



OPERATIONS MANUAL

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Chapter 1: Program Overview

1.1 Program Background and Overview

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) oversees the administration of several energy assistance initiatives in Maryland, including the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), the EUSP Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA), the Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA), and the Crisis Grant. OHEP is also responsible for accepting applications for the Utility Service Protection Plan (USPP). A single, streamlined application is used to apply for all programs. These services are delivered through agreements or contracts with local agencies operating within each jurisdiction throughout the State of Maryland.

1.1.1 Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Act of 1981, Title XXVI of Public Law 97-35, along with subsequent amendments through the Human Services Reauthorization Acts of 1984 (Public Law 98-558), 1986 (Public Law 99-425), and 1990 (Public Law 101-501), as codified in 42 USCA Sections 8621-8629, authorizes the federal Department of Health and Human Services to provide grants to states to assist eligible households in reducing their home heating and/or cooling energy costs.

In Maryland, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is the designated agency to receive and manage these federal funds. The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP), a division within the DHS Family Investment Administration, administers this program to help Maryland residents manage their home energy expenses. MEAP provides financial assistance to homeowners, renters, and roomers/boarders by issuing energy benefits that can be applied toward the cost of electricity, utility gas, oil, kerosene, propane, coal, wood, or solar energy subscriptions (MEAP only).

To deliver services locally, DHS contracts with twenty Local Administering Agencies (LAAs), which include Departments of Social Services, Community Action Agencies, local government agencies, and other public service organizations. These agencies are selected based on their experience and capacity to administer energy assistance programs for low-income households in their jurisdictions.

OHEP is responsible for distributing program funds to the LAAs, providing training and technical assistance, and monitoring program operations to ensure compliance

with federal and state requirements. These requirements are detailed in the State LAA contract, the OHEP Operations Manual, the annual State LIHEAP and EUSP Operations Plan, and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR).

1.1.2 Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)

The Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) was established under the Electric Customer Choice and Competition Act of 1999, Section 7-512.1 of the Public Utilities Article, to assist electric utility customers whose annual household income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

EUSP is a State of Maryland program administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) through the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP). The program is designed to help eligible low-income households manage their electric utility costs through the following services:

1. Assistance with Current Electric Bills

EUSP provides a benefit to help cover a portion of the household's current electric bill. This benefit can be divided into 12 monthly bill credits applied over the course of a year or issued as a lump sum payment upon the customer's request.

2. Assistance with Past Due Electric Bills

If a household has unpaid electric bills and does not qualify for, or has exhausted, arrearage assistance funds—or if the outstanding balance exceeds the available arrearage grant—the EUSP benefit can be applied as a lump sum to reduce the past due balance.

The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) provides program oversight and submits an annual report to the Maryland General Assembly detailing program operations and outcomes.

1.1.3 Arrearage Retirement Assistance Programs

The Arrearage Retirement Assistance programs are designed to help eligible customers reduce or eliminate large, past-due electric and gas bills. Qualified applicants may receive a one-time grant of up to the maximum allowable amount under the Electric Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA) and Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA) programs.

To be eligible, customers must have a past-due balance of \$300 or more. In general, households may receive an arrearage retirement grant once every five years, though certain exceptions may apply. Notably, arrearage benefits received in calendar years 2020 and 2021 do not count toward this five-year limitation.

For full eligibility details and program criteria, refer to [Chapter 2.1](#) of this manual.

1.1.4 Critical Medical Needs Program (CMNP)

The Critical Medical Needs Program (CMNP) provides expedited energy assistance to households where a utility disconnection would pose a serious threat to the health or well-being of a medically vulnerable individual. The program is designed to ensure that individuals with qualifying medical conditions have continued access to essential utility services, particularly electricity, which may be necessary to support life-sustaining medical equipment, treatments, or health needs.

Eligible applicants must meet the income guidelines for energy assistance programs and provide medical certification from a licensed healthcare provider verifying the critical nature of their condition and the need for uninterrupted utility service. CMNP applications are given priority processing to prevent disconnections or to restore service as quickly as possible.

The program is administered by the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) in coordination with Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) across the state, working closely with healthcare providers, community navigators and utility companies to protect the health and safety of vulnerable residents.

1.1.5 Utility Service Protection Plan (USPP)

The Utility Service Protection Plan (USPP) is a utility-administered program regulated by the Maryland Public Service Commission under [COMAR Title 20.31.05](#). The program provides safeguards against utility service terminations for households that qualify for energy assistance program benefits.

Once enrolled in USPP, eligible customers are placed on a budget billing plan that spreads their annual utility costs into equal monthly payments. As long as the agreed-upon payments are made, participating households are protected from electric or gas service disconnections during the heating season, which runs from November 1 through March 31. Any outstanding balance accrued during this period becomes due at the conclusion of the heating season.

USPP is designed to help low-income households maintain essential utility services throughout the coldest months of the year, while managing energy costs through consistent, predictable monthly payments. For more details on eligibility and program requirements, refer to [COMAR Title 2031.05.05](#).

1.2 Energy Efficiency Programs

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) partners with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to support energy efficiency initiatives for low-income households. Through this collaboration, OHEP refers eligible applicants to DHCD's Energy Efficiency Programs, which offer services such as weatherization, insulation, and furnace repair or replacement.

These programs aim to lower household energy consumption by identifying sources of energy loss and implementing appropriate energy-saving improvements. By reducing overall energy usage, these services help improve home comfort, lower utility costs, and enhance the safety and health of residential living environments.

For additional information about available services and referral procedures, see [Chapter 3.9](#) Energy Efficiency Services.

1.3 Coordination with Other Programs

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) actively collaborates with a network of related programs and community partners to ensure a comprehensive and accessible energy assistance service delivery system across Maryland. This coordination includes the following efforts:

Application Access

Applications for OHEP programs are accepted through designated Local Administering Agencies (LAAs), including Community Action Agencies and local DHS offices, under formal agreements or contracts.

Senior Outreach

Many LAAs work in partnership with local Departments of Aging, senior centers, and senior housing providers to conduct targeted outreach and assist older adults with the application process.

Information Sharing at Application

At the time of application, OHEP applicants are provided information about

available energy efficiency services, self-help resources, and other assistance programs within their community.

Energy Efficiency Referrals

Applicants can indicate interest in energy efficiency services administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) on the OHEP application. Upon eligibility certification, DHCD accesses referral information through the OHEP Data Management System to offer appropriate services.

Utility Service Protection Plan (USPP) Enrollment

The OHEP application includes an option for utility customers to enroll in the Utility Service Protection Plan (USPP), which offers additional protections during the heating season.

Coordination with Supplemental Assistance Programs

OHEP works closely with the Fuel Fund of Maryland, Dollar Energy Fund, and other human service organizations to coordinate support and make referrals when a household's energy needs exceed the available OHEP benefits.

Emergency Assistance Referrals

When appropriate, OHEP provides referrals to other DHS emergency assistance programs to address additional household needs. DHS also actively shares information about available OHEP services.

Categorical Eligibility Referrals

OHEP receives daily overnight referral files from the Eligibility & Enrollment (E&E) system, identifying households eligible for automatic energy assistance benefits through categorical eligibility provisions.

1.4 Public Participation

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) encourages public involvement in the development and oversight of its program plans through the following activities:

Annual Public Hearings

OHEP conducts public hearings each year to gather input and feedback on proposed program operations. Notifications for these hearings are posted on the OHEP website in advance.

Public Access to Program Plans and Program Data

Maryland's annual Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) State

Plan and the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) Operations Plan are made available to the public on the OHEP website annually. Monthly program participation data is also available on the OHEP website.

Submission of Comments and Requests for Notifications

Individuals or organizations wishing to receive notifications about upcoming public hearings or submit written comments regarding planning documents, policies, and procedures may direct their correspondence to:

Office of Home Energy Programs

Attn: Director
25 South Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-3330

1.5 Eligibility

Eligibility for OHEP programs primarily depends on income and responsibility for home energy costs. Income guidelines are established by legislation and are based on the federal poverty level, as updated annually by the federal government. For the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), income guidelines may be set at up to 60% of the state's median income or 200% of the federal poverty level. Each year, Maryland publishes a plan that specifies the income guidelines for MEAP. For the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), eligibility is based on household income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, as set by legislation. OHEP publishes these criteria in its annual EUSP Plan, which is submitted to the Maryland Public Service Commission.

Categorical Eligibility

Households with a member who receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, cash assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or means-tested veterans benefits are automatically eligible to receive OHEP benefits, provided they are responsible for paying utility costs, per HB 0323

[<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/hb0323/?ys=2023rs>].

Income-Based Eligibility

For households that do not meet Categorical Eligibility, income must be verified. The total gross income received by the household in the 30 days prior to the application date must be submitted and reviewed. To qualify, the household's gross income during this period must be less than or equal to the established poverty level.

Additional Eligibility Criteria

In addition to meeting the income requirement, applicant households must meet the following conditions to be eligible:

- The household must not have already received energy assistance benefits during the current program year (see Chapter 3.3, Application Requirements).
- The applicant must be at least 18 years of age or an emancipated minor.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted to the Local Administering Agency (LAA) based on the applicant's delivery address, which must be within the State of Maryland. If an applicant submits an application to the wrong office, the LAA should accept the application and forward it to the appropriate office. The applicant must be informed of the correct office location and directed to contact that office for further questions regarding their application.

1.6 Benefit Levels

OHEP determines benefit levels to ensure that households with the greatest need receive the largest benefits. Benefit amounts are based on several factors, including income, household size, fuel type, annual energy costs, and geographic location. As a result, larger families with lower incomes and higher energy costs typically receive the highest benefits.

1.7 Crisis Assistance

The State provides energy crisis assistance year-round through two distinct programs: Year-Round Crisis Assistance and Winter Crisis Assistance.

Year-Round Crisis Assistance offers expedited processing of energy assistance to resolve immediate crises, such as preventing utility service termination, restoring service to a household that has been disconnected, or delivering fuel to a household with less than two days' worth of fuel.

Winter Crisis Assistance provides a crisis grant in addition to the regular MEAP grant to address "heat-related" emergencies during the designated crisis season, which runs from November 1st through March 31st. The maximum grant amounts are determined annually based on available program funding. Customers may apply

for a crisis grant as part of their annual application or separately if their MEAP application was submitted before the crisis season begins (see Chapter ____Crisis).

1.8 Outreach

Federal regulations mandate that local agencies ensure all low-income households, including the elderly and disabled, are informed about energy assistance programs. [Chapter 9](#) provides an overview of the outreach requirements and coordinated activities necessary to meet this obligation. Outreach efforts are carried out by OHEP, Local Administering Agencies (LAAs), and energy suppliers to ensure that all potentially eligible households, particularly those with elderly and/or disabled individuals, are made aware of available energy assistance programs. These efforts also include information on other related services that can help reduce their energy burden.

1.9 Application Process

Customers can apply for OHEP through various channels. [Chapter 3](#) outlines the available application methods. Applicants should choose the method most convenient for them, but in case of an emergency, they should apply in person at their local office or by telephone. Applications are processed by intake workers. The list of required documents for eligibility determination is detailed in [Chapter 3.4, Application Requirements](#). At their discretion, Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) may request additional documentation from applicants if any submitted materials are deemed questionable. Applications must be processed within 45 days from receipt.

1.10 Denial Process

An application may be denied for the following reasons:

1. The applicant fails to submit all required documentation to their Local Administering Agency (LAA) within 15 days of the issuance of the *Request for Additional Information* letter.
2. The applicant submits complete documentation but does not meet the eligibility criteria for the program.
3. The applicant has already received benefits for the program year in which they are applying.

Applicants who are denied will receive written notification of the denial. For further details and procedures related to denial, refer to [Chapter 4.2](#), *Denial Policy*.

1.11 Review and Hearing Process

OHEP applicants have the right to appeal the eligibility determination made on their application. While Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) should work to resolve any disputes informally and promptly, applicants are guaranteed access to a formal review and hearing process if the issue cannot be settled locally. For complete details on this process, refer to [Chapter 5](#), *Fraud, Repayment, and Administrative Hearing Procedures*.

1.12 Payments

OHEP benefit payments are issued directly to the energy suppliers of eligible households. These suppliers are responsible for delivering fuel or applying the benefit amount as a credit to the household's existing energy account. In order to participate in the program, energy suppliers must enter into an agreement with OHEP. The agreement outlines the specific provisions and responsibilities that each participating energy supplier must adhere to. For more details, refer to [Chapter 12](#), *Grant Funds Policy*.

Program Snapshot

	Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)	Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)	Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA)	Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA)
Frequency of Grant	Annual (State fiscal year)	Annual (State fiscal year)	Every 5 years (certain exceptions may apply)	Every 5 years (certain exceptions may apply)
Grant Requirement	Account does not have to be in the Applicant's name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Account does not have to be in the Applicant's name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant <u>must</u> receive EUSP grant to be eligible Applicant must have a past-due electric balance of at least \$300 The account must be in the Applicant's name or their name listed on the account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant must receive MEAP grant to be eligible Applicant must have a past-due gas balance of at least \$300 The account must be in the Applicant's name or their name listed on the account.
How Benefit is Applied	One-time credit to the fuel supplier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pays a portion of customer's current electric bill Grant is applied in monthly credits to electric supplier* See Chapter 11.2 for exceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists customers with large past-due electric bills, up to the maximum arrearage grant. Grant is applied as a one-time credit to electric supplier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists customers with large past-due gas bills, up to the maximum arrearage grant. Grant is applied as a one-time credit to gas supplier
Funding	Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility ratepayer fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative via Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund Dominion Settlement 	Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
How Benefits are Determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household size Total household income Heating source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household size Total household income Annual energy usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount past due, up to maximum arrearage benefit. Eligible arrearage amount is confirmed with the electric company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount past due, up to maximum arrearage benefit. Eligible arrearage amount is confirmed with the gas company

Chapter 2: OHEP Eligibility Policy

2.0 General Eligibility Criteria for MEAP and EUSP

A household may be determined eligible for energy assistance under the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) and/or the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) if all of the following requirements are met:

- At least one household member is a US Citizen or a qualified alien
- The total gross household income is equal to or less than the established income guidelines based on household size.
- The applicant establishes Maryland residency.
- Required documentation to verify eligibility is submitted within the prescribed timeframe.
- The applicant has not already received the same benefit (MEAP or EUSP Bill Payment Assistance) for the current program year or heating season.
- The household consists of one or more individuals who function as an economic unit and customarily purchase residential energy in common or pay for energy as part of rent.
- Meets Categorical Eligibility - a member of the household receives SNAP, Cash Assistance, SSI, and/or Means Tested Veterans benefits.
- For MEAP only: Responsibility for heating costs is established, either through direct payment or as an undesignated component of rent.

2.1 General Eligibility Criteria for Arrearage Assistance

The eligibility requirements for both the EUSP Arrearage Retirement Program (EARA) and Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA) are the same. An applicant is eligible if all of the following are met:

- The applicant has a qualified arrearage on an account in their name.
- The applicant has not received an arrearage grant within the preceding five (5) years, unless:
 - The previous benefit was received during calendar years 2020 or 2021, which are exempt from the five-year rule, or

- A [Point in Time Waiver or Vulnerable Population Waiver](#) has been approved.
- The applicant's total gross household income is at or below the program's established poverty guideline.
- The applicant is eligible for:
 - EUSP Bill Payment Assistance (for EUSP arrearage), or
 - MEAP (for gas arrearage).
- Funds are currently available for the program.
- The applicant's name is listed on the utility bill associated with the arrearage.

Benefit Amount and Conditions

If eligible for an arrearage grant:

- The applicant may receive an arrearage benefit for any past-due amount identified by the current electric or gas company that is 21 days or more past due, up to the maximum arrearage grant.
- The arrearage does not need to be from the current utility account but must be from an account previously held in the applicant's name.
- If additional qualifying arrearages are discovered at a later time (including in subsequent years), those amounts may be eligible for payment provided all other criteria are still met.

Restrictions

- Arrearage funds may not be used to reimburse the applicant for prior payments made on their arrearage before applying for assistance. Customer funds applied to past due balances must remain applied to the account and cannot be offset or replaced by program funds.

- An applicant may receive both an electric and a gas arrearage grant, each up to the maximum arrearage grant, in the same five-year period — including within the same program year if eligible.

2.1.2 Point in Time (PIT) Application and Waiver Policy

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) application is a “point in time” application, meaning applicants are screened and considered for all eligible grants — including MEAP, EUSP, EUSP Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA), and Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA) — based on the information and eligibility status provided at the time of application.

Limitations on Arrearage Grant Eligibility: Applicants who are determined ineligible for an arrearage grant at the time of application for MEAP and EUSP, may not receive an arrearage grant later within the same program year unless they qualify for and are approved for a [Point in Time \(PIT\) Waiver](#).

The PIT Waiver applies only to arrearage grants (EARA and GARA). There are no PIT Waivers available for MEAP or EUSP benefits. Additionally, since enrollment in EUSP or MEAP is a prerequisite for receiving an EARA or GARA benefit, a customer who did not receive EUSP or MEAP at the time of application is ineligible for a PIT Waiver for an arrearage grant later in the program year.

Important: Households may only receive one arrearage grant per Program Year.

PIT Waiver Authorization and Process

Local Administering Agency (LAA) Directors have the authority to approve exceptions to the PIT policy through the completion and approval of a [PIT Waiver Form](#).

The purpose of the PIT Waiver is to allow flexibility for applicants who have experienced significant changes in circumstances since their original application date.

The PIT Waiver form includes eligibility statements for the following qualifying conditions:

- A reduction in household income

- A change in household composition
- Presence of a household member age 2 or younger, or age 60 or older
- Presence of a medically fragile household member
(*All CMNP cases are automatically considered medically fragile*)

Documentation Requirements

Applicants must provide documentation supporting their stated eligibility for the PIT Waiver based on the applicable qualifying condition.

- If the applicant claims a reduction in income, they must submit income documentation for the immediate prior 30 days, in accordance with OHEP policy.
- The reduction must result in a change that would shift the household to a lower benefit level for eligibility purposes.

Note: While the documentation is retained with the original application file, the updated income information is not entered into the OHEP Data Management System but should be reflected in the Notes Tab.

- Customers who were in Benefit Level 1 at the time of application and now report zero income are eligible for a PIT Waiver.
- Households that reported no income at the time of application and continue to have no income are also eligible for a PIT Waiver.

In both situations, all other arrearage eligibility criteria must be met, and a copy of the most recent utility statement reflecting the eligible arrearage amount must be included in the applicant's file.

Special Considerations for Categorical Eligibility

Customers who exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) but are categorically eligible, remain eligible for a PIT Waiver. All applicable documentation requirements for categorical eligibility must be maintained with the application file.

Documentation for Changes in Household Circumstances

For applicants requesting a PIT Waiver based on changes in household circumstances, the following documentation must be obtained:

- ***Change in Household Composition:***
Proof of residence (e.g., lease, utility bill, or official correspondence) for any new household member.
- ***Household Member Age 2 or Under, or 60 and Older:***
A copy of the birth certificate (for minors) or government-issued photo identification (for adults).
- ***Medically Fragile Household Member:***
A completed [Physician's Certification Form](#) from a licensed medical professional verifying the individual's medically fragile status.

Use of PIT Waivers or Vulnerable Population Waivers

PIT Waivers may be used for both:

- Regular arrearage grants, and
- Arrearage grants awarded under the Vulnerable Population Waiver (see [Chapter 7](#)).

However, the procedures specific to the Vulnerable Population Waiver must still be followed when applicable.

Only one arrearage grant may be awarded per household per program year. If a customer received a regular arrearage grant at the time of the original application, they are not eligible to receive a Vulnerable Population Waiver grant in the same program year, even if a PIT Waiver is submitted.

Important: Under either a [Point in Time \(PIT\) Waiver or a Vulnerable Population Waiver](#), a customer is eligible to receive one additional arrearage grant, up to the maximum allowable arrearage benefit, within a five-year period.

