

## Common Questions Asked About Low Income Energy Assistance Program

*Q: Does LIEAP pay for all of my heating bills through all of the cold months?*

A: LIEAP provides a **partial payment or a supplement** for income eligible households—State guidelines count income for everyone in the household and assets, as well. So LIEAP pays for **part of the heating bill**; the benefit is paid directly to the utility company or fuel supplier. Benefits pay for heat generated by gas, electricity, propane or wood. **LIEAP assistance is just for heat and just during the months of October through April.** The cost for cooking, hot water and other utility costs are not included as part of the LIEAP assistance.

*Q. What are the income limits for a household of 1, 2 and 4 to give our listeners an idea of what the guidelines are?*

A: A household of 1 can have an income of no higher than \$22,293 which includes earned income, resources and assets. A household of 2 can have an income of \$29,153 and a household of 4 has an income limit of \$42,872. Income guidelines are listed on the Montana State Government website.

*Q: Do the Utility companies offer discounts to households receiving LIEAP benefits?*

A: Northwest Energy offers these discounts to households receiving LIEAP benefits: from May through October they give a 15% discount for electric heat and from Nov. through April they give a 25% discount. For gas heat they offer no discount during the warmer months of May through October but **offer 30% discount** in the coldest months. This deep discount plus the LIEAP benefit can really help with the heat bill—so it is worth applying.

*Q. So LIEAP benefits can help renters as well as homeowners?*

A. Yes, but for renters their heat bill account needs to be in their name; if it isn't there is a process we have to go through. Please call our front desk: 447-1625 to find out what you need to do. Just a reminder: **LIEAP can only pay for heat bills not for lights or water.**

*Q. Can LIEAP can help those eligible households who use wood for their primary source of heat. How does that work?*

A. LIEAP can reimburse applicants for purchased wood once they fill out the LIEAP application are approved.

*Q. Is there help for folks who face shut off notices?*

A. Yes there is; Energy Share is a non-profit organization that may assist with energy services such as shut off notices. Folks need to apply for LIEAP first because it can assist families with fuel assistance, weatherization, furnace and education on how to save energy and reduce heating bills. Energy Share is a program of last resort when a family is faced with a home energy emergency due to an unavoidable circumstance. If someone is facing an emergency they can call the LIEAP office: 447-1625.

For more information or to ask questions, please call (406) 447-1625 or come into our office at 648 N Jackson in Helena, MT.

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