



Dear HR/Management Professional:

With the first frost of the season upon us and the quick approach of another cold winter in New England, we would like to pass along information that may be helpful to you and your employees about home heating and weatherization assistance. Following is a list of providers in the Greater Boston area who can provide assistance in home heating and protection for those who are eligible.

The provider has a standard set of questions to determine eligibility. Requirements vary slightly but programs cover both documented and undocumented residents of Massachusetts. Note that answering NO to any of the questions does NOT disqualify an employee from getting assistance. The local fuel assistance agency can determine which program applies to the employee need on a case-by-case basis.

Following is information that you can share with your employees along with a flyer that you can print and post, or forward through email. For those companies in states other than Massachusetts, for fuel assistance information in your state, please see the bottom of the flyer.

Enjoy the changing of the seasons and stay warm!



**You May Qualify for Home Heating Assistance this winter!**

**No family should go without heat and hot water. Massachusetts offers heating assistance to eligible residents during the winter months. Find out more below.**

There are several programs in Massachusetts to help low-income families and individuals pay for their heating fuel and other utilities. Government help is available to pay for fuel, weatherization, and heating system repairs. In addition, low-income customers can get utility discounts, utility shutoff protection, and help from non-government programs.

**WHAT IS FUEL ASSISTANCE?**

Fuel assistance is a government program to help low-income families pay their heating bills. The program was started so that low-income people would not have to choose between heating their homes and buying food or other things they need. The official name of the program is the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Most people who get fuel assistance also qualify for other related energy assistance programs:

- Free weatherization services to lower your fuel bills (for example, insulation and weather-stripping).
- Heating system repair or replacement, for homeowners who are without heat because their heating systems don't work.
- Discount rates with gas, electric, and telephone companies.
- Electricity conservation programs, offered by the electric utility companies, to lower your electric bill by switching to a more energy-efficient refrigerator, lighting, water heater, etc. and installing insulation.
- For households heating with oil, a one-time half-price oil delivery (up to 175 gallons) per heating season through the Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program.

**WHO RUNS THE FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM?**

Local community organizations take applications, determine eligibility, make payments, and handle all other matters concerns the fuel assistance program and related energy programs.

Funding for the LIHEAP program comes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the federal government. In Massachusetts, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers LIHEAP.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FUEL ASSISTANCE?**

Most low-income families and individuals are eligible for fuel assistance during the heating season, as long as their total income is within the income limits (see limits below).

- You may be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen. (Undocumented non-citizens are not eligible.)
- You may be a homeowner or a renter.
- You may pay for your own heat, or it can be included in you rent.
- You may use any type of heating fuel (gas, oil, electricity, propane, etc.)
- Note: Some renters living in subsidized housing (such as Section 8 housing) with heat included in rent are not eligible for fuel assistance. Check with your local fuel assistance agency if you are in this situation.

### **WHAT ARE THE INCOME LIMITS?**

Eligibility for fuel assistance is based on the combined gross annual income of everyone in your household 18 years of age or older. Gross annual income means income from all sources such as a job, government assistance, pensions, child support payments, interest on savings, etc., before any deductions. The income limits depend on the number of people in your household. Your household's gross income must be no greater than the income limits shown in the table below.

<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Fuel Assistance Income Limits 2004-2005 heating season</b>
1	\$18,620
2	\$24,980
3	\$31,340
4	\$37,700
5	\$44,060
6	\$50,420
7	\$56,780
8	\$63,140

Note: These income limits are equal to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG). Income limits for larger households are available from your local fuel assistance agency.

### **WHAT ARE THE ASSET LIMITS?**

Assets are things you own and money you have saved. There are no asset limits for the fuel assistance program. The amount of money you have and the value of things you own do not affect your eligibility for fuel assistance.

### **WHAT OTHER ENERGY PROGRAMS MAY I BE ELIGIBLE FOR?**

Most fuel assistance households are also eligible for several other energy programs:

- Weatherization
- Emergency heating system repair and replacement
- Utility discounts
- Electricity conservation programs
- Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program

### **HOW DO I APPLY TO OTHER ENERGY PROGRAMS?**

If you apply for fuel assistance, you do not have to fill out separate applications for other energy programs. Your fuel assistance application is all you need. Your fuel assistance agency will let you know if you are eligible for other energy programs such as weatherization, furnace repair, and utility discounts.