2.2 General Eligibility Criteria for USPP

The Utility Service Protection Program (USPP) is designed to protect low-income households from utility shutoffs and to help manage utility bills during the heating

season (November 1–March 31). Participation includes a budget billing plan to level monthly utility payments and protects against service termination during the heating season, as long as the customer makes agreed-upon payments.

To be eligible for USPP, a customer must:

1. Apply and be approved for the MEAP or EUSP benefits for the current program year.
2. Agree to participate in the utility's budget billing program, which averages annual utility costs into equal monthly payments.
3. Comply with the terms of the USPP agreement, which includes making regular monthly payments as determined by the utility.

Chapter 3: Applying for Energy Assistance

3.0 Applying for Energy Assistance Benefits

Application Period

Applicants may apply for energy assistance at any point during the program year, which runs from July 1 through June 30. Applications are processed based on specific program guidelines, funding availability, and individual customer circumstances, following the schedule outlined below. No applicant may be turned away due to the time of year.

Period	Programs and Processing Details
July 1 – June 30	<p>Applications are accepted for all programs (MEAP and EUSP).</p> <p>Applicants who have not received OHEP benefits during the current fiscal year will have their applications processed for the current year.</p> <p>Applications from customers who have already received benefits during the same fiscal year will be held for processing in the next program year.</p>
November 1 – March 31	<p>Crisis applications for MEAP are accepted and processed during this time period.</p>

3.1 Applying for Energy Assistance Benefits

Categorical Eligibility Applications: Categorical Eligibility applications are transferred nightly through batch processing from the MDTHINK Eligibility and Enrollment (E&E) system to the OHEP Data Management system. These applications are identified by their E&E Case ID in the OHEP system.

Online Applications: Customers can apply at [myMDTHINK](#). LAAs must import and review these daily.

Telephonic Applications: LAAs may take applications by phone if the customer cannot apply otherwise. A Telephonic Signature Form must accompany these.

Mail-In Applications: Local agencies (LAAs) can mail applications to customers, including instructions and informational materials for return processing.

In-Person Applications: Applications completed on-site must be signed by the applicant, and a copy provided to them.

Off-Site Intake: Applications can be accepted at special events or partner locations (senior centers or community organizations).

Home Visits: Reasonable accommodations must be made for homebound or infirm customers, with home visits arranged as needed per OHEP policy and safety guidelines.

By Proxy: An authorized individual may apply on behalf of the applicant, following proxy application procedures.

Redetermination Process: Customers on a fixed income from the previous program year (aged 60+, disabled, or in the Critical Medical Needs Program) may be eligible for a streamlined renewal without a full application.

- Eligibility is system-generated based on prior year data.
- Income sources must be limited to Social Security, SSI, SSDI, or Pension.
- Small income changes (like a Social Security COLA) can be adjusted without documentation if still within guidelines.
- More significant changes (like household composition or address) require a new application.
- Customers have 45 days to return the redetermination form or provide additional documentation if needed.
- Redetermination mailings are auto-generated quarterly by the state Office of Home Energy Programs. All bulk fuel customers receive a redetermination notice in the first batch sent out at the beginning of the fiscal year.

3.2 OHEP Protections for Domestic Violence Victims

Applicants who have concerns for their personal safety must complete the Concern for Personal Safety Privacy Form, which serves as the required documentation. Once this form is completed, the applicant is exempt from providing photo identification, proof of residence, and a copy of their utility bill.

For cases where an applicant is unable to provide a delivery address due to safety concerns:

- Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) must coordinate with the State OHEP office for guidance.
- If the applicant is currently receiving services from a domestic violence program, the program's mailing address should be entered into the OHEP Data Management System as the applicant's address of record.
- If the applicant is not connected with a domestic violence program, the applicant's legal name must still be used, but the address should be entered as "123 Fake Street."

In all situations, the LAA, State OHEP, utility provider, applicant, and any supporting organization must collaborate to ensure the energy assistance payment is correctly applied to the appropriate utility account.

3.3 Application Processing

Once an application is submitted, Local OHEP Administering Agencies must follow these steps to ensure a timely and accurate eligibility determination:

- Applications must be entered into the OHEP Data Management System, with all supporting documentation uploaded or merged into the system, within 7 calendar days of receipt.
- Immediate Review for pending Utility Termination, disconnected service, or crisis heating situation- All applications should be reviewed promptly and carefully to assess whether the applicant is experiencing a crisis situation.
 - Emergency cases must be prioritized to resolve urgent utility-related issues
 - LAA's should place a 55-Day Hold for utility termination protections.
 - Follow Energy Crisis Assistance emergency protocols during the November 1 – March 31 Crisis Season
- Screen application for Categorical Eligibility.
 - If Categorically Eligible, process as a CE application
- If the applicant is not Categorically Eligible, screen the application for standard eligibility requirements and required documentation.
 - If any required information or documentation is missing, generate a Request for Additional Information (RAI) using the OHEP Data Management System.
- Signature Requirements- Electronic signatures are entered via case notes in the OHEP Data Management System or an intake worker can sign and date a paper application received legibly using their first and last name and upload the application into ECM.
- Supervisor certifies or denies application
- An Electronic Delivery Statement is generated and payments are processed weekly.
- Applications are to be processed within 45 days.

3.4 Application Requirement

General Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years old or an emancipated minor.
- Maintain primary residence at the address listed on the application or meet proxy application criteria (see Chapter 3.4.5).
- Appear for an in-person interview if requested by the LAA.

Required Documents (Non-Categorical Eligible Applications)

An application is only complete when the following are submitted:

1. Signed and Dated Application

- Accepted if signed by applicant, proxy, or Power of Attorney.
- Submission methods: in person, online, mail, phone, fax, or email.
- Original signatures not required unless questionable.
- Electronic signatures only accepted via MDTHINK online application.
- Telephonic signatures allowed with a completed Telephonic Signature form.

2. Names and Social Security Numbers (SSNs)

- Required for applicant and all household members.
- Acceptable documents: SSN card, SOLQ/SVES printout, tax forms, official letters, or Medicare card (if number shown is SSN).
- Previously verified SSNs do not need to be re-verified but must be documented in the current file.

3. Photo Identification (for applicant)

- Required unless already on file.

- Acceptable forms: driver's license, MVA ID, passport, military ID, employment ID, or other government-issued IDs (see full list in [Chapter 3.4](#)).

4. *Proof of Residence*

- Required unless verified via state systems or prior documentation on file.

5. *Proof of Gross Income*

- All household income from the past 30 days must be documented (see full list of [countable income/resources](#) and [excluded income](#) and resources).

6. *Copy of Utility Bill or Termination Notice*

- If applicable.

7. *Copy of Heating Bill or Receipt*

- If applicable.

Household Member Requirements

- All persons residing in the home as of the application date must be listed, and their income counted.
- Documentation may be requested if residency is in question.
- Same-year multiple benefits restriction: No household member may reapply as an applicant if still residing with the original applicant. LAAs must verify the departure of a former applicant through acceptable documentation to include:
 - New lease
 - Recent utility bill
 - Rent receipt with landlord's signature

- Updated driver's license
- Notarized letters are not acceptable.
- The OHEP system requires entering 000-00-0000 for relocated applicants still listed for data purposes.

Social Security Number (SSN) Verification

SSNs must be verified and placed in the current file unless already verified in a prior fiscal year.

For missing SSNs:

- Applications may be held in pending status for 15 days while awaiting documentation.
- LAAs must attempt to verify via state systems.
- In crisis situations, use 000-00-000 for children awaiting SSNs, with proof of SSA application.
- Applications may be denied if proof isn't provided within required timeframes or if applicants refuse to obtain a required SSN.

SSN Card Types

1. Unrestricted (valid for work)
2. Not Valid for Employment (issued for benefit eligibility)
3. Valid for Work Only with DHS Authorization

Photo Identification Requirements

- Required for applicants unless already on file.
- Acceptable forms include:
 - Driver's license
 - MVA ID card
 - U.S. or out-of-country passport
 - Military ID
 - Employment ID

- Other government-issued IDs (see [Chapter 3.4](#))
- Youth under 25: Valid school, high school, college, or vocational school ID accepted.

Proof of Residence

To be eligible for MEAP or EUSP benefits, applicants and household members must be residents of the State of Maryland. Proof of primary residence is required for the applicant and must include the applicant's name and a valid Maryland street address (P.O. Boxes are not acceptable).

Acceptable Proof of Residence Documents

- Valid, unexpired Maryland driver's license or MVA-issued photo ID (address must match delivery address)
- Current (within 12 months) signed residential lease or rental agreement
- Current (within 30 days) letter or rent receipt with:
 - Applicant's name
 - Current address
 - Landlord's signature
 - Date within the last 30 days
- Current (program year) OHEP Landlord Agreement
- Completed and signed Rent-Living Arrangements Form (OHEP form)
- Social Security benefit letter
- Department of Social Services benefit letter or E&E printout (within last 6 months)
- Recent major utility bill (electric, heating, cable, phone, or major credit card) showing applicant's name and service address
- Valid voter registration card
- Current (within calendar year) property tax bill or receipt
- SDAT property record printout (<https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty>)
- Mortgage account statement

Additional Documentation- If residency is questioned, request additional proof using any documents listed above.

Special Situations

Joint Custody- Each parent may apply for benefits with the same children listed, but a child cannot be on two active applications simultaneously. The first application must be fully processed and placed in EDS Sent status before adding the child to the second application.

Children Moving In/Out of Household- Additional documentation may include:

- Custody order
- School, childcare, or medical records
- Rental lease listing the child
- E&E documentation
- Signed statements from both applicants specifying living arrangements

3.5 Supplier (Utility) Information

The Local Administering Agency (LAA) must verify customer utility account information.

Acceptable Documentation

- Current utility bill
- Current termination notice (if applicable)
- Utility website printout or document listing account number, customer name, and service address

For Landlord-Paid Utilities

- Current (program year) Landlord Agreement
- Proof of rental status (choose one):
 - Current (within 12 months) signed lease
 - Current rent receipt
 - Current landlord statement

Required Data for Application Processing:

MEAP Applications and EUSP Applications

Obtain current electric (kWh) or natural gas (therms) usage and previous 12 months utility costs from:

- Utility website
- Recent utility bill

Arrearage Information

- gas and/or electric past due balance from utility website or recent utility bill
- If past due balance meets minimum arrearage requirements use OHEP system's Arrearage Inquiry tool for eligibility check;
- Document any overrides in system notes

Usage Estimates (If No History Available):

- Average available usage data and multiply by 12
- If unavailable, obtain utility-provided estimate from a comparable neighboring residence
- If no estimate is available, use a similar household's history within the agency as a proxy
- Document method of estimation in the OHEP system notes

3.6 Customers Establishing New Service

When applicants are moving into new residences and need to establish utility service:

Procedures

1. Applicant must provide:
 - New address
 - Move-in date verification from landlord or housing program letter

2. LAA verifies any outstanding debt with the utility company
3. Determine eligibility for applicable OHEP benefits, including arrearage screening
4. If no usage history exists, refer to [Section 3.5](#) for usage estimation procedures
5. Communicate application status and benefit amounts to applicant and utility company, ensuring benefits are tied to the new address
6. Benefits cannot be paid on closed accounts. If a new account number is issued, request the utility transfer the old account balance to the new account before applying OHEP benefits.

3.7 55-Day Holds

OHEP customers who are facing termination of utility service due to non-payment may be granted a 55-day hold on their electric account. This temporary protection ensures that customers who have applied for energy assistance are not disconnected while their application is pending.

Purpose- The 55-day hold allows the Local Administering Agency (LAA) time to process the customer's OHEP application and determine eligibility, preventing termination when financial assistance may be forthcoming.

Eligibility Criteria

A customer is eligible for a 55-day hold if:

- They have submitted an OHEP application, and
- Are in termination status with their utility company (i.e., have received a termination notice).

Note: Per Public Service Commission Order 81638, holds should only be granted if the customer applies within 14 days of the issuance of the termination notice.

Hold Placement Guidelines

- Holds should be placed immediately upon receipt of the application if the customer has a valid termination notice.
- LAAs should not delay placing the hold because of other active protections on the account (e.g., a customer-requested extension, a Fuel Fund 7-day hold, or a 30-day medical hold).
- If a termination notice is received by the customer after the application has been submitted but before it has been processed, a 55-day hold may still be placed.

Each utility has a different system for recording holds and may interpret agreements differently. LAAs should contact their local utility representative with any case-specific questions.

Recording Holds in the OHEP Data Management System

The worker must:

- Check the “55-day Hold” box in the Programs Applied section of the Client Information tab.
- Enter the date the hold is placed with the utility in the notes section.

Additional Information on 55-day Holds

- The 55-day hold may be terminated if a customer is determined ineligible for assistance.
- LAAs must inform customers that:
 - The utility company will be notified of their application status.
 - If denied, any active hold on the account will be removed.
 - Customers should continue to pay their utility bills during the hold period, as charges will continue to accrue.
 - The hold is valid for up to 55 days or until the application is fully processed, whichever comes first.
 - There is no guarantee of a full 55-day protection period if the application is denied before the 55 days elapse.

3.8 Referrals to Other Energy Assistance Resources

When an OHEP applicant is experiencing a heating crisis that cannot be resolved through available OHEP benefits, the Local Administering Agency (LAA) is responsible for referring the customer to other energy assistance resources.

Emergency Assistance (EA) Program

1. Eligibility for Referral

LAAs may refer customers to the Department of Human Services/Social Services (DHS/DSS) for EA if:

- a. The customer has been determined eligible for OHEP assistance; and
- b. There are children under the age of 21 living in the household; and
- c. OHEP funds are insufficient or unavailable to resolve the heating crisis.

Note: The applicant does not need to be a current Public Assistance recipient to qualify for EA benefits. Each local DSS has the discretion to approve or deny EA assistance for heating crises, and policies regarding EA fund use may differ by jurisdiction.

2. Referral Process

- a. Complete the Referral by [phone or email](#) and Provide the customer the referral information to follow up with their local DSS office.

Note: *Each LAA must maintain an up-to-date list of alternative energy assistance resources for referrals when OHEP benefits are inadequate to meet a customer's energy needs.*

3.9 Referral for Energy Efficiency Programs, Furnace Repair and Replacement

OHEP collaborates with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to connect eligible households with energy efficiency programs designed to help reduce their overall energy burden. Local Administering Agencies, when uploading a paper application(LAAs) are responsible for selecting the appropriate box in the customer's record within the OHEP Data Management System, granting DHCD access to the customer's information for follow-up and

program referral. Applications merged from MDTHINK will automatically select the box in the customer's record.

OHEP also offers a limited number of furnace repairs and replacements for eligible households through DHCD. When a customer is identified as potentially qualifying for this service, the LAA must refer the case to DHCD by completing the [DHCD Referral Form](#) and submitting it via email to: dhcd.energyintake@maryland.gov.

Upon receiving the referral, DHCD will coordinate with local weatherization agencies or approved vendors to assess the furnace issue and determine eligibility for repair or replacement services.

For questions or additional information, LAAs may contact DHCD directly at 1-855-583-8976.

Chapter 4: Application Certification and Denials

4.0 Application Certification Process

Non-Categorical Eligibility Applications

Each application must be reviewed for completeness and accuracy before a grant is issued. This review is known as certification. If an application is determined ineligible for an OHEP grant, the denial procedures outlined in [4.2 Application Denials](#) must be followed.

Categorical Eligibility Applications

For applications flagged as categorically eligible, LAAs must use the income and household information provided through the Eligibility & Enrollment (E&E) system to determine benefit levels for MEAP and EUSP. Energy usage and utility account information must still be entered manually if not prepopulated. (See [Chapter 6 Categorical Eligibility](#) for full guidance.)

4.1 Certification Requirements

All certified applications must include:

- Electronic signatures are entered via case notes in the OHEP Data Management System or an intake worker can sign and date a paper application received legibly using their first and last name and upload the application into ECM.
- Date of certification
- Benefit level and dollar amount awarded

This information must be documented either on the physical application that is uploaded to ECM (if applicable) or within the Notes section of the OHEP Data Management System.

Important: The person certifying the application must be different from the individual who conducted intake or entered the application data.

4.1.2 Certification Procedures

All applications must be certified using:

- The OHEP Data Management System
- The Enterprise Content Management (ECM) System

LAA's should follow these steps to certify applications:

Processing applications from oldest to newest.

- Review Application- The certifier reviews the application and all supporting documents for completeness and accuracy in both the OHEP Data Management System and ECM.
 - a. If incomplete, the certifier emails the caseworker, logs the notification date on the tracking sheet, and waits for necessary updates or applicant follow-up.
 - b. If complete, proceed with certification in the OHEP Data Management System and update the tracking sheet accordingly.

Certify or Deny the Application:

- If approved: The benefit amount is recorded in the OHEP Data Management System Notes section along with the certifier's signature narration.
- If denied: Select the denial reason from the drop-down list, document the reason in the Notes section, and add the certifier's signature narration.

Resolve Eligibility Conflicts- If the computer-generated eligibility decision conflicts with the certifier's assessment, reset the program certification and consult with a supervisor or local OHEP director to resolve the discrepancy.

Modify Applications- Once an application is certified or denied, no changes may be made without supervisor approval.

4.2 Application Denials

Denial Criteria- Applications may be denied for the following reasons:

- The applicant does not meet OHEP eligibility criteria.
- The applicant fails to complete the application process within 15 days of the issuance of a [Request for Additional Information \(RAI\) form](#). An application is considered complete when all required fields are filled out and requested documentation is submitted.
- The applicant household has already received OHEP benefits for the current fiscal year.
- Required utility account information or other documentation is not provided within 15 days of a formal request.

Categorical Eligibility applications cannot be denied for over income or missing required information, until the end of the program year, but may be denied for other eligibility issues.

90 Day Curing Period Applicants denied for missing information have a three-month (90-day) curing period to submit the required documents and have their application reopened). LAAs are required to conduct outreach to these applicants during the curing period and must track all outreach efforts.

Applicants who are denied will receive written notification explaining:

- The reason(s) for denial.
- Their right to request a fair hearing to appeal the decision, in accordance with [Chapter 5 Administrative Hearings](#).

4.2.1 Denial Procedures

1. LAA's should review the application for completeness.
2. If incomplete, verify whether an RAI form has been issued
3. Process denials through the OHEP Data Management System's certification function.
 - Deny based on established criteria *Basis for Denial*.
 - The system will automatically deny applications:
 - Over income for non-CE applicants (when income is entered in the household table).
 - Heat is included in rent for subsidized housing (for MEAP benefits only).
4. If ineligible for other reasons, LAA's should select the appropriate denial reason within the system.
5. Use the Supervisor Deny function when necessary.
6. The certifying worker must sign and date the application in the notes section.

4.2.2 Monitoring Pending Applications and Auto-Denials

The OHEP Data Management System automatically denies applications 25 days after an RAI form is issued from the system if required documentation has not been received.

Important details:

- The system will switch the application status from Pending to Denied and automatically generate a Denial Notice.

- LAAs are responsible for:
 1. Monitoring applications auto-denied by the system daily by reviewing the “Denied by System” report on the dashboard.
 2. Checking mailrooms and agency email to verify whether documentation has been submitted for these applications.
 3. Changing the status from Denied to Pending for applicants who subsequently submit documentation, and processing the application accordingly.

Recommendation: To avoid auto-denials, LAAs should consider placing a follow-up phone call to applicants after sending the RAI form to confirm they understand what is needed.

4.3 Notifying Customer of Application Denial

A denial letter must be sent to every applicant household within 7 calendar days of the denial date. The letter, generated through the OHEP Data Management System, must include:

- The date of the denial notice.
- Applicant’s full name and mailing address.
- A clear explanation of the reason for denial.
- Instructions on how to request an appeal or fair hearing.
- The name and telephone number of the LAA contact person.

Denied applicants also have the right to reapply for assistance.

4.3.1 Timeliness of Denial Notifications

It is program policy that all denial notices must be sent to applicants within 7 calendar days of the denial decision.

To meet this requirement, LAA's must closely monitor pending applications. If it becomes clear that an applicant is either ineligible or has not provided required information within the allotted time, the application may be immediately denied. The OHEP system will auto-generate the denial notice once all programs are denied.

