

Dear Community Leader,

Home Energy Assistance Program- Cooling Assistance, is available beginning May 1, 2015.

The program will close on August 28, 2015, or earlier, if funding is exhausted. Last season, funding was exhausted by the end of June.

- Eligible Households will receive installation of one (1) window Air Conditioner, or a portable AC unit, if installation of a window unit is not feasible.

All HEAP components are federally funded. The funding is limited and cooling assistance is provided on a first come, first served basis.

Eligibility Requirements:

Income:

- Households must have received a 2014-15 HEAP benefit OR
- Have income which does not exceed the 2014-15 maximum HEAP guidelines

Medical Need:

- At least one member of the household must have a medical condition exacerbated by extreme heat. The medical condition must be clearly stated, documented in writing by a Physician, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner, and be dated within the last 12 months. Documentation older than 12 months may be used, if it provides sufficient information to indicate the medical condition is considered chronic.

Households that received HEAP cooling assistance within the last 10 years, or Households with a working AC unit, that is less than five years old, are not eligible.

Households that have heating costs included in rent, and rent is subsidized (Section 8, Belmont, etc.), are not eligible.

How to Apply:

Starting 5/1/15, clients may apply at the HEAP office at 291 Pearl Street, Buffalo, 8am-4pm.

We will also accept applications by mail. Clients may call the HEAP Application Request line at 858-1969 for an application packet. Applications will be mailed beginning 5/1/15.

Applicants will be provided a list of qualified contractors in our area who have a contract with NYS to install AC units. HEAP will notify the chosen vendor of program eligibility. The vendor will then contact the client to set up an appointment.

The HEAP Hotline **858-7644** is available to provide information about:

- Cooling Assistance
- Other programs available to assist with heat and electricity costs, or furnace repair when HEAP benefits are closed for season
- Weatherization Assistance Program, and EmPower NY referral
- Questions about HEAP applications submitted during the season
- Information about the 2015-16 HEAP season. HEAP "early outreach" mail out of applications for 2015-16 season, to select households, is expected to commence in the Fall. HEAP Auto pay process for 2015-16, for households in receipt of TA or SNAP, is expected to commence in September.

Thank you for your commitment to helping eligible households in Erie County obtain critical HEAP assistance. We value your partnership.

Jane Filipski

Energy Programs Coordinator

Erie County Home Energy Assistance Program