### **WHO PAYS MY HEATING FUEL BILLS?**

Fuel assistance will pay your heating bills up to your benefit limit. You must pay the rest, if any.

You can estimate how much you will have to pay by looking at the total amount you spent on heat last year and subtracting the benefit amount. For example, if your heating bills were \$600

last year and your benefit amount is \$480, you should plan to pay about \$120 of your own money for heat. You should plan to pay more if fuel costs are higher this year than last year.

If you heat is included in your rent, fuel assistance will pay up to 30% of your monthly rent.

If your benefit limit is higher than your actual heating costs, fuel assistance will only pay the amount of your heating bills. The extra is returned to the fuel assistance fund to help another family.

#### **HOW DO I GET MY BENEFITS IF I PAY FOR MY OWN HEAT?**

Your heating company (oil, gas, electric company, etc.) will send copies of your heating bills to your fuel assistance, which will make payments directly to your heating company. The agency will make payments up to your benefit limit for heating fuel used between November 1 and April 30. Fuel assistance payments may not show up on your heating bill right away.

#### **HOW DO I GET MY BENEFITS IF HEAT IS INCLUDED IN MY RENT?**

Your fuel assistance will send a check directly to you, usually 3 or 4 times during the heating season.

#### **HOW DO I APPLY FOR FUEL ASSISTANCE?**

You should apply for fuel assistance by calling or visiting the agency in charge of the fuel assistance program in your area. A few of the cities/towns in Massachusetts are listed here. If you have Internet access, please use this link to find your specific place of residence – Massachusetts [Fuel Assistance City/Town](#). Otherwise, you can also call the Massachusetts Heat Line toll-free at 1-800-632-8175 for information and a fuel assistance staff member will help you with your application and answer any questions you have about the program. *Information is available in Spanish as well as in English.*

#### **HOW DO I FIND OUT IF I QUALIFY?**

You may call the Massachusetts Heat Line toll-free at 1-800-632-8175 for information or call your local fuel assistance agency. (For other state 800 numbers see below.)

## Where is my town's heating assistance agency?

<b>ACTON</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li> <li>✓ Weatherization Services</li> <li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li> </ul>	South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc. (SMOC) 300 Howard St. Framingham, MA 01701 (508) 620-1230 - Framingham 1-800-286-6776 - Toll Free outside Framingham

<b>ACUSHNET</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li> </ul>	People Action in Community Endeavors Inc. (PACE) 166 Williams St. New Bedford, MA 02740 (508) 999-9920
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Weatherization Services</li> <li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li> </ul>	Citizens for Citizens (CFC) 264 Griffin St. Fall River, MA 02724 (508) 679-0041 – Fall River (508) 823-6346 – Taunton (508) 676-7397 – Information

<b>ARLINGTON</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li> </ul>	Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI) 517 Moody St. Lowell, MA 01854 (978) 459-6161 - Lowell (781) 643-2358 - Arlington 1-877-451-1082 - Toll Free
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Weatherization Services</li> <li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li> </ul>	Menotomy Weatherization 20 Academy Street, Suite 202 Arlington, MA 02476 (781) 316-3436

<b>BOSTON</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li> <li>✓ Weatherization Services</li> <li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li> </ul>	Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD) 178 Tremont Street Boston, MA 02111 (617) 357-6012

## **BRIDGEWATER**

- ✓ Fuel Assistance
- ✓ Weatherization Services
- ✓ Heating Systems Service

Self Help, Inc. (SHI)  
Fagan Drive  
Avon, MA 02322  
(508) 588-5440 – Avon  
(508) 584-1414 – Brockton  
(508) 226-4192 – Attleboro  
1-800-255-0875 – Toll Free

## **BROCKTON**

- ✓ Fuel Assistance
- ✓ Weatherization Services
- ✓ Heating Systems Service

Self Help, Inc. (SHI)  
Fagan Drive  
Avon, MA 02322  
(508) 588-5440 - Avon  
(508) 584-1414 - Brockton  
(508) 226-4192 - Attleboro  
1-800-255-0875 - Toll Free

## **CAMBRIDGE**

- ✓ Fuel Assistance

City of Cambridge, Department of Human Services  
51 Inman St.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 349-6252