4.4 Reapplication

Applicants who are denied assistance will receive a written notice that includes:

- The specific reason(s) for the denial.
- Information about their right to request a fair and timely review and hearing of the decision.

Denied applicants are also advised of their right to reapply for assistance under the following conditions:

- **Standard Reapplication Window:** Applicants may reapply 30 days after the date of the denial notice, provided the program remains open and accepting applications.
- **End-of-Program Exception:** If the program's scheduled close date is less than 30 days away, an applicant may submit a new application within 15 days of the close date, if there are changes to the information previously provided.

4.4.1 Incomplete Information Exception:

If an application is denied due to incomplete information, the applicant has 90 days from the date of denial to provide the required documentation to cure the application. If all required information necessary to determine eligibility is received, the original application may be reopened and processed without requiring a new application.

Chapter 5: Administrative Hearing Rights, Overpayments, IPV's and Suspected Fraud

5.0 LAA's Role in Administrative Hearing Process

As part of the administrative hearing process, the Local Administering Agency (LAA) is responsible for the following actions:

1. *Informing the Applicant of Appeal Rights*

Ensure that the applicant is notified of their right to request a fair hearing if they disagree with the eligibility decision.

2. *Assisting with the Appeal Request*

Provide assistance to applicants in completing the [Request for Fair Hearing form](#), if needed.

3. *Offering a Pre-Hearing Conference*

Extend an opportunity for a pre-hearing conference with the applicant to attempt to resolve the issue prior to the scheduled administrative hearing.

4. *Submitting the Pre-Hearing Packet*

Prepare and issue a Pre-Hearing Packet to both the applicant and the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) at least six (6) days before the scheduled hearing date.

5. *Participating in the Administrative Hearing*

Attend the hearing and actively participate in presenting the agency's case.

5.0.1 Administrative Hearing

A representative from the Local Administering Agency (LAA) must attend the administrative hearing and present the agency's case, bringing the complete hearing packet to the proceeding. When available, the State OHEP Staff will also attend to provide additional support.

Administrative hearings are held in the county where the appeal originated, typically these hearings are held virtually. If in-person, hearings will be held at an Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) designated location. The LAA is responsible for presenting its case first. At the start of the hearing, the agency should identify the hearing packet and formally request that it be admitted into evidence.

Following the agency's presentation of the facts, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will provide the applicant or their representative an opportunity to cross-examine the LAA representative. The agency may then respond to any matters raised during the cross-examination, call witnesses, or request the admission of additional documents into evidence.

Once the LAA's case is presented, the applicant will be given the opportunity to present their side of the case. The agency may cross-examine the applicant if it chooses. After both parties have completed their testimony, the ALJ will allow each side to make a closing statement.

Upon conclusion of the hearing, the ALJ will issue a written decision to the local agency, the applicant, and the applicant's representative. While decisions are generally rendered within sixty (60) days, it may take up to ninety (90) days from the date the household was notified of the hearing to receive the final decision.

Once the decision is received, the LAA must forward a copy to the State OHEP Quality Assurance Analyst for recordkeeping and place a copy in the applicant's case file.

Customers Rights to Appeal

An applicant may request a fair hearing when a Local Administering Agency (LAA) takes any of the following actions:

1. Denies, either in full or in part, an application for assistance.
2. Fails to act with reasonable promptness on an application or a request for adjustment of assistance.
3. Suspends, reduces, or terminates assistance.
4. Makes a decision affecting a plan of service to a recipient.

5. Makes a decision affecting the method of providing assistance.
6. Imposes sanctions on a recipient.
7. Recovers an overpayment or over-issuance of assistance.
8. Issues notice of intent to take any of the aforementioned actions.

The LAA must inform customers of their fair hearing rights whenever taking action or providing notice regarding an appealable decision. Additionally, LAAs must visibly display signage about fair hearing rights in public areas of their office, along with the [Request for Fair Hearing form](#).

Timeline to Appeal

Unless otherwise specified, a request for a fair hearing is valid if received by the agency:

1. Within 30 calendar days from the date the agency mailed or delivered a timely and adequate notice, whichever is earlier.
2. Within 30 calendar days of the agency action if no timely and adequate notice was provided.
3. Within 30 calendar days of the date by which the agency was required to act on an application or adjustment but failed or refused to do so

Customer's Request for Appeal- A request for appeal is defined as any expression by the customer of a desire to contest a decision.

- Any agency employee may receive this request, whether verbal or written.
- If the request is verbal, the agency must ask the customer to complete a written [Request for Fair Hearing form](#) and offer assistance in doing so.
- If the customer refuses or is unable to provide a written request, the agency must document the appeal to the best of its ability.

- If the nature of the appeal is unclear, the agency should ask the customer for clarification.
- When necessary, the agency must provide an interpreter and explain the hearing procedure in a manner the customer can understand.

Submitting the Request for Appeal

All appeals must be documented using the [Request for Fair Hearing form](#). Within five (5) business days of the appeal request (whether written or verbally documented), the LAA must:

1. Forward the appeal to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH).
2. Send a copy to the State OHEP Office.
3. Submit the appeal request using [OAH's Transmittal for Department of Human Resources form](#), selecting Code 38 "Md Energy Assistance Program."

OAH will issue a notice of hearing within three (3) business days and typically schedule the hearing within 15 to 30 days.

Local Resolution Opportunity

If an appeal is based on missing documentation, the LAA may attempt to resolve the matter through an informal, local review before forwarding it to OAH. If resolution is not achieved, the appeal must proceed to OAH.

For appeals due to incomplete application information, the LAA may allow the applicant up to 30 days from the Denial Notice to submit the missing information. If resolved within that period, the application may be processed without an OAH hearing. If not, a new application must be submitted.

Pre-Hearing Conference

Before a formal OAH hearing:

- The local agency must contact the customer to schedule a pre-hearing conference to review the appeal details and attempt resolution.

- An agency supervisor is required to attend, with the case manager and/or appeals representative encouraged to participate.
- If the customer cannot be reached by phone, the agency should send a letter advising the customer to contact the agency within seven (7) days if they wish to discuss the appeal.
- If no response is received, the formal hearing process proceeds.

During the conference:

- Allow the customer to explain their concerns.
- Communicate in plain language, avoiding acronyms and technical terms.
- Do not discourage the customer from pursuing the hearing.
- If the customer chooses to withdraw the appeal, they must complete a [Withdrawal of Request for Fair Hearing form](#). The original should be sent to OAH by mail or fax, with a copy retained in the case file and provided to the customer.

The agency must document the outcome and discussion of the pre-hearing conference in the OHEP database notes section.

Hearing Packet

If the customer proceeds to an OAH hearing, the local agency must prepare and send a hearing packet to the customer (and their attorney/representative, if authorized) at least six (6) days before the hearing. Failure to do so may result in a hearing postponement.

The hearing packet must include:

- A Hearing Summary outlining the issue and supporting evidence.
- [The Request for Fair Hearing form](#).
- The OAH Notice of Hearing.

- A complete copy of the application and all supporting documentation.
- Copies of all notices issued to the customer (e.g., Eligibility Determination Notice, Request for Additional Information).
- Relevant excerpts from COMAR, the OHEP Operations Manual, Action Transmittals, and any policy directives supporting the agency decision.
- Any additional correspondence or documents providing context for the case.

5.2 Overpayment and Recoupment Procedures

Purpose- To establish consistent procedures for the identification, notification, and recovery of overpaid energy assistance benefits, and the handling of alleged Intentional Program Violations (IPVs) by Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) in coordination with the State OHEP Office.

General Overview

Upon notification from the State OHEP Office to pursue recoupment of funds and/or a determination of an IPV, the Local Administering Agency (LAA) is responsible for:

1. Notifying the customer of the repayment amount and/or alleged IPV.
2. Negotiating and executing a Promissory Note for repayment, when applicable.
3. Referring unresolved cases to the Maryland Central Collections Unit (MCCU) through the State OHEP Office.

Notes:

- LAAs may not impose any fees, interest, or penalties on repayment amounts.
- Recoupment is not required for overpayment amounts under \$125, though IPV referrals may still proceed.
- Repayments exceeding \$2,500 tied to an IPV will be handled criminally by the Office of the Attorney General. In such cases, LAAs should refrain from discussing repayment terms with the applicant and defer inquiries to the local State's Attorney's Office.

5.3 Notification of Overpayment

When IPV Is Not Being Pursued- Upon receiving notification from State OHEP, the LAA must:

1. Issue [Overpayment Letter #1](#) to the customer, identifying:
 - The grant(s) involved.
 - The overpayment amount.
 - The reason for the overpayment.
 - Appeal rights and a [Request for Fair Hearing form](#).
2. If no response within two (2) weeks, follow up by phone and log the attempt in the OHEP database.
3. If no resolution within forty-five (45) days, issue [Overpayment Letter #2](#) (Attachment F) and conduct a second follow-up call, logging the attempt.
4. If no response within ninety (90) days, issue [Overpayment Letter #3](#) (Attachment G), notifying the customer of referral to Maryland Central Collection Unit (MCCU) and the addition of a 17% fee.

When IPV Is Being Pursued- The LAA must initiate the administrative hearing process and:

- Issue Overpayment Letter with IPV #1 [Attachment L- Overpayment Letter with IPV](#) instead of Letter #1.
- Include the [Request for Fair Hearing form](#).
- Proceed through the IPV hearing protocol as directed by State OHEP.
- Include a copy of all notifications must be retained in the applicant's case file.

When a Customer Requests an Administrative Hearing- If a customer requests an appeal regarding the overpayment:

- Suspend all collection activity until the hearing decision is rendered.
- If repayment is upheld, resume the notification and recoupment process at the appropriate step.

When a Customer Enters into a Repayment Agreement- Upon notification, the LAA should schedule a meeting with the customer to:

- Review repayment terms.
- Explain appeal rights.
- Offer either:
 - Lump-sum repayment, or
 - An installment plan not to exceed ten (10) months of equal payments.

The customer must sign a [Promissory Note and Confessed Judgment form](#) (Attachment J) in person, witnessed by the LAA. Copies of the signed form must be provided to the customer and State OHEP Office, with the original filed in the case record.

LAA's should Provide the Customer with Payment Instructions:

Payments are due by the 15th of each month and must be sent via check or money order to:

Maryland Department of Human Resources

Attn: Office of Home Energy Programs
25 S. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

The State OHEP Office logs payments and monitors account status.

Note: Repayment terms exceeding ten (10) months require written approval from the State OHEP Office.

If overpayment was caused by an error on the part of the LAA, State OHEP, or the database, the LAA may submit a waiver request to reduce the repayment amount. Approval from the State OHEP Director is required.

Referral to Maryland Central Collections Unit (MCCU)

Referral to MCCU occurs when:

1. No response to Overpayment Letters #1-3 after 90 days.

2. The customer refuses repayment and fails to appeal.
3. The customer defaults on two (2) consecutive Promissory Note payments without cooperation.

The LAA must:

- Submit the MCCU Debt Referral form ([Attachment AA](#)) to the State OHEP Office.
- Send the customer Overpayment Letter #3 if applicable, notifying them of MCCU referral and the 17% fee.

The State OHEP Office logs the referral and forwards it to MCCU for collection.

Note: MCCU provides quarterly reports to State OHEP. Adjustments to active debts must be submitted to MCCU via the Debt Payment – Debt Adjustment form (Attachment) by the State OHEP Office.

Missed Promissory Note Payments

If a customer misses a scheduled payment:

- The QA Analyst notifies the LAA.
- The LAA must contact the customer.
- If a second consecutive payment is missed:
 - The LAA may refer the case to MCCU.
 - If the customer experiences hardship, the LAA may renegotiate terms through a new Promissory Note, with a copy sent to the State OHEP Office

Issuance of New Benefits During Repayment

Customers actively repaying overpayments must continue to receive new energy assistance benefits unless barred due to an IPV penalty. Benefits may not be withheld solely due to non-payment. Non-compliance should result in an MCCU referral, per these procedures.

Write-Off of Overpayment Amounts

Repayment amounts may be written off when:

1. The overpayment is less than \$125.
2. The balance is \$25 or less after Promissory Note payments stop.
3. The customer is deceased with no surviving spouse to assume the debt.

Note: LAAs must consult State OHEP before proceeding with any write-off.

5.4 Intentional Program Violation (IPV) Procedures

Suspected IPV vs. Overpayment

Not all overpayments result from an Intentional Program Violation (IPV). When submitting a *Referral for Investigation* form, the Local Administering Agency (LAA) must indicate whether it is recommending an IPV determination as part of the referral.

An IPV is defined as the intentional submission of false or misleading information, the deliberate concealment or withholding of facts, or any other act of willful misrepresentation related to an application for assistance through the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP).

Upon submitting a referral for suspected IPV:

- The LAA cannot deny benefits based solely on suspicion.
- If definitive evidence exists that renders the customer ineligible, the application may be denied.
- If eligibility remains uncertain and further investigation is needed, the application must be processed and benefits issued, unless directed otherwise by the State OHEP Quality Assurance Analyst.

In cases where intent is unclear (e.g., a household member listed on an application is incarcerated but the applicant was unaware of program rules), the LAA must assess whether the action appears to be intentional misrepresentation or an honest error. The State OHEP Office will review the facts presented and advise the LAA whether to proceed with IPV pursuit.

IPV Penalties

Penalties for IPV may be imposed only under the following conditions:

1. The individual is found to have committed an IPV through an Administrative Disqualification Hearing.
2. The individual is convicted in court for an offense related to the OHEP application.
3. The individual voluntarily signs an [Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver](#) (Attachment M).
4. The individual signs a [Disqualification Consent Agreement](#) (Attachment N).

Disqualification Periods:

- 1 program year for a first offense.
- 2 program years for a second offense.
- Permanent disqualification for a third offense.

A program year runs from July 1 to June 30.

Examples:

- *If benefits were received in the current program year, the penalty starts July 1 of the next program year.*
- *If no benefits were received in the current program year, the penalty applies immediately and ends June 30 of the same year.*

Important: During the disqualification period, the customer's current household cannot receive benefits under any circumstances. The household cannot exclude the disqualified individual to bypass the restriction. A fraud flag is added to the applicant's record in the OHEP Data Management System, remaining active for the duration of the penalty.

Notification of Suspected IPV

If the State OHEP Quality Assurance Analyst authorizes IPV pursuit:

- The LAA must notify the client in writing via an Advance Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing ([Attachment AB](#)), including:
 - Reason for the suspected IPV.
 - Supporting evidence.
 - The customer's right to waive the hearing.
 - Applicable penalties if found in violation.

The notice must include:

- [Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver](#)
- [Administrative Disqualification Hearing Pamphlet](#) (Attachment P)
- If an overpayment is involved, an [Overpayment Letter with IPV #1](#)

These documents must be sent in a single mailing.

Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver

Clients may voluntarily waive their hearing by signing the Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver. It must be clearly explained that:

- Penalties are the same whether a hearing is held or not.

- The administrative hearing is not a court proceeding and cannot result in a criminal conviction.

A signed waiver finalizes the IPV determination and related penalties. A copy must be sent to the State OHEP Office , with the original filed in the client's case record.

Disqualification Consent Agreement

In cases of criminal prosecution (for IPV amounts exceeding \$2,500), the local State's Attorney may offer a Disqualification Consent Agreement, allowing the customer to avoid formal fraud adjudication.

This decision is solely at the discretion of the State's Attorney's Office.

IPV Hearing Scheduling

If no signed waiver is received within 20 days:

- The LAA must submit a referral to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) using the appropriate transmittal form ([Attachment AC](#)), along with all supporting evidence.
- A one-page case summary must accompany the evidence.
- A complete copy of this packet must be sent to the customer.

Once a hearing date is set, the LAA must notify the State OHEP Office.

Note: If an IPV involves an overpayment and the customer has appealed the overpayment decision, the LAA may request OAH to consolidate the two matters into one hearing.

Notification of Hearing Outcome

Following the OAH ruling:

- The LAA must notify the client in writing using the [Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing Decision](#) (Attachment R).

- Copies must be provided to the State OHEP Office and retained in the customer's case file.

IPV Tracking in the OHEP Database

Upon receipt of an LAA referral:

- The State OHEP Office will apply a fraud flag in the database for approved IPV cases or those referred to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

Once an IPV determination is made:

- The State OHEP Office will log the decision, apply the appropriate penalty period, and update the client's record.
- The fraud flag remains for the full penalty period.
- If the individual moves to a new household, the flag follows them for the remainder of the penalty.

At the end of each program year, records are reviewed to lift or continue penalties as appropriate.

5.4.1 Administrative Disqualification Hearings (IPVs)

When a Local Administering Agency (LAA) suspects an applicant has committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV), and receives approval from the State OHEP Office, the case must be referred to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) for an Administrative Disqualification Hearing.

Referral Process

The LAA shall request the hearing using the OAH Transmittal for Department of Human Resources form. On the form:

- Select or write in the appeal category as "Other: IPV – Md Energy Assistance Program".

Required Documentation

When submitting an IPV referral to OAH, the LAA must include a complete evidentiary packet containing all documents supporting the suspected IPV. A copy of this packet must also be provided to the accused applicant. Examples of required documents include:

- Intentional Program Violation Notice #1
- Referral for Investigation form
- Application(s) and all supporting documentation
- Prior year's application and documentation (if applicable)
- Income verification results from systems such as The Work Number, E&E, SVES, or other approved databases
- Correspondence with the applicant and/or related parties
- Attestations or relevant statements from the applicant or stakeholders supporting the case

Hearing Notification and Scheduling

Upon receiving the IPV hearing request, the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) will issue a notice of hearing within three (3) business days to both the LAA and the applicant.

- The hearing will be scheduled no sooner than thirty (30) days from the date the OAH notice is sent.

5.5 Questionable Income and Fraud Investigations

Questionable Income Applicant Investigations

A. When suspected fraud involves employment income:

- The LAA must complete a Wage Screening Request Form for all adult household members claiming zero income.
- This form should be emailed to State OHEP staff for assistance in conducting wage screenings, as needed when the LAA lacks access to income verification databases.

B. If an applicant refuses to provide employment verification or denies employment with an identified employer:

- The LAA must send a written request to the employer, asking them to complete a [Wage Verification Form](#) covering the 90-day period prior to the application (or annual income, if applicable).
- The request must include a copy of the applicant's signed [Release of Information Form](#) and a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
- The LAA must notify the applicant that this request has been made on their behalf.

C. Suspicions involving other income sources (e.g., public assistance, Social Security, Veterans Administration benefits, Unemployment Insurance, or other monthly benefits):

- Income must be verified in writing by the issuing agency, including specific dollar amounts received during the relevant time period.

D. Other questionable income sources (e.g., child support, room/board income) must be documented according to **Income Documentation** guidelines.

E. If the suspected fraud involves household composition:

- The LAA must attempt to verify the number of household members through energy suppliers, agency records, landlords, or other reliable sources.

Uncooperative Applicant Fraud

If an applicant refuses to cooperate with the investigation procedures outlined above:

- The LAA must thoroughly evaluate the case record and document all evidence to confirm the discrepancy was not caused by intake worker error, certifier oversight, incomplete information, or employee-assisted fraud.

5.6 Energy Supplier/Vendor Fraud

Energy supplier fraud or non-compliance with OHEP contractual terms may include:

- Unusual fuel price changes
- Deliveries exceeding customer fuel tank capacity
- Repeated delivery failures
- Steering of benefits to favored suppliers by staff

A. Monitoring and Investigation

- The LAA must monitor, investigate, and document all complaints regarding energy suppliers.

B. Collection of Evidence

As appropriate, the following should be collected:

1. Applicant confirmations
2. Delivery tickets
3. Invoices

4. Home visit reports
5. Statements from energy suppliers, vendors, or agency staff

C. Payment Suspension and Notification

- Immediate notification must be provided to the State OHEP Office
- The State OHEP Office suspends benefit payments to any supplier with a documented pattern of non-delivery or confirmed irregularities.

D. Recovery of Undelivered Benefits

- The State OHEP Office will request in writing the return of all undelivered benefits from the supplier.

