



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Lydia L. Mihalik, Director

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For Immediate Release:
3/27/2020

Ohio Development Services Agency Contact:
Todd Walker
Phone: 614-644-0247
Todd.Walker@development.ohio.gov

Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency Contact:
Tonya Dobbins, HEAP Coordinator
1743 E. Main St.,
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Phone: 740-653-4146
Fax: 740-653-1273
Email: tdobbins@faircaa.org

Ohio Updates Application Process for Energy Assistance Programs in response to COVID-19

The Ohio Development Services Agency (Development) and Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency (Community Action) are working to help keep Ohioans safe during this time of emergency. Recently, Governor Mike DeWine declared a state of emergency regarding COVID-19, and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH has issued orders to limit social interactions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Effective immediately, Ohioans who are enrolling in the Percentage of Income Payment Plan Plus (PIPP) for the first time, applying for Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program, or have limited income, are no longer required to visit a local Energy Assistance Provider in order to complete an application. Please call Community Action to speak to a Case Manager or the Front Office Coordinator for direction on completing an application.

Ohioans can visit www.energyhelp.ohio.gov to start their application and upload the required documents. If you do not have access to the internet and/or cannot upload your documentation, Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency can coordinate a time for you to drop off your documentation or your documentation can be mailed, faxed, or emailed to the local agency. For a list of required documentation and/or to schedule a phone interview, please call 1-833-232-1749.

“Working with our local providers, we have been providing Ohio families with the support they need to manage their energy bills, and now this support is even more important,” said Lydia Mihalik, Director of the Ohio Development Services Agency. “The online application, in a normal scenario, makes it easier to apply and reduces the length of an in-person appointment, but now it is providing a bridge to assistance during an incredibly difficult time.”

Development will also extend the Winter Crisis Program (WCP) until May 1, 2020 to align with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio’s extended Winter Reconnect Order and the regular Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) will be extended until June 1, 2020.

Development’s Interactive Voice Response phone lines will not be available, however Ohioans may continue to call (800) 282-0880 and select option 2, to be transferred to their local Energy Assistance Provider.

The Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program helps income-eligible Ohioans pay their heating bills and can assist with fuel tank placement, fuel tank testing and furnace repair.

Ohioans that have a disconnect notice, have less than 25% of propane, fuel oil, or wood, or need assistance to establish new service are eligible for a one-time WCP benefit if they have not already received a WCP or regular HEAP benefit.

For more information about the features of the Winter Crisis Program locally and what is needed to apply, contact Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency at 740-653-4146. Additional information can also be found at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov or by calling (800) 282-0880.