- ✓ Weatherization Services
- ✓ Heating Systems Service

Menotomy Weatherization  
20 Academy Street, Suite 202  
Arlington, MA 02476  
(781) 316-3436

## **CHELSEA**

- ✓ Fuel Assistance
- ✓ Weatherization Services
- ✓ Heating Systems Service

Community Action Program Intercity, Inc. (CAPIC)  
100 Everett St., Unit 14  
Chelsea, MA 02150  
(617) 884-6130

## **EVERETT**

- ✓ Fuel Assistance
- ✓ Weatherization Services
- ✓ Heating Systems Service

Tri-City Community Action Programs, Inc. (TRICAP)  
341A Forest Street  
Malden, MA 02148  
(781) 322-6284

## FALL RIVER

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Citizens for Citizens (CFC) 264 Griffin St. Fall River, MA 02724 (508) 679-0041 – Fall River (508) 823-6346 – Taunton (508) 676-7397 Information
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## FITCHBURG

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li></ul>	New England Farm Workers Council (NEFWC) (North Central Massachusetts) 435 Main Street, Suite 3040 Fitchburg, MA 01420 (978) 342-4520
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Montachusett Opportunity Council, Inc. (MOC) Energy and Environmental Services 52 Hartwell St. Fitchburg, MA 01420 (978) 342-7025

## LYNN

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Lynn Economic Opportunity, Inc. (LEO) 156 Broad St. Lynn, MA 01901 (781) 581-7220 ext. 283
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## MALDEN

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Tri-City Community Action Programs, Inc. (TRICAP) 341A Forest Street Malden, MA 02148 (781) 322-6284
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## NEWTON

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD) 178 Tremont Street Boston, MA 02111 (617) 357-6012
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## QUINCY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc. (QCAP) 1509 Hancock Street, 3rdFloor Quincy, MA 02169 (617) 479-8181 ext. 101
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## **WINTHROP**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Fuel Assistance</li><li>✓ Weatherization Services</li><li>✓ Heating Systems Service</li></ul>	Community Action Program Intercity, Inc. (CAPIC) 100 Everett St., Unit 14 Chelsea, MA 02150 (617) 884-6130
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### **I don't see my town listed above!**

**MASSACHUSETTS:** call the Massachusetts Heat Line toll-free at 1-800-632-8175 for more information.

**CONNECTICUT:** call the 2-1-1 Info line or the Department of Social Services' Winter Heating Assistance line at 1-800-842-1132

**NEW HAMPSHIRE:** contact Celeste Lovett at (603) 271-2155

**MAINE:** call 1-866-HEAT-TIP

**VERMONT:** call 1-800-479-6151 or 1-802-241-1165

**RHODE ISLAND:** call 401-222-6920

#### **WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?**

You may apply for fuel assistance any time during the heating season, up until April 30. You may apply for weatherization, furnace repair services, or utility discounts throughout the year.

#### **WHAT DOCUMENTATION DO I NEED?**

You will need the following information and documents to apply for fuel assistance:

##### ***Household Information:***

- Names, birthdates, and Social Security numbers of all household members
- Picture I.D. for the head of household
- Proof of address

##### ***Income Information:***

- You need to provide proof of income for the past 30 days for all household members who are 19 or older. Depending on your type of income, this may include:
  - Pay stubs
  - Copies of pension checks
  - Copies of disability or SSI checks
  - Unemployment or workers' compensation stubs
  - Bank interest statements
  - Copies of child support checks
- If self-employed, entire copy of your most recent tax return – signed and dated
- If you have rental income, copies of your most recent tax return or proof of rental income and expenses.

***Utility Information:***

- Copy of current heating bill showing the name on the account, the account number, service address, rate, and amount
- If you rent your home and heat is included in your rent, a copy of your lease or a statement from your landlord that heat is included. Also your landlord's name and phone number
- If you live in subsidized housing (such as Sect 8), a copy of your lease
- Proof of last year's heating costs, to see if you qualify for the high-energy benefit
- Names of your electric, gas, and telephone companies and your account numbers

**HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO FIND OUT IF I AM ELIGIBLE?**

If you bring all of the needed documents with you when you apply, you will find out if you are eligible for fuel assistance right away. If you do not have all of your proofs when you apply, the process will take longer. Once you have been approved, you will get a written notice of your benefit level.