Procedure:

- Send a first and, if needed, a second registered letter to the supplier's President/CEO within 14 calendar days of each other.

If no response is received within 14 calendar days of the second letter:

- The State OHEP office will refer the case to the Maryland Central Collection Unit (MCCU) and consult with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Attorney General's Office for further action.
- The LAA will work with impacted customers to an alternate supplier.

E. Documentation

- The LAA must maintain a file for each energy supplier fraud case, including all supporting documentation and correspondence.

5.7 LAA Employee Irregularities or Fraud

LAA leadership is responsible for diligently monitoring for employee irregularities, including but not limited to:

- Misrepresentation on applications resulting in unauthorized payments
Unauthorized changes to benefit amounts for personal gain
- False or incomplete information provided by an employee to fraudulently secure benefits

A. Reporting and Immediate Action

- All suspected employee fraud must be documented and reported immediately to the State OHEP office.
- Local Department of Social Services (DSS) OHEP staff must also follow departmental employee fraud protocols.
- Community Action Agency (CAA) OHEP staff must report incidents to the State OHEP office, who will coordinate with OIG and the Attorney General's Office.

B. Employee Suspension

- Any employee implicated must be immediately relieved of all OHEP-related duties pending investigation.

C. Processing Employee Applications

To prevent conflicts of interest:

- Employees must apply for energy assistance in the jurisdiction where they reside.
- Applications must be submitted to the lead worker in the local office.
- The lead worker is responsible for data entry and eligibility processing.

- The local OHEP supervisor or director must certify or deny the application.

If the applicant is the lead worker:

- The application must be submitted to the local Director, who will assign an appropriate staff member to process it.

Important: Under no circumstances should an employee enter or process their own application. Doing so is grounds for immediate termination.

Chapter 6: Categorical Eligibility Policy for OHEP Programs

Overview

On April 24, 2023, Governor Wes Moore signed [House Bill 323 \(HB 323\)](#) into law, establishing automatic enrollment in Maryland's Energy Assistance Programs for households receiving one or more of the following benefits:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Means-Tested Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits

Households awarded benefits from any of the above programs during the current program year are not required to submit an additional application for Maryland's Energy Assistance programs:

- Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)
- Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)
- Electric Arrearage Retirement Assistance (EARA)
- Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA)

6.0 Categorical Eligibility

Households participating in SNAP, TANF, SSI, or Means-Tested VA programs are categorically eligible for OHEP benefits.

If additional household members are listed on the OHEP application but not on the qualifying benefit case, their income must be collected. However, if the household's combined income exceeds 200% FPL, the household still remains eligible for OHEP benefits if any member receives one of the qualifying benefits.

Important — any household member receiving a qualifying program benefit categorically qualifies the entire household for OHEP assistance, regardless of income.

Other program eligibility rules for MEAP, EUSP, EARA, and GARA remain unchanged.

6.1 Benefit Levels

Categorically Eligible (CE) households will continue to receive benefits based on the existing MEAP and EUSP benefit matrices.

- CE applicants assessed at Level 6 (household exceeds 200% FPL) will receive:
 - A nominal benefit for MEAP
 - A nominal benefit for EUSP
- CE applicants remain eligible for:
 - Up to the maximum EARA
 - Up to the maximum GARA

Note: EARA and GARA still require the utility account to be in the applicant's name and continue to follow a 5-year limit on benefit eligibility.

6.2 CE Application Processing

SNAP, TANF, and SSI application approvals transfer nightly via batch processing from the MDTHINK Eligibility and Enrollment (E&E) portal to the OHEP Data Management (myDHR) staging table.

During batch processing:

- Applications are matched by address to identify additional potential OHEP household members.
- Identified members are merged into a single OHEP application.
- If there are no system matches and the SNAP and TANF application is missing information, the system will generate a [Request for Additional Information](#)
- Unhoused individuals and SNAP cases without an adult Head of Household (HOH) are excluded from batch processing.

Required Application Narration

For Categorical Eligibility applications, staff must include the following narration in the notes section:

“This application is a CE Household.”

CE Eligibility due to [Program Type: SNAP, TANF, SSI, or Means Tested VA Benefits].

MEAP Benefit: \$___

EUSP Benefit: \$___

Arrearage Amount: \$___ *(if applicable)*

Document Management (ECM)

- CE applications must be saved as a PDF from the OHEP Data Management System and uploaded to the applicant’s digital file in ECMS.
- File naming format: [APPLICANT NAME] FY[Program Year] CE APP
(e.g., *JOHN DOE FY25 CE APP*)

Documentation verifying categorical eligibility is already retained within the E&E system and accessible to staff.

Important: If discrepancies or requests for additional information arise (e.g., Request for Additional Information for unlisted household members), those documents must also be uploaded to ECMS.

CE Certification Process

- Applications should be reviewed using the OHEP database and ECMS system for accuracy.
- If corrections are needed, the certifier must email the assigned caseworker.

CE Denial Process

Categorical Eligibility applications will be auto-denied through batch processing in two cases:

1. Head of Household has already received benefits during the current program year
→ Denial Reason: *Already received benefits this program year.*
2. An existing application is in “awaiting” status
→ Denial Reason: *Already Applied in Fiscal Year.*

CE applications should not be manually denied in the staging area under any other circumstances.

Chapter 7: Critical Medical Needs Program

Background

The purpose of the [Critical Medical Needs Program](#) is to reduce the barriers to the energy assistance application process for critical medically vulnerable individuals and their households in obtaining State and federal financial assistance for their electric, gas, or other energy source bills; Make referrals, as necessary, to other agencies and organizations when additional resources are necessary for the continuation or restoration of energy service; and Make referrals to the Department of Housing and Community Development for energy efficiency programs, and heating and cooling system repair or replacement programs.

The program provides an expedited process for critically ill, medically vulnerable individuals to apply for energy assistance with the help of a trained navigator. CMNP ensures that eligible applicants are automatically considered for certain arrearage forgiveness waivers and reduces barriers by offering personalized application assistance through navigators.

CMNP Navigators

Navigators serve as trusted advocates who guide critically ill customers through the Energy Assistance application process.

- Navigators typically work within hospitals, medical facilities, cancer centers, and nonprofit agencies that serve medically vulnerable individuals.
- They assist clients in collecting necessary documentation, completing applications, and obtaining [Physician Certification \(PC\) forms](#).
- Navigators provide information about all available OHEP programs and should use the OHEP brochure and application as key resources.
- Before submitting an application to the Local Administering Agency (LAA), navigators must ensure that all required documents are complete and attached, following the application's cover sheet checklist.

Training Requirements for Navigators

- The State OHEP office offers virtual CMNP navigator training
- Interested individuals must attend a one-time, one-hour virtual training offered through the Cancer Support Foundation, OPC, or OHEP.
- After training, navigators must sign and submit a Confidentiality Form to OHEP before receiving a CMNP Training Certificate.

CMNP Application Process

- Preferred submission method: Email completed CMNP applications to CMNP.OHEP@maryland.gov
- Original (wet) signatures are not required unless a document's authenticity is questionable.
- Electronic signatures are not accepted (except for applications submitted via the online myDHR portal).
- Telephonic signatures are permitted using the Telephonic Signatures Form.

Key Points:

- Customers must apply through a trained navigator.
- CMNP application requirements and verifications are the same as those for non-CMNP applicants.– [Application Requirements](#).
- LAAs may request additional documentation if needed.
- Applications must be processed within 2 business days after receipt of all documents from the navigator.
- LAAs must notify navigators of any missing information within 2 days via email.
- The application must be signed and dated by either the applicant or navigator.

Physician Certification (PC) Form

A completed [Physician Certification for Serious Illness or Need for Life-Support Equipment form](#) is required for each CMNP application and must be signed by one of the following:

1. Licensed Physician
2. Certified Nurse Practitioner
3. Physician's Assistant

Exception: For applicants aged 60 and older, a navigator may submit a CMNP application without the PC form initially. The navigator then has 90 days to obtain and submit the PC form. The LAA must process the application upon receipt and notify the navigator of the 90-day timeframe.

55-Day and 30-Day Medical Utility Holds

- A 55-Day Hold may be placed with a utility provider by an LAA or navigator if a CMNP applicant has a termination notice, even before an application is submitted.
- If no application is submitted within 55 days, a second hold (30-Day Medical Hold) may be requested. This requires a Physician Certification form to be submitted to the utility along with the hold request.
- After these two holds, a CMNP application must be submitted for further assistance.

Expedited Screenings

CMNP cases are automatically prioritized for expedited processing.

Vulnerable Population Waiver (VPW)

All CMNP cases are screened for a Vulnerable Population Waiver (VPW) within 48 hours of receiving the application or VPW request.

- The VPW screening is conducted during the application processing if the [PC Form](#) is included.
- If the PC form is submitted after initial processing, a VPW can still be completed later, provided a signed VPW form accompanies the PC form.

- All standard VPW policies (see [Chapter 7](#)) apply to these cases.

DHCD Referrals

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will expedite referrals for energy efficiency or weatherization services when a Physician Certification form is submitted along with the [DHCD referral form](#).

Referrals should be emailed to dhcd.energyintake@maryland.gov using the appropriate [DHCD form](#).

Chapter 8: OHEP Crisis Assistance Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the requirements and procedures for providing Energy Crisis Assistance under the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP). Crisis Assistance is not available through the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP).

8.0 Energy Crisis Period

The designated Energy Crisis period for MEAP runs from **November 1 through March 31**. During this time, households may apply for Energy Crisis Assistance through their local OHEP intake office.

In accordance with Public Law 97-35, Title XXVI Low-Income Home Energy Assistance, Section 2604(c), a reasonable portion of available funds, based on data from prior years, must be reserved through March 31 for addressing crisis situations such as weather-related or supply shortage emergencies. The OHEP State Office manages the allocation of funds to jurisdictions using historical heating usage and population data to ensure equitable distribution and availability for applicants.

Definitions

- **Energy Crisis:**
As defined in federal LIHEAP regulations, a weather-related, supply shortage, or other household energy-related emergency. In Maryland, an energy crisis occurs when a household has no heat, a fuel shortage, or an imminent utility termination (within 3 days) during the winter period (November 1–March 31). Jurisdictions may request a waiver from the State OHEP Office to modify this period.
- **Crisis Assistance:**
Financial assistance provided through OHEP funds to address an energy crisis. This benefit is in addition to the customer's regular grant for their heating fuel type unless it is outside the winter period.
- **Expedited Service:**
Rapid processing of applications under standard procedures to address

urgent needs.

8.1 Local Administering Agency (LAA) Requirements

Each LAA must submit a Local Crisis Plan to the OHEP State Office by October 30th annually. The plan must include:

- Primary crisis contact person.
- After-hours crisis management provisions.
- A list of additional community resources for situations where MEAP funds are insufficient.
- Strategies for ensuring geographically accessible application sites.
- Provisions for enabling disabled individuals to:
 - Apply for crisis benefits from home, or
 - Travel to an accessible application site.

(Reference: Public Law 97-35, Section 2604(c)(3))

8.2 Energy Crisis Application Policy

The timeframe for resolving a crisis begins as follows:

- ***Incomplete Applications:***
The 18- to 48-hour clock starts when both a signed application and a Crisis Season Declaration Form are received. These are the only documents needed to issue a crisis benefit or utility commitment. Supporting documentation can be provided later.
- ***Complete Applications:***
The 18- to 48-hour clock starts upon receipt of a signed application and all required documentation. No declaration form is needed.

If funding is exhausted, applicants must be referred to other agencies for assistance, accompanied by a denial letter stating funds have been depleted.

Utility termination notices outside the winter crisis period are to be processed as expedited service to prevent disconnection, though they do not qualify as weather-related energy crises.

Each LAA must designate a crisis intake worker and/or coordinator during the energy crisis season to monitor supplier delivery timelines and ensure actions are documented in the client record.

Applicants lacking full documentation may sign a [Crisis Season Declaration Form](#) (per COMAR 07.03.21.10) affirming their crisis status. They must be advised of consequences for fraudulent claims. The case should be processed to resolve the immediate crisis while safeguarding program integrity.

8.3 Crisis Application Procedures

New Applications

A. Crisis Situation Identification

During intake, staff must screen applicants for the following between November 1 and March 31:

- Disconnected service
- Turn-off notice
- Out of fuel
- Less than three days' worth of fuel
- Inoperable heating system

Crisis details must be recorded in the OHEP data management system's Crisis Assistance Tab.

B. Crisis Application Field

Set the "Crisis Application" field to **Yes** in the system.

C. Date and Time Presented

Log the exact date and time the agency is notified of the crisis (e.g., applicant reports out of fuel at 2:00 PM on 12/10/2025).

D. Crisis Type Selection

Select from:

1. Turn-Off Notice

2. Service Off
3. Low Fuel (≤ 3 days)
4. Empty Fuel
5. Broken Fuel Burner
6. Broken Furnace (if uncertain, default to this)

E. Vendor

This auto-populates from the applicant record.

F. Application Package Status

- **Complete:** All required documentation received; application placed in AWAITING status. Processed benefits will receive a 3% discount.
- **Incomplete:** Missing documentation; application placed in CRISIS-PENDING status. Eligible for immediate crisis benefit without the 3% discount.

G. Date and Time Action Taken

Record when the agency commits to resolving the crisis or makes a referral.

H. Crisis Resolution Action

Select one or more from:

1. Fuel Delivery Full Grant
2. Fuel Delivery Minimum Grant
3. 55-Day Hold
4. OHEP Utility Benefits
5. Referral – DHCD
6. Referral –DSS
7. Referral – Fuel Fund, Dollar Energy
8. Referral – Shelter
9. Referral – Church

If none apply, document in the “Other” box.

8.4 Existing Applications Requesting Crisis Assistance

If a household already has a pending application and a crisis develops during processing (November 1–March 31):

- Review the application for immediate eligibility certification.

- Update the Crisis Assistance field accordingly.
- Follow procedures from [Section 8.2](#) to address the crisis.

Chapter 9: Outreach Requirements and Activities

9.0 Federal Outreach Requirements

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981, as amended, outlines specific outreach requirements under Section 2605(b)(3) and Section 2605(b)(15). These provisions require outreach activities to ensure that certain target populations are made aware of available assistance.

Section 2605(b)(3), also known as *Assurance Number 3*, mandates that the State:

Conduct outreach activities designed to assure that eligible households — particularly those with elderly, disabled individuals, or households facing high home energy burdens — are made aware of energy assistance programs under this title, as well as other related programs administered under the Community Services Block Grant or any program previously administered under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

Sections 2605(b)(2) and (3) further require that LIHEAP benefits prioritize and target high-burden and vulnerable households.

In Maryland, the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) ensures compliance by designing outreach strategies tailored to each jurisdiction's needs. These efforts aim to reach elderly, disabled, and other vulnerable populations, making them aware of energy assistance options and related resources. OHEP also requires that alternate intake options — including home visits — be made available so no application is refused due to lack of access to a physical intake site.

Although these outreach requirements originate with LIHEAP, they also extend to the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) administered by OHEP and its Local Administering Agencies (LAAs).

9.1 Local Agency Outreach Plans and Supplemental Funding

Each year, LAAs receive dedicated funding within their administrative budgets for outreach activities. DHS administrative budgets are approved annually, while

Community Action Agency budgets are approved via an RFP or Sole Source Solicitation process.

OHEP also offers LAAs the opportunity to request supplemental outreach funds to support new, creative outreach initiatives aimed at increasing application numbers. Supplemental funding is allocated based on the number of applications processed in each jurisdiction.

Every LAA must submit an Outreach Plan to State OHEP by the established due date. The plan should reflect the specific needs of the jurisdiction and outline all proposed outreach activities, including assurances that additional outreach/intake sites are available if administered by a Department of Social Services. The plan must also include a budget projection to support these efforts. OHEP provides a standardized template for this submission.

9.2 State OHEP Outreach Support

State OHEP assists LAAs in meeting outreach requirements through a range of activities, including:

- Printing and distributing posters, brochures, and flyers to local agencies for display in high-traffic locations.
- Issuing press releases and media articles promoting the availability of assistance.
- Participating in public forums and events to raise program awareness.
- Developing informational materials for use by federal, private, and utility partners.
- Maintaining a toll-free customer service line (1-800-332-6347) for program inquiries.
- Analyzing data to inform and improve outreach strategies.

9.3 Local Outreach Responsibilities

The primary responsibility for outreach rests with each LAA. If a Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) administers the program, it must affirm the availability of additional intake sites, including site names, locations, and participation data.

Local Outreach Plans should demonstrate partnerships with community organizations and incorporate a mix of activities such as:

1. Establishing additional outreach/intake sites (including at least one Senior Information Center, if DSS-administered).
2. Providing intake through home visits or telephone-based services.
3. Participating in community meetings and forums targeting vulnerable populations.
4. Offering geographically accessible application sites for regular and crisis assistance.
5. Participating in community events to increase visibility and accept applications.
6. Educating applicants on additional available resources, including weatherization and private utility initiatives.
7. Supplying information to energy providers for bill inserts.
8. Promoting the program through local media, newspapers, and broadcast outlets.
9. Displaying promotional materials in key community locations.

Outreach activities should be varied, widely distributed, and designed to reach multicultural, faith-based, disabled, elderly, and non-English speaking communities.

9.3.1 Outreach Activity Log

LAAAs must maintain a [monthly Outreach Log](#) summarizing outreach activities. This log must include detailed, accurate, and verifiable records showing compliance with the approved Outreach Plan. LAAAs are required to submit logs to the State OHEP Office with their quarterly request for Administrative funds.

9.4 OHEP Advisory Board

State OHEP maintains an Advisory Board to discuss and provide feedback on issues related to the administration and implementation of OHEP programs. The board meets quarterly and helps identify program priorities and outreach needs. A current Advisory Board membership list is available upon request from OHEP.

9.5 National Outreach Coordination

At the national level, outreach efforts targeting high-burden and vulnerable households are coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Additionally, organizations like the National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA) support these efforts with national outreach initiatives. State and local outreach strategies integrate and support these national campaigns as appropriate.

Chapter 10: OHEP's Administrative Funds Policy

10.0 Competitive Procurement Process

For jurisdictions where energy assistance is not administered by a Local Department of Social Services (LDSS), a competitive procurement process will be conducted to award service delivery contracts for periods not exceeding five (5) years.

- All procurement activities will follow applicable State procurement laws and regulations.

Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS)

Each LDSS operating as a Local Administering Agency (LAA) will receive administrative funds via a line-item budget covering staff salaries and operational costs for the contract period.

- Budgets must be submitted upon request by State OHEP.
- State OHEP will review, determine, and approve the final administrative funding amounts.

Other Government Agencies

Government agencies awarded program funds will enter into an intergovernmental agreement signed by both parties.

All LAAs are responsible for maintaining sound internal controls, recordkeeping, and reporting systems for the proper management of administrative funds.

10.1 Budget Management

A. Budget Process

Before the start of each contract for competitive procurements, the State approves a budget for the contract period.

Before the start of each program year, the State approves a budget for each non-contractual LAA.

B. Budget Line Items

Administrative budgets must allocate funds under the following categories:

1. Salaries/Wages
2. Fringe Benefits
3. Communications
4. Travel
5. Utilities
6. Contractual Services
7. Office Supplies
8. Equipment
9. Rent
10. Outreach
11. Other

C. Allocation of Funds

Fund allocations are based on:

- Availability of State and Federal funds
- Expenditure patterns from submitted Administrative Reports
- Current spending trends

10.2 Budget Amendments

A budget amendment reflects an increase or decrease in the approved budget.

- Amendments require State OHEP and Department of Human Services approval and are subject to fund availability.
- LAAs must submit a written request using the Administrative Budget Revision Request form, providing full justification for any adjustments.

10.3 Administrative Reporting Procedures

A. Quarterly Financial Status Report – Administrative Funds

LAAs must submit this report to State OHEP by the 15th of each month following the quarter, covering activity through the last day of the prior month

Time Period	Due Date
July 1-September 30th	October 15th
Oct. 1-Dec 31st	January 15th
Jan 1-March 31st	April 15th
April 1-June 30th	July 15th

B. Report Completion Guidelines

- Column (a): Approved contract amount per line item
- Column (b): Actual monthly expenditures (including prior adjustments with explanations)

- Column (c): Year-to-date expenditures
- Column (d): Outstanding obligations for payment in subsequent months
- Column (e): Total of columns (c) and (d)
- Column (f): Balance of remaining funds (column (a) minus column (e)).
Negative balances require a budget revision request.

