approved benefits.

Q. If I was missing information/documentation when I submitted my application, how long do I have to return it?

A. You have 10 business days from the time you submit your application to return any missing information. A "Document Requirements" form will be given (or mailed) to you that states when the documents are due as well as what information is missing. If you are unable to return documents within this time, you might be asked to complete a new application.

Q. I think it has been more than 30 business days, can I fill out another application?

A. No. If you think the processing time has expired, please contact our office and we can look for an update. Please **DO NOT** submit multiple applications. Submitting multiple applications causes confusion among caseworks which can result in delays of processing applications.

Q. What do I do if I submitted a HEAP application but have since received a disconnect notice or have less than ¼ tank of fuel?

A. If you have not received a determination regarding your regular HEAP benefit, but since submitting your application you have received a disconnect notice, or are low on fuel, please contact our office. When you speak with us, we will ask questions to verify some information, then work with the DSS to address your emergency.

Q. What is the difference between Regular HEAP and Emergency HEAP? How can I apply for Emergency HEAP?

A. Emergency HEAP opens on 02 January 2026. You can only apply for Emergency HEAP if you have already received a Regular HEAP benefit **and** you have either a shut off notice or are low on a deliverable (less than ¼ tank or less than a 10-day supply). You can apply for emergency HEAP by calling our office. Most emergency applications can be done over the phone and do not require full application. Please **do not** complete a full application packet unless you are instructed to do so. Submitting unnecessary applications can cause confusion and delays.

Additional HEAP information, including benefit amounts and income calculation, can be found here:

Office of Temporary Disability and Assistance (OTDA): <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/>

Albany County Department of Social Services (DSS):

<https://www.albanycountyny.gov/departments/social-services/home-energy-assistance-program-heap>