

CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Department of Public Service provides a variety of services to protect and assist utility customers. This factsheet provides information on bill payment options and financial assistance programs to help manage utility bills.

BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS

Balanced/Budget Billing—a balanced (or levelized) billing plan provides equal monthly payments. The plan helps even out bills that are high in one season and low in another so that your charges remain the same throughout the year. The payment plan does not reduce your overall energy bill for the year; however, it does help you manage your monthly budget.

Deferred Payment Agreement—a deferred payment agreement assists consumers who have fallen behind on their bills and cannot pay in full. Your utility can work with you to develop a plan to pay outstanding charges over a specified period based on your ability to pay. The length of the agreement and the amount of each monthly payment will be decided between you and your utility.

ENERGY SAVING PROGRAMS & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - Federal, Utility, and Community

Government-sponsored programs: Contact your county's Department of Social Services or Office for Aging to learn about assistance programs.

➤ **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP):** a federally funded program that provides heating grants to help income-eligible consumers pay for their energy costs. Additional information regarding the HEAP program can be found by visiting the otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/ and mybenefits.ny.gov websites, by calling the NYS HEAP Hotline at 1-800-342-3009, or by contacting your local Department of Social Services Office. HEAP includes:

- Regular Benefit – assists households that pay a high proportion of household income for heat or heat-related energy.
- Regular Arrears Supplement Benefit (RAS) – a one-time benefit based on the actual amount of current utility arrears, up to a maximum of \$10,000 per applicant household. Benefits are paid directly to the household’s gas and/or electric utility vendor(s). You may be eligible for RAS if you heat your home with natural gas or electricity or heat is included in your rent and you pay for electricity.
- Emergency Benefit – assists households who are facing a heat or heat-related energy emergency. If you have an emergency, contact your local Department of Social Services office.
- Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement - helps income eligible homeowners repair or replace furnaces, boilers, and other direct heating equipment necessary to keep their primary heating source functional.
- Clean and Tune Benefit – includes the cleaning of primary heating equipment, but may also include chimney cleaning, minor repairs, installation of carbon monoxide detectors or programmable thermostats, if needed, to allow for the safe, proper, and efficient operation of the heating equipment.
- Cooling Assistance Benefit - provides for cooling assistance services to households that include an individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by extreme heat.

2021-2022 HEAP Benefits Maximum Income Levels	
Household Size	Monthly Income
1	\$2,729
2	\$3,569
3	\$4,409
4	\$5,249
5	\$6,088
6	\$6,928
7	\$7,086
8	\$7,243
9	\$7,401
10	\$7,558
11	\$7,715
12	\$7,873
13	\$8,420
Each Add'l*	\$568
*amount increased per additional household member	

- **Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP):** is a drinking water and wastewater emergency assistance program funded through new federal resources. Benefits are based on the amount of unpaid water and wastewater bills owed by applicants. This assistance is targeted at low-income households and income guidelines will mirror that of HEAP. Information regarding LIHWAP can be found by visiting otda.ny.gov/LIHWAP.

Utility-sponsored programs: Payment assistance programs are available through each of the major natural gas and electric utilities. In addition, income-eligible consumers can receive a discount on their monthly electric and/or gas bills, as well as other benefits, depending on the characteristics of the particular utility's program. The chart below includes links to information on each utility's website about consumer programs available to help manage energy bills.

Central Hudson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance Program • Save Energy & Money
Con Edison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment Plans & Assistance • Save Energy & Money (link on homepage)
Corning Natural Gas Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save Me Money (link on homepage) • Assistance Programs (link on homepage)
Liberty Utilities (formerly St. Lawrence Gas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance Programs • Energy Efficiency
National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment Assistance Programs • Energy Efficiency Programs
National Grid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Long Island (including the Rockaway Peninsula) – Metro (Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island) – Upstate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for Winter Weather (all territories) • Save Energy & Money (Metro NY link on homepage) • Save Energy & Money (LI link on homepage) • Save Energy & Money (Upstate link on homepage)
New York State Electric & Gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HEAP & Energy Assistance Programs • Help with Your Bill • Project Share (Heating Fund Grant)
Orange & Rockland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment Plans & Assistance • Save Energy & Money (link on homepage)
PSEG – Long Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Assistance Programs • Save Energy & Money
Rochester Gas & Electric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HEAP & Energy Assistance Program • Help with Your Bill • Project SHARE (Heating Fund Grant)

Community-based service programs: Service organizations and local community agencies provide financial aid, counseling services and assistance with utility emergencies. Contact organizations like the [American Red Cross](#) (800-733-2767), the [Salvation Army](#) (800-728-7825), and [United Way](#) (2-1-1 or 888-774-7633) to learn more.