Complete all cash flow sections, noting large anticipated expenses. Reports must be signed and submitted in duplicate.

C. Special Payments Payroll

LDSS LAAs paying contractual staff via Special Payments Payroll must record associated funds and fringe benefits in the respective report line items.

10.4 Recordkeeping and Documentation

A. Fiscal Accounting

The LAA Fiscal Officer must:

- Maintain a dedicated cost category for OHEP
- Track all OHEP costs within a general ledger
- Follow State Procurement Regulations, Title 21 for allowable/unallowable costs

B. Administrative Expenditure Documentation

Documentation must clearly identify:

- Date(s)
- Type and purpose of expense
- Applicability to OHEP

- Supervisor's initials and OHEP Director's signature for approval

C. LDSS FMIS Updates

LDSS must update administrative expenditures in the State's FMIS system by the 10th of each month.

10.5 Payments and Reimbursements

A. Vendor Payments

Payments are made only with original vendor invoices, which are then marked **"PAID"** to prevent duplication.

Petty Cash Procedures

- Maximum petty cash fund: \$100
- All disbursements must be supported by documentation
- Replenishments require review and proper records
- Petty cash funds must be closed by June 30 each program year, with balances returned to the funding source

10.6 Closeout Procedures

- Final closeout reports are due as specified in annual instructions
- Submit a final Financial Status Report – Administrative Funds, marked "FINAL"

10.7 Record Retention

Per Federal requirements, all household and program records must be retained for three (3) years after the audit report's submission date for that fiscal year, unless otherwise directed by State OHEP.

Household and program records that can be retrieved from the OHEP Data Management System, the Eligibility and Enrollment System, and/or the ECM meets this requirement and is consistent with paperless processing requirements.

Chapter 11: OHEP Grant Funds Policy

Overview

OHEP benefit payments are issued directly to eligible households' energy suppliers, who apply the payment as a credit or fuel delivery. Suppliers must sign an OHEP Energy Supplier Agreement to participate. For oil, kerosene, propane, and coal/wood suppliers, this agreement mandates a 3% per unit discount off their lowest residential cash price, increasing purchasing power for OHEP recipients.

A. Authorized Agencies

The Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) approves grant funds through contracted Local Administering Agencies (LAAs). The State OHEP Office and regional processing sites process and issue energy assistance payments to energy suppliers, landlords, and on rare occasions direct customers.

B. Recordkeeping and Reporting

LAAs are responsible for:

- Using the OHEP data management system to process, certify, and deny applications.
- Process customer refunds in the OHEP data management system, when necessary.

C. Availability of Funds

If program funds are exhausted, the OHEP State Office will notify LAAs.

D. Audits

Annual audits must be conducted in accordance with OMB Circular A-128 or A-133 (as applicable). Audit reports must be submitted to the State Office within one year following the end of the program year being reviewed.

E. Ownership of Assistance

MEAP and EUSP benefits are strictly for assisting households with heating and electric needs. To ensure this:

- Payments are made directly to suppliers.
- Suppliers may not return funds directly to applicants.
- If funds are used for mechanical equipment (e.g., furnace repair), ownership transfers to the applicant or their estate.

11.1 Grant Payment Procedures

General Process

- Following certification of eligibility, payments are processed via the OHEP data management system.
- Applicants must identify their energy suppliers on the application.
- LAAs certify applications and weekly State OHEP creates an Energy Delivery Statement (EDS), which details customer names, account numbers, and benefit amounts.
- Payments are issued in batches per EDS.

Payments to Utilities

- The State Office processes utility payments weekly once payments begin in August.
- EDSs generated by Monday are included in that week's payment batch.
- Payment transmittals are typically submitted on Wednesdays.
- Payments are received by utilities within 10–14 business days.

- Applicant data is sent to utilities via email and FTP server in coordination with payments.

Payments to Non-Utility Suppliers

- Regional Processing Agencies issue MEAP payments to non-utility suppliers (must have signed agreements) for the total benefit amount minus the 3% discount (excluding crisis cases).
- Suppliers must credit the full benefit to the customer's account.
- Payments and EDS copies are mailed together.

11.1.2 Special Payment Procedures

A. Crisis Assistance

- In verified energy crises, LAAs may authorize a crisis delivery up to the customer's MEAP benefit amount or the approved crisis benefit.
- If certified, applicants are assigned to the next available EDS.
- For pending applications, LAAs may certify a crisis grant toward a minimum delivery
- Denied applications trigger recovery actions.

B. Payments to Landlords

- Processed like other suppliers by Regional Processing Agencies.
- For landlords with 10+ tenants, a special landlord code may be assigned by the State Office.

C. Direct Payments to Applicants

- Require a current W-9
- Direct payments require proof of use for heating assistance.
- Preferred alternatives include two-party checks or payment to secondary heating suppliers.

D. Non-Participating Energy Suppliers If a supplier is not on the OHEP-approved list:

1. Confirm the supplier's legitimacy.
2. Invite them to participate.
3. If declined, ask the applicant to choose an approved supplier.
4. If no alternative exists, consider direct payment or a two-party check in crisis cases.

E. Supplier Refusal If a supplier refuses a grant:

- Encourage the household to identify a secondary supplier.
- Explore issuing a two-party check.
- Direct payments are a last resort.

At season's end, suppliers submit an Energy Delivery Record (EDR) accounting for delivered and undelivered grants. Undelivered funds are refunded to the LAA.

11.2 Refunds

LAAs must make every effort to minimize the number of funds returned due to duplicate payments or application processing errors. To help prevent duplicate payments, LAAs are required to run the Duplicate Payment Report in the OHEP Data Management System every Monday. Any identified duplicate payments must be

resolved prior to the weekly utility payment batch, typically processed on Wednesdays.

Important: Energy Delivery Statements (EDSs) should never be deleted from the OHEP Data Management System, as this action may cause critical errors during payment processing by State OHEP.

When duplicate payments are identified, LAAs must follow the steps below:

1. Review the Application and Case Notes

Access the application and associated case narration in the OHEP Data Management System to determine whether the payment is a legitimate crisis payment or an actual duplicate.

2. If a True Duplicate is Found:

- Request a refund from the utility or bulk fuel supplier.
- In the Duplicate Payment Report, select “Edit” for the duplicate entry. Enter:
 - Customer’s account information
 - A brief explanation for the duplicate payment
 - Then click “Resolve” to remove it from the Duplicate Payment Report.

3. When Refunds are Received by the LAA:

- Notify State OHEP

4. When Refunds are Received by State OHEP:

- State OHEP will document the returned amount in the OHEP Data Management System.
- These transactions are tracked through the Returned Funds Report.

5. Update the EDS

Mark the duplicate payment EDS as “funds returned” and select Save.

Once completed, the duplicate payment and associated returned funds will be fully reconciled and documented within the OHEP Data Management System.

Chapter 12: Energy Delivery Statement (EDS) Procedures

12.0 EDS Assignment

1. State OHEP staff will assign EDS for both utility and non-utility vendors on a designated day once per week. In the event that the EDS assignment schedule is modified due to holidays or scheduling conflicts LAAs and Utility vendors will receive advance notice of any change.

12.0.1 EDS Payment Processing

Payments to Utility Vendors

- Utility payment transmittals are forwarded to the accounts payable team at DHS Central once per week for payment issuance through FMIS.
- Payment files are forwarded to the Utility Vendor once per week on a designated day.
- Payment status for utility EDS updates automatically to “PAID” once the payment transmittal has been created. In the event that the automatic update fails, a state OHEP staff member will manually update utility payments to “PAID” the following week.

Payments to Bulk Fuel Vendors, Landlords and Direct Pay customers

- A data file containing a list of EDS to be paid is created by the OHEP systems team on a designated day each week.
- The file is forwarded to the D365 systems team to create payment journals processed by 5 local processing jurisdictions. (Attachment)
 - Allegany County DSS
 - Cecil County DSS
 - Kent County DSS

- Prince George's County DSS
 - Queen Anne's County DSS
- Upon receipt of the journal in D365 the finance team at the local DSS will process the payments, print the check and mail to the vendor along with a copy of the corresponding EDS statement.
- Through a reconciliation process, a state OHEP staff member manually updates the payment status of Bulk Fuel, Landlord and Direct Pay payments to "PAID" once a check has been issued and mailed by the local processing jurisdiction.

12.0.2 EDS Errors and Corrections

- LAA's should not make any modifications to a case that's status has changed to "EDS SENT"
- In the event that an error is discovered, the LAA should contact the state OHEP office with details and await guidance for correction

12.0.3 EDS Content

Each EDS includes:

- Applicant name
- Account number
- Approved benefit amount
- Payment authorization information for the supplier

Chapter 13 : OHEP Data Management System Policies

Background: *This chapter outlines the general policies governing the use of the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) Data Management System (DMS). Detailed functional and technical information is available in the OHEP Data Management System Reference Manual.*

13.0 Data Processing Policy

The OHEP Data Management System is the official platform for all Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) to process energy assistance applications, unless otherwise authorized in writing by OHEP. Processing includes application intake, data entry, certification, and benefit payment issuance.

A. Application Processing

1. Methods of Application Processing:

- **Online:** During intake and interview, staff may enter applicant data directly into the system. The application is printed and signed by the applicant upon completion.
- **Batch:** Applications completed manually (on-site, off-site, electronically, by phone, mail, e-mail, fax) are grouped and entered into the system at a later time. All applications must be entered into the system within **7 calendar days** of receipt.

2. Incomplete Applications:

Incomplete applications must also be entered within 7 days of receipt. Applicants must be notified of any outstanding required documents within **7 calendar days** of data entry.

B. Certification

All applications must be certified through the system before a benefit can be issued. No benefit may be disbursed without system certification.

C. Payment Issuance

1. Recording Payments:

All benefits must be recorded in the OHEP DMS.

2. Exceptions:

In rare cases requiring benefit issuance outside of the system, LAAs must obtain written approval from the State OHEP Office. The office will provide a written policy waiver for documentation.

3. Supplier Refunds:

Refunds issued by energy suppliers may be returned to the supplier upon request if the applicant maintains an active account. Refunds may be processed through **September 30th** following the program year in which eligibility was established.

4. Other Exceptions:

Any other exceptions must be approved in writing by the State OHEP Office.

D. Customer Notifications

Customer notices, including benefit payment letters and denial notifications, must be generated through the DMS.

- A copy of the Household Notification Letter is not required in the applicant's file but must be generated in the system within 10 days of the payment date.

E. Reports

Reports Guide

Report	Description	Menu	Frequency
Agency Management Report	Provides a comprehensive overview of applications received, their status, the agency's average processing time, and any validation errors that need to be addressed.	Management	Weekly
Application List	A comprehensive list of all applications received YTD. The list may be filtered by program and application status.	Management	As often as needed
Assigned Worker Detail	Allows applications to be tracked by a specific worker. This report only works when a worker is assigned to each application. Local agencies may choose to run this report by the status of the application to see which cases are in pending status under a particular worker.	Management	As often as needed
Auto Denial Report	Shows the number of applications that have been automatically denied by the OHEP Data Management System. Only those applications that have a Request for Additional Information notice generated from the system will be automatically denied. Denials occur when the application is not set to awaiting within 25 days of generating the notice. It is important for the LAA to run this report to ensure customers were not wrongfully denied (i.e. customer has returned information, but the worker has not completed the application in the system).	Dashboard Report	Daily or Weekly
Clients Not Applying This Year	<p>This list shows the customers who applied last program year, but not in the current program year. This report is extremely helpful when performing mass mailings, so as to avoid duplicate applications.</p> <p>To run this report, select a program under the "Program" field and "ALL Customers" under the "Receive Benefits" field. This report may also be filtered by customers who received benefits last year or those who were denied.</p>	Management	As often as mass mailings

CE Statistical Report	Report available as Summary or Detail. Summary provides statistical data for CE applications across all statuses. Detail provides a list of applications and their corresponding status.	Reports	As needed
CP Statistical Report	Report available as Summary or Detail. Summary provides statistical data for CP applications across all statuses. Detail provides a list of applications and their corresponding status.	Reports	As needed
Denied Applications Summary	Shows the number of applications that have been denied by the denial reason. LAAs may use this report to strategize how to lower denial rates.	Management	As often as needed
Duplicate Applications	Shows any applications for the same applicant or address two or more times in the same program year. When a duplicate application is created, it is imperative that the local agency identify the application immediately to avoid duplicate payment of energy assistance benefits to the household. LAA will need to click on the arrow next to the agency's name to view the applicants' names and click the "Edit" button in order to reconcile the duplicate records. See Chapter 10.2 Identifying Applicant Fraud for further instructions on this report.	Management	Weekly
Duplicate Payment	Shows any applicants that have received more than one benefit per program in the current year. LAA must review the list and verify whether an actual duplicate payment was made. LAA is responsible for contacting the utility or vendor to return the duplicate payment. LAA will need to click on the arrow next to the agency's name to view the applicants' names and click the "Edit" button in order to reconcile the duplicate payments.	Fiscal	Weekly
Energy Delivery Record	This report is run at the end of the year and sent to each bulk fuel vendor.	Fiscal	Annually by state OHEP staff
Incomplete myDHR Applications	This report shows the LAA how many myDHR applications are currently in the myDHR staging table and are waiting to be worked/transmitted into the OHEP Data	myDHR	As often as needed

	Management System. To run this report, the LAA should click on “Detail” in the Report Type field.		
Local Agencies Processing Time Report	Displays a detailed list of applications aged 25-44 days or over 45 days.	Management	Daily/Weekly
Minimum Delivery Report	Shows a list of customers that received a minimum delivery and allows for timely follow up in order to issue the remaining payment, if applicable.	Management	Weekly - during crisis season
Production Report	Shows the number of cases that were data entered, certified, or denied within a specific time frame, or year-to-date. It also shows the total grant amounts that have been awarded during the same time frame.	Statistical	As often as needed
SSN Validation Report	Local Administering Agencies (LAAs) must run the SSN Validation Report in the OHEP database weekly to review and resolve invalid social security numbers no later than thirty days from the date the invalid number is determined. LAA will need to click on the arrow next to the agency’s name to view the invalid SSN and click the “Edit” button in order to reconcile. See Chapter 10.2 Identifying Applicant Fraud for further instructions.	SSN Validation	Weekly
55 Day Extension Report	Shows those customers for whom a 55-day hold has been placed.	Management	Weekly
55 Day Extension Delinquent Report	Shows those customers for whom a 55-day hold has been placed and has since expired.	Management	Weekly

13.2 System Requirements and User Information

A. Software & Connectivity

The OHEP DMS is a centralized, web-based application accessible to authorized users via:

- Pentium processor (or later)
- 256K+ RAM
- Internet Explorer 8.0+ (or equivalent browser per system manual settings)
- Updated antivirus software
- Secure login credentials issued by the State OHEP Office
- Direct connection to the DHS Network or via VPN for external agencies

B. User Authorization

1. New User Requests:

LAAs must submit a signed [Logon Request Form](#) for new users, specifying the user's role. The form may be faxed.

2. User Termination:

Submit a [Logon Request Form](#) for removal when an individual leaves OHEP or the LAA.

3. VPN Access:

Agencies not connected to the DHS network will access the DMS via DHS's VPN. Separate login credentials are required.

4. Password Requirements:

- Initial login uses the assigned username and a temporary password.
- Passwords must be changed at first login and every **45 days** thereafter.
- Passwords must never be shared.

C. Security

- All computers accessing the DMS must have commercial antivirus software.
- Users must never leave an active session unattended.
- Passwords are confidential and must not be shared or reused by others.
- Any suspected security issues must be reported to the State OHEP Office immediately.
- Unauthorized software or downloads are prohibited.

D. Software Development & Work Requests

State OHEP exclusively manages DMS software and development. System enhancement or correction requests should be submitted through the formal request process via the State OHEP System Coordinator.

E. Software Updates

Application updates are centrally installed by OHEP.

- Users will be notified **at least one day in advance**, when possible.
- Updates may include release notes for changes affecting LAA operations.

F. Hardware

OHEP provides each LAA with the minimum required hardware to comply with operational standards.

- Installation and maintenance of OHEP-purchased equipment are the responsibility of OHEP/DHS.
- Equipment bought by LAAs with non-OHEP funds is maintained by the LAA.
- OHEP equipment remains DHS property and can be relocated with notice.

G. Training

State OHEP is responsible for software and hardware training. Training requests should be directed to the State OHEP Office.

H. Technical Support

Technical support is provided by State OHEP and DHS's Office of Technical Services for Human Services (OTHS).

- Call the **DHS System Support Desk at 410-767-7002** for assistance.
- Do not contact contractors without approval from the State OHEP Office.

13.3 System Maintenance and Problem Reporting

13.3.1 Daily Maintenance

LAAs must maintain computer equipment cleanliness and physical security. Hardware issues should be reported to the DHS System Support Desk.

13.3.2 Software Issues

Immediately report software issues to the OHEP Office with:

- Description of the issue
- Actions taken before the problem
- Impact on other workstations
- Any error messages displayed

13.3.3 Hardware Issues

Report hardware problems to the System Support Desk with a detailed description. Record the work order number for follow-up.

13.4 Other Computer Uses

OHEP computers may be used for other agency business (e.g., word processing, spreadsheets) provided it does not interfere with OHEP operations.

- Additional software must have proper licenses and State OHEP approval before installation.

13.5 Other Software

Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) software may be installed with agency approval and proof of licensing.

- Unauthorized, public domain, shareware, or downloaded software is prohibited to prevent malware and security risks.

13.6 Database Backup and Disaster Recovery

DHS's contracted data host is responsible for daily server maintenance and data backups. LAAs are **not responsible for backing up OHEP data** and do not have access to perform this task.

13.7 Use of Data

All DMS data is the property of DHS/OHEP and is considered confidential.

- Data use for non-OHEP purposes requires written approval from the State OHEP Director.
- External data requests for research require a confidentiality statement.
- Requests for individual applicant data require a signed release.

Chapter 14: General Policy – Application Management, Record Keeping, and Reporting

Each Local Administering Agency (LAA) must manage application processing to ensure fair, timely, and consistent treatment of all applications in accordance with productivity standards set forth in this Operations Manual. This chapter defines the required procedures for application management, record keeping, and reporting to maintain compliance with Federal and State regulations.

14.0 Policy – Application Management Requirements

Effective application management begins at the point of receipt and continues through assignment, processing, and certification. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring prompt data entry and immediate assignment of applications to caseworkers, maintaining adherence to productivity standards outlined in this chapter.

Because each LAA experiences different volumes and types of applications—including Categorical Eligibility, mail-in, consumer portal, in-office, and telephone applications—local procedures must balance these demands while prioritizing customers in crisis and ensuring timely payments to energy suppliers.

14.1 Application Management – Overview and Background

A. Seasonal Workload Variations

OHEP operations typically see an increase in application volume from fall through winter, driven by heating needs. Mail-in applications generally represent the majority of submissions. During this peak, rapid data entry, diligent application follow-up, and timely fiscal processing are essential. Local managers must actively monitor operations to prevent backlogs. The State OHEP office closely observes agency performance during this period and is available to assist in addressing any backlog concerns.

B. Planning and Workflow Management

A clear, documented plan for distributing, tracking, and processing applications—particularly mail-in applications—is essential. Key questions for management include:

- How are Categorical Eligibility, Consumer Portal, and mailed applications received and opened?
- How are mail-in applications assigned to workers using the tracking log?
- How are high volumes of applications scanned into ECMS and filed to ensure accessibility?
- What is the prioritized order for processing applications?
- Are staff properly trained and assigned appropriate responsibilities?
- Are Requests for Additional Information (RFAs) issued within the required timeframe?

Each LAA will have its own application intake trends. OHEP managers must identify these peaks and adjust staffing accordingly. Early-season backlogs can delay data entry and RFAs, resulting in application processing delays, increased call volume, and higher demand for crisis services.

As application intake slows, demands shift to certification, payment processing, supplier communication, crisis services, and outreach. Supervisors must carefully monitor every stage—from data entry to scanning, benefit notice preparation, and documentation.

External factors such as extreme weather, energy shortages, price spikes, or economic downturns may also affect application volume and require operational adjustments.

14.2 Application Processing Standards

To maintain timely service and meet program expectations, the following practices are required:

A. Scanning and Document Upload

- Paper applications and documents are immediately uploaded to ECMS.
- Telework staff may securely email encrypted documents for upload.

- Emailed applications are uploaded directly into ECM (MyMDThink/myDHR).
- Categorical Eligibility applications are downloaded from the staging area with standardized file names.
- Telephonic applications and signature pages are downloaded and scanned into ECMS.

B. Document Handling

- Original documents (e.g., driver's licenses, Social Security cards, utility bills) are returned to customers promptly after scanning.
- Original documents must not be retained.
- All disposal follows [FIA Document Disposal guidelines](#)

C. Application Assignment

- Applications are logged into the shared Google Application Tracking Sheet or Excel sheet.
- Assignments are rotated equitably among caseworkers.
- Local maximum daily assignment limits for each application type (paper, telephonic, MyMDThink) are established.
- Categorical Eligibility applications are assigned with specific daily limits.
- Staff on full-day leave should not receive new assignments.
- Data entry is performed from the digital file in ECMS by either clerical staff or case managers.
- Each case assignment must be narrated in the Notes tab within the data management system.

D. Application Tracking

- All applications must be tracked using the Application Tracking Sheet.
- The State OHEP Quality Assurance Analyst and Director must have viewing/comment access.
- Agencies unable to use the Google sheet must maintain an Excel tracking log available upon request.
- The tracking sheet must:
 - Include tabs for Pending, Denied, and Certified applications.
 - Record applications by date received, type, and assigned worker.
 - Highlight rows upon receipt of verifications.
 - Document actions in the Notes tab.

E. Application Processing

- Process applications using the digital ECM file and tracking sheet.
- Review all supporting documents and complete required system screens (E&E, SOLQi, Work Number, Beacon, etc.).
- Verify utility information via supplier portals or email, saving screenshots/PDFs to ECM.
- Complete additional forms with customers and scan to ECM.
- Issue RFAs through CDC as needed, with copies uploaded to ECM.
- Maintain detailed narration for each action taken.

F. Data Entry Timeline

- Log all applications immediately upon receipt.
- Enter applications into the OHEP database within **seven (7) calendar days** of receipt.
- If applications exceed this timeline and customer service is impacted, the LAA will be required to submit a corrective plan to meet the 7-day standard.

G. Pending Applications

- Requests for additional information must be sent within **seven (7) days** of application receipt, unless a crisis exists.
- Four types of pending statuses:
 1. **Applicant Information** – Applicant has 15 days to respond before denial.
 2. **Utility Supplier Information** – Do not deny applications for lack of this information.
 3. **Landlord Information** – Do not deny applications for lack of this information.
 4. **Worker Information** – Do not deny applications due to incomplete internal data entry.
- Applications pending for over 30 days must have documented reasons in the Notes tab.
- Supervisors must review aging pending applications weekly and take action to resolve or deny where appropriate.
- If 2% of an LAA's applications remain pending for 45 days or more, a corrective action plan will be required.

H. Application Review and Certification

- Certify applications within 10 working days after the application is complete and in Awaiting status.
- Certification Process:
 - Prioritize certifications oldest to newest using the tracking sheet.
 - Run status reports to manage workload.
 - Review applications and supporting documents in ECMS.
 - Notify workers of corrections; log notification dates in the tracking sheet.
 - Certify applications in the system when complete.
 - Update tracking logs with certification dates.

Eligible and Ineligible Household Members for OHEP Benefits An 'eligible household member' is a U.S. citizen or a qualified alien. Qualified aliens must be included as part of the household. A Social Security Number alone does not verify eligibility. LAAs must request additional documentation to determine OHEP eligibility, and proof must be maintained in the applicant's file.

Eligible Categories & Acceptable Documentation

- - Lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the INA, 8 U.S.C. §§1101–1537
- · I-551 (Permanent Resident Card)
- · Unexpired Temporary I-551 stamp in a foreign passport or on Form I-94
- - Admitted as a refugee under §207 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. §1157
- · I-94 with admission stamp under section 207
- · I-688B annotated '274a.12(a)(3)'

- I-766 annotated 'A3'
- I-571 (Refugee Travel Document)

Ineligible Household Members

An 'ineligible household member' is a person who is not a U.S. citizen or a qualified alien. While they may apply as the applicant, the household must have at least one eligible member to qualify for certification. They must provide proof of residence and income, though they are not included in the household count. Children under 18 are always counted in the household, regardless of citizenship status.

Processing Applications Without Valid SSNs

OHEP applications must be accepted from any household. However, at least one eligible household member is required to process benefits. The OHEP database has two key columns to track this:

A. 'Is a U.S. Citizen?' – Check if citizenship is documented.

B. 'Is Eligible?' – Check if the individual is a qualified household member.

Proof of eligibility must be included in the file for eligible non-citizens. Ineligible adults are not counted in the household number but their income is included in the total. All children under 18 are counted as household members and included in the benefit calculation, regardless of citizenship.

Appendix A - Application Forms

Attachment A- [Included Income](#)
Attachment B- [Excluded Income](#)
Attachment C- [Wage Verification Form](#)
Attachment D- [Request for Additional Information](#)
Attachment E- [Social Security Number Verification](#)
Attachment F- [Proof of Residence](#)
Attachment G- [Request for Fair Hearing](#)
Attachment H- [Withdrawal Request for Fair Hearing](#)
Attachment I- [Overpayment Letter #1](#)
Attachment J- [Overpayment Letter #2](#)
Attachment K- [Overpayment Letter #3](#)
Attachment L- [Overpayment Letter with IPV #1](#)
Attachment M- [Promissory Note and Confessed Judgment form](#)
Attachment N- [Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver](#)
Attachment O- [Disqualification Consent Agreement](#)
Attachment P- [Administrative Disqualification Hearing Pamphlet](#)
Attachment Q- [Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing Decision](#)
Attachment R- [Consent to Release of Information Form](#)
Attachment S- [Point in Time Waiver](#)
Attachment T- [Physician Certification \(PC\) form](#)
Attachment U- [DHCD form.](#)
Attachment V- [Crisis Season Declaration Form](#)
Attachment W- [OAH's Transmittal for Department of Human Resources form](#)
Attachment X- [Logon Request Form](#)
Attachment Y- [FIA Document Disposal guidelines](#)

Attachment Z- [Outreach Log](#)

Attachment AA - [MCCU Debt Referral](#)

Attachment AB - [Advance Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing](#)

Attachment AC - [OAH Transmittal Form for DHS](#)

Attachment A Countable Income

Countable Income

Gross wages, tips, and commissions
Employment income of part-time college students
Net income from self-employment
Monetary gifts and loans (excluding student loans)
Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Pensions, veterans' compensation, workers' compensation
Interest from savings/checking accounts
Interest or dividends from bond redemption
Disbursements from annuities, IRAs, or other retirement accounts
Dividends
Estate or trust income
Rental income
Royalties
Inheritance and lottery winnings
Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) and Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP) grants
Guaranteed/Universal Basic Income Pilot Program grants
Child or spousal support (alimony)
Armed Forces Dependents' Allowance and Support Payment
AmeriCorps or VISTA payments
Criminal Injuries Compensation Board payments
Severance pay
Monetary settlements
Mine Workers Benefits and Railroad Retirement Benefits
Unemployment benefits
Educational stipends for living expenses (excluding tuition/fees)

Attachment B- Excluded Income

Excluded Income

Third-party payments over which the household has no control
Employment income of a child under 18 or a full-time student
"In-kind" contributions
Loans on assets such as home equity loans, reverse mortgages, and hypothecated loans
Retroactive SSDI payments (only the current month is counted)
Medicare payments and premiums deducted from Social Security or pensions
Assets or the sale of assets
Stocks and bonds (considered assets)
Reinvested interest/dividends from retirement accounts
State of Maryland Homeowners'/Renters' Tax Credit payments
Federal/state tax refunds and Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC)
HUD direct payment subsidies
Food Supplement Program benefits
Welfare Avoidance Grant (WAG)
TDAP Flex Rent Payments
Payments under the Federal Action program (RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companion Program)
Strike funds without employee contributions
Payments to home care providers for the care of adults who cannot care for themselves
Foster Care Grants, Subsidized Adoption, and Kinship Care Payments
Nazi restitution payments
Reimbursements for employment-related expenses
Overpayments
Stipends from State/federal job training programs
Educational assistance (Title IV, BIA funding, scholarships, grants, fellowships, deferred student loans, work-study, veteran benefits) used for: Tuition, books, required materials/fees; Recognized post-secondary institutions; Schools for individuals with disabilities; Vocational or technical schools; or Programs for obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent

Attachment C- Wage Verification Form

 MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS WAGE VERIFICATION FORM	RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Instructions: If sufficient pay stubs as required by OHEP are not available, this form must be completed and signed by the Employer. The Applicant and Employee must sign at the bottom.

EMPLOYER NAME & ADDRESS:	EMPLOYEE NAME:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	Client ID #: Local agency will provide

Dear Employer:

We are requesting verification of wages for the above-named employee. Authorization for the release of this information appears below. Please complete the section(s) that applies. Thank you for your cooperation.

Intake Worker & Telephone # _____

Current wages: Please list each paycheck received in the month listed.

MONTH: _____				MONTH: _____			
Period Ending	Gross Pay	Tips	Date Received	Period Ending	Gross Pay	Tips	Date Received

NEW EMPLOYEE	SEPARATED EMPLOYEE
First day of work _____	Last day of work _____
Date first pay received _____	Date final pay received _____
GROSS pay, first check _____	Final GROSS pay _____

Signature of Employer:

_____	_____	_____	_____
Signature	Title	Date	Telephone

I hereby authorize the above-named employer to release to the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) information regarding my employment and wages.


Employee Signature

Date

Applicant (If other than Employee)

Date

Attachment D Request for Additional Information

	MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	RETURN THIS FORM TO: <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div>
---	---	---

Applicant's Name: Date:
 Address: Client ID#:

In order to complete your application for the Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP), we need copies of the required information noted below. Your information must be received by or your **APPLICATION WILL BE DENIED** and any commitments or holds to your accounts may be removed. If your application is denied, you may reapply for OHEP after 30 days.

Proof of ALL GROSS income for <u>ALL</u> household members from <input type="text"/> through <input type="text"/> EXAMPLES of INCOME: Earned Income: Self Employment, Work Paystubs, Wage Form completed by Employer. Unearned Income: Social Security, SSI Benefits, Child Support/Alimony, TCA or TDAP, Retirement or Pension, Bank Statement	
EARNED INCOME for:	APPLICANT'S PHOTO ID (e.g. Driver's License or Photo ID issued by the MVA, Passport, Employment ID Card with Picture)
WAGE FORM (enclosed) for:	SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS for:
UNEARNED INCOME for:	PROOF OF RESIDENCE (Lease, rent receipt, tax bill)
DECLARATION OF ZERO INCOME FORM (enclosed) for:	LANDLORD AGREEMENT Mailed to Landlord by Agency YES <input type="text"/> Mail Date <input type="text"/> NOT NEEDED <input type="text"/>
ELECTRIC BILL Supplier Name: <input type="text"/> Account Number: <input type="text"/>	Forms Enclosed: RESOURCE PROVIDER FORM <input type="text"/> HOUSEHOLD WORKSHEET <input type="text"/> WAGE FORM <input type="text"/> DECLARATION OF ZERO INCOME FORM <input type="text"/>
HEATING BILL Supplier Name: <input type="text"/> Account Number: <input type="text"/>	OTHER:

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAPER WITH THE REQUESTED INFORMATION BY THE DATE ABOVE.

Please contact at if you have any questions.

Attachment E - Social Security Number Verification

Social Security Numbers

Verification of Social Security Numbers (SSNs) must be maintained in the applicant's file. If an applicant previously provided SSN documentation in a prior fiscal year, it is not necessary for them to resubmit the documentation when reapplying for assistance.

However, a copy of the previously submitted documentation must be included in the current fiscal year file.

Acceptable Documentation for Social Security Numbers

- Copy of the Social Security card.
- Screenshot from the Maryland E&E system showing active FIA benefits.
- Medicare card (if the number displayed is the applicant's SSN).
- Printout from SOLQ or SVES systems.
- Federally issued IRS tax documents (e.g., 1099, W-2).
- Official government-issued letter or benefits notice displaying the SSN (must be on official letterhead).
- SSN verification through the OHEP Data Management System validation process.

Documentation Requirements and Processing

All U.S. citizen adult members of a household must have a documented SSN in order to process an application. If an SSN is missing at the time of application, the application must be placed in a pending status for up to fifteen (15) days while the applicant provides a valid Social Security card or an official letter from the Social Security Administration confirming the number.

During this period, the Local Administering Agency (LAA) must attempt to verify the SSN through available state systems. Persons identified with alien status may use 000-00-000 in the system.

Guidelines for alien eligibility are outlined in Chapter 4.6: Alien Eligibility.

Children Without Social Security Numbers

If a child in the household does not have an SSN, the parent or guardian must apply to the Social Security Administration for one. Proof of application (such as a receipt or SSA-issued confirmation) must be submitted.

In crisis situations, the application may be processed with 000-00-000 temporarily entered for the child. The actual SSN must be provided to the LAA once it is received. If not a crisis, the applicant must submit the child's SSN documentation before the application can be processed. SSNs are typically issued within fifteen (15) days.

If the number is not available within this timeframe, proof that an application has been made to SSA may be submitted in its place. The system should continue to reflect 000-00-

000 until the SSN is received. An application may be denied for incomplete information if an applicant refuses to obtain an SSN for a child over the age of two.

Types of Social Security Cards Issued by SSA

- ****Unrestricted Card****
 - Displays the individual's name and SSN.
 - Permits employment without restrictions.
 - Issued to:
 - U.S. citizens.
 - Lawful permanent residents or individuals with DHS authorization to work permanently in the U.S.
 - ****Card Stamped "NOT VALID FOR EMPLOYMENT"****
 - Issued to individuals lawfully admitted to the U.S. without DHS permission to work.
 - Typically needed if a federal or state law requires an SSN to receive a benefit or service.
 - ****Card Stamped "VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION"****
 - Issued to individuals with temporary DHS authorization to work in the U.S.
- Cards issued prior to April 2004 may display "VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH INS AUTHORIZATION."

Attachment F - Proof of Residence

Proof of Residence

To be eligible for benefits under the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) or the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP), applicants and all household members must be residents of the State of Maryland. The applicant is required to provide documentation establishing their primary residence.

Proof of residence must display the individual's name and a valid Maryland street address where energy services are provided. Documents listing a Post Office (P.O.) Box address will not be accepted as proof of residence.

Acceptable Forms of Proof of Residence

- Current, unexpired Maryland Driver's License or MVA-issued Photo Identification
 - Note: The address must reflect the delivery address; P.O. Boxes are not permitted.
- Current Residential Lease or Rental Contract
 - Must be dated within 12 months of the application.
- Recent Letter or Rent Receipt from a Landlord
 - Dated within the last 30 days
 - Must include:
 - Applicant's name
 - Current street address
 - Landlord's signature
- Current OHEP Landlord Agreement (program year specific)
- OHEP Rent-Living Arrangements Form
 - Must be signed by the landlord.
- Social Security Benefit Letter
- Benefit Letter or printout from the Department of Social Services (E&E/CARES System)
 - Must be issued within the last 6 months.
- Recent Major Utility Bill
 - Must include applicant's name and delivery address.
 - Examples: electric bill, heating bill, cable bill, telephone bill, or major credit card bill.
- Valid Maryland Voter Registration Card
- Current Property Tax Bill or Receipt
 - Must be issued within the current calendar year.
- Printout from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) Website
 - Must show proof of homeownership.
 - Website: <https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty>
- Current Mortgage Account Statement

[Attachment G- Request for Fair Hearing](#)



OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS (OHEP) REQUEST FOR FAIR HEARING

Fill out this form **ONLY** if you disagree with a decision concerning your benefits. If you disagree with the action of the local department, you are entitled to discuss it with a supervisor. We will help you fill out this form or you can ask for a hearing by calling 1-800-332-6347.

1. Tell us who you are. Fill in the blanks in this box and complete boxes 2-4. Please print clearly.	
Name: _____	Date of Birth: _____
Address: _____	
City: _____	State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone Number: _____
Your local office name: _____	
2. Which programs do you want to appeal? (Check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) – Heating Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) – Electric Bill Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) – Electric Arrearage Retirement Assistance	
3. What are the reasons you want a hearing? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> I was not allowed to apply. <input type="checkbox"/> My application was turned down. <input type="checkbox"/> My application was not handled properly. <input type="checkbox"/> I am not receiving the services that I need. </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> The amount of assistance I received is wrong. <input type="checkbox"/> My assistance has been incorrectly suspended, reduced, or terminated. <input type="checkbox"/> I do not agree that I should pay back assistance I received. </div> </div> If you received a notice about this, what is the date on the notice? _____ Why do you want a hearing? Please tell us what happened. _____ _____	
4. I understand if I ask for a hearing within 10 days from the date of the notice and I was receiving benefits, I can still get them while I wait for my hearing unless my benefit period ends. I may have to pay back the benefits if I lose my appeal. <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if you do not want benefits while you wait for your hearing. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div>Signature: _____</div> <div>Date: _____</div> </div>	
FOR AGENCY USE ONLY	
Department: _____ Local Office: _____ Date Appeal Received: _____ Case Name: _____ Case Number: _____ Appeal based on notice sent: _____ Effective: _____ Conference held? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Benefits pending? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Reason: _____ Case record attached? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Reason: _____ Worker: _____ Supervisor's Approval: _____ Date: _____	
FOR APPEAL UNIT USE ONLY	
Appeal Rep: _____ Date: _____ Category: _____ Transmitted by: _____	

HOW TO HAVE A HEARING IF YOU THINK WE ARE WRONG

➤ How do I request a hearing?

- **Fill out the form** on the front of this page.
- **Mail, fax or take the form** to your local Office of Home Energy Programs, **OR**

If you prefer, mail the form to the Office of Administrative Hearings to the following address:

Office of Administrative Hearings
Administrative Law Building
11101 Gilroy Road
Hunt Valley, MD 21031-1301

- Use the enclosed envelope.

If you don't want to fill out the form

Call or go to your local OHEP office. Someone there will help you.
For other information regarding energy assistance call 1-800-332-6347.

➤ How long do I have to request a hearing?

You must ask for a hearing no later than **30 days** after the date of the notice.

➤ Can I still get my benefits while I wait for my hearing?

If you ask for a hearing no later than **10 days** after the date of the notice and you were getting benefits, you can get your benefits while you wait, unless your benefit period ends. Then we may not be able to send you benefits until after the hearing decision is received.

➤ Will I owe any money if I get my benefits while I wait?

If the judge agrees with the decision we made, you may have to pay back benefits you received.

➤ When and where will the hearing be?

The Office of Administrative Hearings will send you a notice telling you the time and place of your hearing.

➤ Do I have to come to the hearing?

The hearing may be dismissed if you do not come to it. If you can't come, call the Office of Administrative Hearings and they will let you know how to reschedule your hearing.

➤ Can I bring someone to help me or speak for me?

You can bring a lawyer, friend or relative. If you want free legal help, call your local social services office or call Legal Aid at 1-800-999-8904.

➤ How can I prepare for the hearing?

We will send you information with our reasons for the decision we made at least 6 days before the hearing. You can see your file, including your computer file, at your local office. We will talk to you about this decision. You will need to call to make an appointment to see your file and to talk to a supervisor.

Si necesita ayuda para llenar el formulario favor de llamar al 1-800-332-6347.

Attachment H- Withdrawal of Request for Hearing



MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS WITHDRAWAL OF REQUEST FOR HEARING

To: Office of Administrative Hearings
Administrative Law Building
11101 Gilroy Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21031-1301

Customer Name: _____
Client ID#: _____
OAH Number: _____
Hearing Date: _____

I, _____ of _____
(Name) (Address)

(Address) (County)

have filed a request for hearing. I now withdraw this request because (choose one below):

☐ the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) has agreed to address the specific reason I am appealing by doing the following:

☐ Other (Explain other reason):

OHEP will take this action by: _____
(Date)

I withdraw my request for a hearing knowing that (please initial each line):

- _____ I may be eligible for free legal representation before the hearing and that, if I am eligible, my legal representative could review what OHEP has told me.
- _____ I have a right to look at my case record, including computer records, before I sign this withdrawal.
- _____ If I had a hearing, an Administrative Law Judge, who does not work for OHEP, would decide my case. I would have a hearing and a decision within 90 days of the date I filed my request for a hearing.
- _____ If I went to a hearing, OHEP would have to explain its decision. I would have an opportunity to subpoena witnesses, question the OHEP representative, and present evidence or witnesses to explain why I believe OHEP was wrong.
- _____ Going to a hearing would not affect any current application for OHEP benefits or any of my other benefits.

Customer Signature: _____ Date: _____

OHEP Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

OHEP LEG HEARING WTHDRW (REV 06/18)

Attachment I- Overpayment Letter

(Insert Letterhead)

<<Date>>

<<Mr./Ms.>><<First Name>><<Last Name>>

<<Address 1>>

<<Address 2>>

<<City>><<State>><<Zip Code>>

Re: Overpayment of Energy Assistance Funds

Dear <<Mr./Ms.>><<Last Name>>:

The Office of Home Energy Programs received and processed an application to provide financial assistance to you for your energy bills. The following grants were paid to your energy vendors based upon the information reviewed at the time of your application:

Application Date:	\$XXX.XX	Application Date2:	\$XXX.XX	Application Date3:	\$XXX.XX
Electric Benefit:	\$XXX.XX	Electric Benefit2:	\$XXX.XX	Electric Benefit3:	\$XXX.XX
Heating Benefit:	\$XXX.XX	Heating Benefit2:	\$XXX.XX	Heating Benefit3:	\$XXX.XX
Arrearage Benefit:	\$XXXX.XX	Arrearage Benefit:	\$XXXX.XX	Arrearage Benefit3:	\$XXXX.XX
Total Benefit:	\$XXXX.XX	Total Benefit2:	\$XXXX.XX	Total Benefit3:	\$XXXX.XX

It has come to our attention that an overpayment of <<Insert Dollar Amount>> has occurred due to the following reason:

<<State reason for overpayment>>

COMAR and/or Operations Manual Citation:

Please contact me at <<insert phone number and/or e-mail address>> within the next fourteen (14) days so that we can meet to review this matter and enter into a payment agreement. Failure to respond to this letter will result in your overpayment being referred to the State of Maryland Central Collections Unit, where an additional seventeen percent (17%) fee will be charged to your repayment amount.

You have the right to appeal this determination. I have included with this letter additional information should you wish to submit an appeal.

Sincerely,

<<Signature>>

<<Printed Name>>

<<Title>>

<<Agency Name>>

Attachment 1:

Request for Fair Hearing

Attachment J- Overpayment Letter #2

{Insert Letterhead}

<<Date>>

<<Mr./Ms.>><<First Name>><<Last Name>>

<<Address 1>>

<<Address 2>>

<<City>><<State>><<Zip Code>>

Re: Second Notice: Overpayment of Energy Assistance Funds

Dear <<Mr./Ms.>><<Last Name>>:

On <<Insert Date of First Letter>> a notice was sent to you regarding an overpayment of funds to you by the Office of Home Energy Programs in the amount of <<Insert Dollar Amount>>. I have attached a copy of the original notice to this letter.

The letter instructed you to contact me to review the matter and to enter into a payment agreement. To date, you have not responded to this. This is a final warning to contact me to discuss this matter immediately. If you do not respond within the next fourteen (14) days, your file will be referred to the State of Maryland Central Collection Unit, where collections will be made along with a seventeen percent (17%) fee added on.

You can contact me at <<Insert phone number and/or e-mail address>> to take next steps on this matter.

Sincerely,

<<Signature>>

<<Printed Name>>

<<Title>>

<<Agency Name>>

Attachment 1: Overpayment Letter #1

Attachment 2: Request for Fair Hearing

OHEP CORR OVERPAY2 (REV 12/15)

<<Printed Name>>

<<Title>>

<<Agency Name>>

Attachment 1: Request for Fair Hearing

Attachment 2: Advance Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing

Attachment K- Overpayment Letter #3

(Insert Letterhead)

<<Date>>

<<Mr./Ms.>><<First Name>><<Last Name>>

<<Address 1>>

<<Address 2>>

<<City>><<State>><<Zip Code>>

Re: Third Notice: Overpayment of Energy Assistance Funds

Dear <<Mr./Ms.>><<Last Name>>:

You received a notice regarding an overpayment of funds to you by the Office of Home Energy Programs on <<insert date>> and a follow-up notice on <<insert date>>. The [letters](#) instructed you to contact me to arrange a repayment agreement for the money that you owe.

I have not received a response from you at this point. As discussed in the prior notices, your case is now being referred to the State of Maryland Central Collections Unit for enforcement of the outstanding repayment amount.

Sincerely,

<<Signature>>

<<Printed Name>>

<<Title>>

<<Agency Name>>

Attachment 1: Overpayment Letter #1

Attachment 2: Overpayment Letter #2

Attachment 3: Request for Fair Hearing

OHEP CORR OVERPAY3 (REV 12/15)

Attachment L- Overpayment Letter with IPV

(Insert Letterhead)

<<Date>>

<<Mr./Ms.>><<First Name>><<Last Name>>

<<Address 1>>

<<Address 2>>

<<City>><<State>><<Zip Code>>

Re: Overpayment of Energy Assistance Funds

Dear <<Mr./Ms.>><<Last Name>>:

The Office of Home Energy Programs received and processed an application to provide financial assistance to you for your energy bills. The following grants were paid to your energy vendors based upon the information reviewed at the time of your application:

Application Date:	\$XXX.XX	Application Date2:	\$XXX.XX	Application Date3:	\$XXX.XX
Electric Benefit:	\$XXX.XX	Electric Benefit2:	\$XXX.XX	Electric Benefit3:	\$XXX.XX
Heating Benefit:	\$XXX.XX	Heating Benefit2:	\$XXX.XX	Heating Benefit3:	\$XXX.XX
Arrearage Benefit:	\$XXXX.XX	Arrearage Benefit:	\$XXXX.XX	Arrearage Benefit3:	\$XXXX.XX
Total Benefit:	\$XXXX.XX	Total Benefit2:	\$XXXX.XX	Total Benefit3:	\$XXXX.XX

It has come to our attention that an overpayment of <<Insert Dollar Amount>> has occurred due to the following reason:

<<State reason for overpayment>>

COMAR and/or Operations Manual Citation:

Based off the evidence we have reviewed, our agency believes your overpayment was the result of an Intentional Program Violation. As a result, in addition to collecting your overpayment, we will also pursue imposing a penalty to disqualify you from receiving future benefits. The determination for whether an Intentional Program Violation will be made through an Administrative Disqualification Hearing. Enclosed along with this letter is information regarding that hearing process.

Please contact me at <<insert phone number and/or e-mail address>> within the next fourteen (14) days so that we can meet to review this matter and enter into a payment agreement. Failure to respond to this letter will result in your overpayment being referred to the State of Maryland Central Collections Unit, where an additional seventeen percent (17%) fee will be charged to your repayment amount.

You have the right to appeal this determination. I have included with this letter additional information should you wish to submit an appeal.

Sincerely,

<<Signature>>

OHEP CORR OVERPAYIPV (REV 12/15)

[Attachment M - Promissory Note and Confessed Judgment form](#)



Maryland Department of Human Services
Office of Home Energy Programs
Promissory Note and Confessed Judgment

1. Repayment: The Maker, _____ hereby agrees to the amount of the debt of \$ _____, which was the financial benefit received for the period from _____ to _____, due to _____

Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)	\$ _____
Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)	\$ _____
Arrearage Retirement Assistance (ARA)	\$ _____

The maker agrees to satisfy the debt by paying an installment of at least \$ _____ per month with the first payment due on _____ and continuing each month thereafter on the 15th of each month until the debt is satisfied. All payments will be made by check or money order and made payable to the **Maryland Department of Human Services**. Payment is sent to:

Maryland Department of Human Services
Office of Home Energy Programs Room 239
311 W Saratoga Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

If the maker fails to comply with the agreed monthly payments, it will result in other action being taken such as, but not limited to, referral to the Courts or referral to State Central Collection Unit. Interest may accrue in the event of the breach.

2. Confessed Judgment: In the event of the default, the Maker authorizes irrevocably any attorney admitted to practice before any court of record in the United States on behalf of the Maker to confess judgment against the Maker in the full amount due on the Promissory Note. The Maker agrees that venue shall be proper in Baltimore City or any County of the State of Maryland. The Maker further waives and releases all errors and all rights of the exemption, appeal, stay, execution, inquisition and extension upon any levy or any real property, estate, or personal property to which he or she may otherwise be entitled under the law of the State or Possession in the United States now enforce of which may hereafter be passed.
3. Prepayments: This note may be prepaid in part or in full at the option of Maker.

4. Tax Refund Intercept: This Maker agrees that the terms of this note will not exclude the State from intercepting any Maryland or Federal Income Tax refund due to the Maker and applying said refund to the outstanding balance on this account. No amount seized may substitute for any regular installment.
5. Governing Law: This note, and all Rights and Remedies arising hereunder, shall be interpreted and applied under the laws of the State of Maryland applicable to contracts executed and intended to be performed entirely within the State of Maryland.
6. Waiver: Maker, for him or herself, and its successors and assigns hereby waives any and all requirements for notice, presentment, protest, demand, diligence, notice of dishonor and/or notice of nonpayment to the extent the same, may be waived under applicable law.
7. I certify under penalty that I have read and understand this agreement, that the statements made herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, and I have received a copy.

Maker has read this Note and with full understanding executes this Note this _____
day of _____.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address and Telephone Contact of Maker:

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Attachment N- Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATIVE DISQUALIFICATION HEARING-WAIVER

Case Name and Address:	Local Agency:
	Agency Representative Name:
	Date:
Violator:	Client ID #:

INSTRUCTIONS

Our evidence indicates you are responsible for an Intentional Program Violation. You may request a hearing to argue that this finding is wrong or you may sign this form to waive your right to a hearing.

If you sign this form you understand that:

- You agree that the actions below will be taken.
- You give up your right to a hearing to argue that this action should not be taken

Action to be taken:

- You will be notified when your disqualification will begin.
- During this period, you will not receive benefits/payments.
- You may be eligible for benefits/payments after the disqualification period

—Office of Home Energy Programs—

The entire household the violator lives in is ineligible during the penalty period.

- ☐ First Violation – One Year
☐ Second Violation – Two Years
☐ Third Violation – Permanently
☐ Other: _____

SUMMARY OF INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION —You should be disqualified and not get benefits/payments due to the reason(s) below:

Representative Types summary here

If you choose to waive your right to an Administrative Disqualification Hearing, you must return this form to:

by: _____
Month Day Year

CHECK ONE

IF YOU CHOOSE TO SIGN THIS WAIVER, you must indicate whether or not you admit the facts as stated above.

Please note: You do not have to admit to any of the allegations.

- ☐ I admit to the facts in the summary above. I know the action stated above will be taken if I sign this form for the Office of Home Energy Programs.
- ☐ I do not admit to the facts above but have chosen to sign this form. I know that the action stated above will be taken if I sign this form for the Office of Home Energy Programs.

To discuss this, call: _____ Issue Date: _____

Office of Home Energy Programs Representative: _____

Rights and Responsibilities in an Administrative Disqualification Hearing

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Remain silent. Anything said or signed by you can be used in future administrative or court proceedings.
- Waive your right to a hearing.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- As a result of the Intentional Program Violation (IPV) set out in the summary, anyone receiving benefits/payments and possibly other members of your household will be responsible for repaying any overpayments.
- If the local department does not receive this signed form within 10 days from the issue date on the front, it will refer this case to the Office of Administrative Hearings for a hearing. If you do not attend the hearing, the hearing is held without you. You will have 10 days from the date of the scheduled hearing to present good cause for failure to appear and for not requesting a postponement before the hearing.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE A HEARING, YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

- Look at the evidence that will be used at the hearing, both before and during the hearing.
- Present your own case, or have someone present your case for you, such as a lawyer, friend or relative.
- Ask for a delay of your hearing for up to 30 days, if you need more time to prepare.
- Bring your own witnesses.
- Freely argue your case.
- Question any evidence or statement made against you.
- Bring any evidence supporting your case.

For free legal representation, call The Legal Aid Bureau 500 East Lexington Street, Baltimore, MD 21201
Telephone: (410) 539-5340, (800) 999-8904, (800) 458-5340 (TTY), Fax: (410) 539-1710, <http://www.mdlab.org/>

The Office of Home Energy Programs is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. If you need assistance or need to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact your local office or call 1-800-332-6347.

☐ I have read, or have had read to me, the "Rights and Responsibilities in an Administrative Disqualification Hearing" and received a copy of the Administrative Disqualification Hearing Pamphlet. I understand my rights.

Note: A hearing does not preclude the State or Federal Government from prosecuting the individual for the Intentional Program Violation in a civil or criminal court action, or from collecting any over-issuance(s) 7CFR273.16 (e)(3)(iii)(H)

Violator's Signature

Date Signed

If not Violator – Head of Household/Caretaker Relative Signature

Date Signed

Witness Signature

Date Signed

Attachment 1: Rights and Responsibilities in an Administrative Disqualification Hearing

Attachment 2: Administrative Disqualification Hearing Pamphlet

Attachment O- Disqualification Consent Agreement



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS DISQUALIFICATION CONSENT AGREEMENT

Case Name and Address:	District Office #:
	Assistance Unit #:
	Date:
Violator:	Client ID #:

This Consent Agreement means that you agree that you have intentionally violated the rules of the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP).

Your case was referred to the _____ County States' Attorney's Office (SAO) or the Office of the Attorney General for either misdemeanor or felony criminal prosecution. Instead of prosecuting your case, the States' Attorney's Office/Office of the Attorney General has agreed to accept a signed Disqualification Consent Agreement (DCA) and either the immediate payment of full restitution, or the entry of a Confession of Judgment against you by the court which will order you to pay full restitution to the Department of Human Resources (DHR). DHR may divide your restitution between one or more programs depending on the source of overpayment(s).

Please read this Disqualification Consent Agreement carefully. If you do not understand it, please ask your private attorney, the Office of the Inspector General, a DHR Representative, the State's Attorney, or the Attorney General to explain it to you.

By signing this form you acknowledge that:

- (1) I understand that by consenting to disqualification, I admit that I intentionally violated the rules of the program(s) checked above and that the household in which I lived received more benefits than they were eligible for.
- (2) I understand that consenting to a disqualification will result in complete disqualification of me and a reduction in benefits for the household I lived with for the duration of the disqualification period.
- (3) I have been warned that the disqualification penalties for Intentional Program Violation (IPV) are as follows:

Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP)

- ☐ 1 program year disqualification for the first violation
- ☐ 2 program year disqualification for the second violation
- ☐ Permanent disqualification for the third violation

I understand this is my _____ violation and I consent to be disqualified for _____ months.

I have been warned that I and the remaining members of my household, if any, will be responsible for repaying any benefits I received fraudulently. I understand that by agreeing to disqualification, the disqualification penalty or penalties described above will be imposed and I am waiving my rights to a trial.

Signature of Household Member: _____	Date: _____
Signature of Head of Household: _____	Date: _____
Signature of Judge: _____	Date: _____
Signature of State's Attorney: _____	Date: _____
Signature of Office of the Attorney General: _____	Date: _____

OHEP LEG DISQUAL AGREE (REV 06/18)

[Attachment P- Administrative Disqualification Hearing Phamplet](#)

MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION



ADMINISTRATIVE DISQUALIFICATION HEARING

What do I do if I think your decision is wrong?

You will have an opportunity to present your case during the Administrative Disqualification Hearing.

What is an intentional program violation?

An "intentional program violation" is any of the following actions:

- *Making a false or misleading statement to the local agency, either orally or in writing, to get an energy assistance benefit to which you are not entitled. Even if your energy assistance application is denied, you can be found guilty.*
- *Hiding information or not telling all the facts in order to receive OHEP benefits to which you are not entitled.*

Advance Notice of an Administrative Disqualification Hearing

The hearing officer will provide the date, time and place of the hearing. You will be told at least 30 days before the hearing date. If you ask the hearing officer at least 10 days before the hearing to delay the hearing, the hearing will be rescheduled. The hearing will not be delayed, however, for more than 30 days. You will be told in writing what the charges are against you. You will also receive a summary of the evidence against you. You will be told in writing how and where you can see the evidence.

What is an Administrative disqualification Hearing?

An administrative disqualification hearing is a hearing held to decide if you or a member of your household intentionally violated Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) rules. This is called an "Intentional Program violation." The local OHEP agency will request that the state conduct a hearing when there is evidence that a violation occurred.

What happens at the Administrative Disqualification Hearing?

The hearing office will decide if you are guilty of the "intentional program violation." The hearing officer will make the decision based upon the evidence presented at the hearing. At the hearing, you may:

- *See all the documents and records being used at the hearing.*
- *Present the case or have a legal representative or someone else present the case.*
- *Bring witnesses.*
- *Question any testimony or evidence.*
- *Confront all witnesses and ask them questions.*
- *Present evidence to establish the household member's side of the case.*
- *Remain silent about the charges.*

Do I have to come to the hearing?

If you fail to attend the hearing, the hearing will go on without you. You have 10 days in advance of the scheduled hearing date to contact the Office of Administrative Hearings and show good cause for not attending. If you failed

to attend because you did not receive notice of the scheduled hearing date, you have thirty days from the date of the hearing decision to show good cause for your failure. If the Administrative Law Judge finds that you had a good reason for not attending, the hearing will be rescheduled.

Can I bring someone to help me or speak for me?

You may have someone (lawyer, friend or relative) go to the hearing to present your case for you. If you are not going to be at the hearing, the person attending for you must bring a written statement, signed by you, that says he or she is your representative. If you want legal help at the hearing, you must make arrangements yourself before the hearing. Contact legal aid program to see if you qualify for free legal help.

The Legal Aid Bureau
500 East Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Telephone: (410) 539-5340, (800) 999-8904
(800) 458-5340 (TTY)
Fax: (410) 539-1710
<http://www.mdlab.org/>

How can I prepare for the hearing?

You and your representative have the right to look at your file and the evidence against you, as well as the regulations being applied to your case. You can get a free copy of any documents related to the hearing. Any person acting for you must provide a signed statement from you before looking at your file or getting copies of papers from it. Confidential information which cannot be shown to you will not be used against you at the hearing. We will send you our reasons for the decision you are appealing at least 6 days before your hearing.

Subpoena:

You can ask the Office of Administrative Hearings to subpoena documents or witnesses that would not otherwise be available and that are essential to your case. You must request the subpoena at least five days before the date of the hearing. Please provide the address of the person or document that you want subpoenaed.

At the Hearing:

You have the right to remain silent concerning the charges against you. You may refuse to answer some or all questions. Anything you say or sign concerning the charges may be used against you in the disqualification hearing or in a court of law. You may bring witnesses to testify on your behalf. The Administrative Law Judge may limit the number of witnesses allowed in the hearing room at any one time if space is limited. You and your representative have the right to look at the evidence against you, to give your side of the case without undue interference, to ask questions of the witnesses against you, and to present evidence to support your case. The hearing will be recorded by the Office of Administrative Hearings. After the decision is issued, you can get a copy of the tape by contacting the hearing office.

Waiver of the administrative disqualification hearing:

You can waive your right to an administrative disqualification hearing. The Office of Home Energy Programs will send you a waiver form (Waiver of Administrative Disqualification Hearing) before they refer your case for a hearing. Unless you return the completed/signed waiver no later than the scheduled date of the hearing, the hearing will still be held. If you sign the waiver, you will still be disqualified, but no hearing will be held. Read the waiver form carefully for a complete explanation.

Hearing decision:

You will receive a written administrative hearing decision within 90 days of the date the household was notified of the hearing. There is no further administrative appeal procedure. If you disagree with the administrative disqualification hearing decision, your written decision will tell you how to ask for judicial review to the Circuit Court of Baltimore City, if you reside in the city, or the circuit court of the county in which you reside. If you have questions about judicial review, contact your attorney, local legal aid office or local bar association.

Attachment Q- Administrative Hearing Decision



MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS NOTICE OF DISQUALIFICATION FOR INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION Administrative Hearing Decision-VIOLATOR

Case Name and Address:	Local Agency:
	Agency Representative Name:
	Date:
Violator:	Client ID #:

This notice is to inform you of the outcome of your Administrative Disqualification Hearing (ADH) held on _____. Based on the evidence presented the ADH decision was:

- ☐ Upheld and determined that you committed an intentional program violation.
- ☐ Overturned and determined that you did not commit an intentional program violation.
- ☐ You waived your right to an Administrative Disqualification Hearing. You have been informed that the disqualification penalty will be imposed.

You will be disqualified from participating in the Office of Home Energy Programs for the following period of time:

- ☐ No disqualification penalty imposed due to the determination that you did not commit an intentional program violation
- ☐ 1 program year disqualification for the first violation
- ☐ 2 program year disqualification for the second violation
- ☐ Permanent disqualification for the third violation

The disqualification period will begin on: _____ and end on _____.

You have the right to remain silent. You do not have to say or sign anything. Anything said or signed by you can be used in future administrative or court proceedings. For free legal representation, call your local Office of Home Energy Programs office for information or contact:

The Legal Aid Bureau
500 East Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Telephone:
(410) 539-5340
(800) 999-8904
(800) 458-5340 (TTY)
Fax: (410) 539-1710
<http://www.mdlab.org/>

The Office of Home Energy Programs is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. If you need assistance or need to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact your local office or call 1-800-332-6347.

OHEP LEG IPV (06/18)

Attachment R- Consent to Release Information

CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION

Name of Person for whom information is requested: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security Number: _____ - _____ - _____

- ☐ I hereby authorize: _____ to release the following information to the Maryland Department of Human Services/ Department of Social Services.
- ☐ I hereby authorize the Maryland Department of Human Services/Family Investment Administration- Department of Social Services to release the following information to:

(Please check information to be released)

- ☐ Financial Records (assets, loans, accounts, investments, etc.)
- ☐ Employment/Payroll/Wage records: Dates, Wages, Withholding, etc.)
- ☐ Benefit/Grant Records (Dates, Amounts, Beneficiaries, etc.)
- ☐ Medical records from _____ to _____
(including any physical examination and lab work, mental status evaluation, general progress notes, and transfer or closing summary) for the purpose of verifying a disability.
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

This consent may be revoked at any time except to the extent that action has been taken in reliance upon it.

Unless I specify an earlier date, this consent expires sixty (60) from the date it is signed.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Date this consent expires, if earlier than 60 days: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature (for a child under age 18): _____
The information may be submitted by dropping it off at the Department of Social Services, mail, fax or e-mail to the intended recipient.

This information is used under the guidelines established in The Privacy Act of 1974 5 U.S.C. § 552a As Amended and the Commercial Law Title 14. Miscellaneous Consumer Protection Provisions
SUBTITLE 35. Maryland Personal Information Protection Act. MD. Commercial Law Code Ann. §14-3502 (2012).

Mail to: _____ Attention of: _____

_____ E-mail to: _____

FAX to: _____ Attention of: _____

DHS/FIA 704 (Revised 07-17) Previous editions are obsolete

Attachment S- Point in Time Waiver



MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS Arrearage Retirement Assistance - Point in Time Waiver

Applicant's Name: _____

Client ID #: _____

Address: _____

☐ Check box if this is a new address from original application

I have a termination notice, pending termination due to a past due balance, or my service is currently off. I would like to be screened for an arrearage grant waiver. Since the time of my original OHEP application (check all that apply below):

- ☐ I have had a reduction in income (Attached income documentation for the last 30 days for all household members 18 years and older)

Explain Change: _____

- ☐ There has been a change in my household composition

Explain Change: _____

- ☐ I have a household member age 2 or under or age 60 or over (attach proof of age)

- ☐ I have a household member who is medically fragile (attach Physician's Certification form)

I swear (or affirm) that all information on this declaration is true, correct and complete to the best of my ability, knowledge and belief. I understand that arrearage grants are provided at time of original application, and my request for a waiver to this rule is subject to approval by the Local Administering Agency (LAA) Director, consistent to OHEP program policies & procedures.

I give permission to the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) and/or the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to check all household income, bank accounts, housing expenses, insurances and any other benefits and for other governmental/non-governmental agencies to give and/or receive information from OHEP needed to complete this application.

Maryland has a fraud law. Punishment can occur for not telling the truth when applying for assistance to pay home energy costs.

I understand that I will be penalized by fine and/or imprisonment for giving false statements. My signature below makes this statement binding.

Applicant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Worker's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Updated 4/30/2025

Arrearage Retirement Assistance - Point in Time Waiver Office Verification

Initial Application Information:	
Date of Application:	
Gross Income at Application:	
Number of HH Members:	
Poverty Level	
Benefit Level:	

Current Information:	
Date of Waiver Request:	
Gross Last 30 Days Income:	
Number of HH Members:	
Poverty Level	
Benefit Level:	

Benefit Level	% Federal Poverty Level
Benefit Level 1	0-25%
Benefit Level 2	26%-50%
Benefit Level 3	51%-100%
Benefit Level 4	101% - 150% FPL
Benefit Level 5	151 - 200% FPL
Benefit Level 6	Subsidized Sub Metered
Benefit Level	Over 200% FPL

This is a (check one):

- ☐ Regular Arrearage
☐ Vulnerable Population Waiver
 (Must include Waiver Request & applicable documentation)

Arrearage Grant Amount: _____ (Must include current electric statement)

Name of Supplier: _____

Account Number: _____

For LAA Director only:

- ☐ Waiver is approved.
 ☐ Waiver is denied *

Reason for denial: _____

LAA Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Right to Appeal

*If you disagree with the reason for denial stated on this notice, you have the right to appeal. Request for an appeal must be received by your local OHEP agency within 30 days from the date this notice was signed.

Updated 4/30/2025

Attachment T- Physician Certification form

CERTIFICATION OF SERIOUS ILLNESS OR LIFE SUPPORT AND/OR PERMISSION FOR UTILITY TO RELEASE CONTACT INFORMATION IN A WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCY

This is to certify that _____ is a resident at:
Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Relationship to Customer: _____
Utility Account Number: _____

Note: This form consists of two sections which provide different notices/approvals.
You may complete and submit either or both sections as applicable, to your utility
company.

SECTION ONE: Certification of Serious Illness or Life Support.

THIS SECTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN OR CERTIFIED NURSE PRACTITIONER ONLY.

I hereby certify that termination of electric and/or gas service will either (check
applicable box or boxes):

- ☐ Aggravate an existing serious illness¹
or
☐ Prevent the use of life support equipment by the person named above²

Physician or Certified Nurse Practitioner's Name _____
(Please print)

Title: _____

License No. _____

Address: _____

Office Number _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail Address _____

Physician or Certified Nurse Practitioner's Signature: _____

PLEASE NOTE:

Within 30 days of submitting this certificate, you must enter into an agreement with your
utility for the payment of unpaid and current bills to continue service.

¹ "Serious illness" means an illness certifiable by a licensed physician to be such that termination of service
during the period of time covered by the certificate would be especially dangerous to the health of the
person certified to be seriously ill.

² "Life-support equipment" means any electric or gas energy-using device certified by a licensed physician
as being essential to prevent, or to provide relief from, a serious illness or to sustain the life of the customer
or an occupant of the premises.

SECTION TWO: Permission for utility company to release contact information in a weather-related emergency.

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED IF YOU WANT TO GRANT YOUR UTILITY COMPANY PERMISSION TO RELEASE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOU IN THE EVENT OF A WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCY³

I, _____, grant my utility company _____
Print Name Name of Company

my permission to provide any local, state, or federal government emergency responder agency the following contact information, in order that the agency may provide assistance to me in the event of a weather-related emergency;

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Utility Account Number: _____

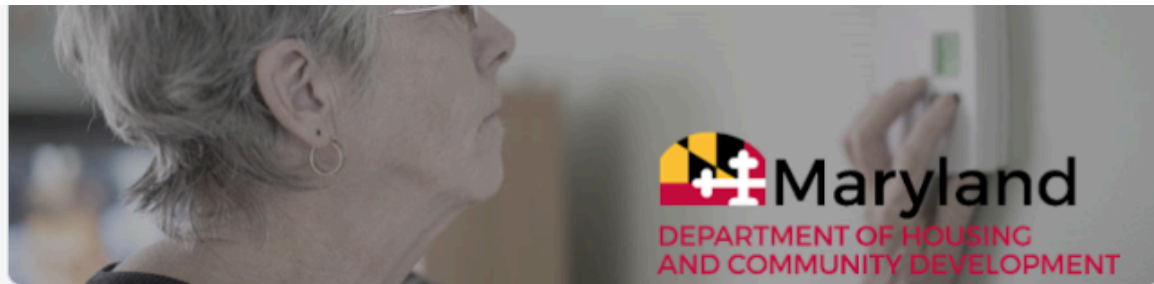
Printed Name: _____

Customer's Signature: _____

³This section, if signed, will allow your utility company to release your contact information to any local, state, or federal government emergency responder agencies. Release of this information is solely for the purpose of verifying your well-being and providing assistance to you in the event of a weather-related emergency, as possible. Submitting this form will not provide you with priority in restoration of electricity service.

Form PSC-801
Orig. 11/02/05 Rev. 08/07/15

Attachment U - DHCD Referral Form



DHCD Critical Service Referral Form

Please complete this form when you would like to refer a client for the MEAP program and/or the Critical Medical Needs Program.

Program information and eligibility requirements are shown below.

****If a client does not have a certified application:****

- The client will need to submit an Energy Program application before they can begin with our programs.
- The application link is below. If this is your first time accessing it, you can click the link to request access.
- You can submit this referral form once the application has been completed and submit to DHCD by the client. Doing so will help us know that you would like the client assigned to your team.

Application link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V8udcvWXqptP47lXGjnt3sRLFcZLBkQC/view?usp=sharing>

Most Recent EmPOWER Income Guidelines:

<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Energy-Home-Repair/Pages/Homeowner-Grants/EmPOWER.aspx>

Most Recent MEAP Income Guidelines: <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Energy-Home-Repair/Pages/Homeowner-Grants/MEAP.aspx>

wanda.levenson2@maryland.gov [Switch account](#)



* Indicates required question

Email *

Your email

Program Information

MEAP Program Information & Eligibility:

- The MEAP Program repairs or replaces existing non-functioning heating, cooling, and hot water heating systems. Systems are serviced year-round, but certain system types are prioritized at specific times of the year (see dates listed below).
- **Eligibility**
 - Must be income qualified
- **System Priority Time-frames**
 - Heating systems, November 1st – March 31st (begins October 1st for Garrett County only)
 - Cooling systems, June 1st – September 30th

EmPOWER Critical Medical Needs Program Information & Eligibility:

- Applicants with critical medical needs (CMN) may be eligible for “fast tracking” to an energy audit and project completion. The CMN process enables applicants with documented medical conditions to receive help on an accelerated basis.
 - The assigned network partner must contact the lead within the same business day of assignment, and at a minimum, the auditor must assess the measures marked as critical for this client (“crisis measures”), which may include a refrigerator, HVAC system, or hot water heater.
 - **Eligibility**
 - Must be income qualified
 - A copy of a physician’s certification of the medical condition must be forwarded to DHCD’s intake team.
-

Is the referred client currently income-certified? *

They should currently receive Energy Assistance through OHEP or recently have been certified via an Energy Programs application. If this is a MEAP client, their certification date MUST cover the season of their requested service (dates listed above). If unsure about current income-certification, email dhcd.lieep@maryland.gov or complete the [Admin Request Form](#). If the client is not certified, have the client complete an Energy Program application (link above) before submitting this form.


☐ Yes, they are currently income-certified.

Next

Clear form

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

Attachment V- Crisis Declaration Form

 MARYLAND OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS CRISIS SEASON DECLARATION FORM	RETURN THIS FORM TO:
---	--------------------------------------

Instructions: Applicants who are not able to provide a complete application in order to determine eligibility must sign this form. Applicants who cannot provide proof of all gross income received in the last 30 days for all household members may declare the income on this form. Income includes but is not limited to: wages, self-employment, Social Security, TCA/TDAP, Unemployment monetary gifts and loans. This form is only to be used during crisis season (November 1 – March 31).

Applicant's Name: _____

Applicant's Client ID #: _____ Local agency will provide

Initial each statement below that is true:

_____ I certify that I have a crisis as defined on my OHEP application under Section 3 – Crisis Information.

_____ My household is income eligible based on the OHEP guidelines for the past (30) day period from _____ to _____

_____ My household's total gross income (before taxes are deducted) received in the last 30 days was \$ _____.

_____ At this time, I still need to provide additional documentation in order to determine eligibility for OHEP benefits. I have been given a Request for Additional Information for the items I need to provide.

_____ I understand that if I do not provide all information requested to complete my application within 15 days and prove that I am eligible for the crisis benefit I received, I will be required to pay the benefit back to the Office of Home Energy Programs.

I swear (or affirm) that all information on this declaration is true, correct and complete to the best of my ability, knowledge and belief.

I give permission to the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) and/or the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to check all household income, bank accounts, housing expenses, insurances and any other benefits and for other governmental/non-governmental agencies to give and/or receive information from OHEP needed to complete this application.

Maryland has a fraud law. Punishment can occur for not telling the truth when applying for assistance to pay home energy costs.

I understand that I will be penalized by fine and/or imprisonment for giving false statements. My signature below makes this statement binding.

When this form is completed by other than the applicant, the signer(s) agree to report to the local agency any changes of which he/she is aware in the financial circumstances of the applicant or in his/her relationship to the applicant.

_____	_____	_____
Applicant's Name	Applicant's Signature	Date Signed

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date and Time Received: _____

Reviewed & Approved: _____
Worker's Signature Date

Attachment W- Office of Administrative Hearing/Transmittal

**SEND TO: OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW BUILDING
11101 GILROY ROAD, UNIT B/CLERK'S OFFICE
HUNT VALLEY, MARYLAND 21031-1301
(410) 229-4288**

TRANSMITTAL FOR DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES (DHS)
FAMILY INVESTMENT/SOCIAL SERVICES (FIA/SSA)/CCS

Department of Social Services for

City/County/Region

Location

Contact Person:

Telephone Number:

Date Appeal Filed:

Client's Name:

Agency File No.: (if any)

Please docket the attached appeal. The local department will be represented at the hearing by:

Name:

Title:

Address:

=====

Please Circle/Check Appeal Category:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Food Stamps/BNAP | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 In Home Aide (IHA) | <input type="checkbox"/> 33 Protective Services for Children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Disqualification Referral (IPV) | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 Kinship Guardianship | <input type="checkbox"/> 34 Family Support Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 TDAP | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 35 Refugee Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) | <input type="checkbox"/> 22A Private Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 36 Protective Services (Juris. Issue) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Mandatory State Supp | <input type="checkbox"/> 33 Adoption | <input type="checkbox"/> 37 Independent Living Prep. Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 PAA | <input type="checkbox"/> 33A Pre-Adoption Placement | <input type="checkbox"/> 38 MD Office of Home Energy Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 EAFC | <input type="checkbox"/> 33B Adoption Subsidies | <input type="checkbox"/> 38A MD Energy Assist. Program Overpayment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Burial Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> 34 F.C. License of Agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> 38B MD Energy Assistance Program IPV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Access to Public Records | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 F.C. DHS Issued License | <input type="checkbox"/> 51 CAN Contested Case - Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Legal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 36 Voluntary Placement (out-of home care) | <input type="checkbox"/> 52 CAN Contested Case - Neglect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 Homeless Program | <input type="checkbox"/> 38 CARE Provider | <input type="checkbox"/> 53 CAN Remand Untimely Filing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 Respite Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 39 Adult Protective Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 54 Jurisdictional Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 CARE Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 SBI Reimbursement | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 IPV - FSP/BNAP Trafficking IPV - |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 Adult F.C. & CARE License | <input type="checkbox"/> 31 Overpayment - Public Assistance Program | <input type="checkbox"/> 58 TCA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Services to Adults & Adult P.S. | <input type="checkbox"/> 32 Residential Child Care Facility | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 IPV - TDAP |

PLEASE ATTACH APPEAL LETTER AND ANY CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO CASE

OAH-CO-B1
REVISED 6/2020

H
ITE

DSS COPY
YELLOW

EXTRA COPY
PINK

Please include the following contacts in all hearing notice correspondence:

DHS CUSTOMER

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

LOCAL DEPT HEARING REPRESENTATIVE

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

OIG INVESTIGATOR (IF APPLICABLE)


Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

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EXTRA COPY
PINK

Attachment X- Logon Request Form

 STATE OF MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR HUMAN SERVICES myDHR ACCESS REQUEST FORM		Print Form
ACTION: <input type="radio"/> ADD <input type="radio"/> UPDATE <input type="radio"/> DELETE		
EMPLOYEE INFO:		
NAME: _____	DATE OF REQUEST: _____	CURRENT LOGON ID: _____
JOB CLASSIFICATION: _____	ADDRESS: _____	
TELEPHONE: _____ FAX: _____	COUNTY: _____	LOCATION CODE: _____
EMAIL: _____	EMPLOYED WITH: <input type="radio"/> STATE <input type="radio"/> OTHER SPECIFY: _____	
REQUESTED ACCESS:		GROUPS:
SITE CODE: _____	<input type="radio"/> COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBO)	
CBO NAME: _____	<input type="radio"/> FIA ADMINISTRATOR	
myDHR GROUP: _____	<input type="radio"/> LDSS / LHD / OHEP	
	<input type="radio"/> LONG TERM CARE USER	
	<input type="radio"/> OTHS SECURITY	
	<input type="radio"/> OTHS SYSTEM SUPPORT LEVEL 1	
	<input type="radio"/> PROGRAM EVALUATIONS	
	<input type="radio"/> SSA MANAGER USER	
Link to myDHR Group(s) on DHS Knowledge Base http://kb.dhs.maryland.gov/office-of-technology-for-human-services/security-division/security-forms/		
SUPERVISOR:	SECURITY MONITOR:	OTHS USE ONLY
SIGNATURE: _____	SIGNATURE: _____	LOGON ID: _____ DATE: _____
NAME (PRINT): _____	NAME (PRINT): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> ADDED <input type="checkbox"/> UPDATED <input type="checkbox"/> REJECTED <input type="checkbox"/> DELETED
FAX: _____ TELEPHONE: _____	FAX: _____ TELEPHONE: _____	COMMENTS: _____
DATE: _____	DATE: _____	SIGNATURE: _____

DHS OTHS 6725. Retain a copy of this document for your records. Last Revision 10/2019

Attachment Y- FIA Document Disposal guidelines

 Department of Human Resources 311 West Saratoga Street Baltimore MD 21201	Family Investment Administration ACTION TRANSMITTAL
Control Number: 13-14	Effective Date: Upon Receipt Issuance Date: August 5, 2013

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE OFFICERS
DEPUTY / ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: ROSEMARY MALONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: ECMS RECORD RETENTION GUIDELINES

PROGRAM AFFECTED: ALL PROGRAMS

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY:

All local departments are now using the OnBase document imaging system and are experiencing its many benefits. This Action Transmittal provides additional guidance for electronic document retention for the Family Investment Administration's (FIA) programs and associated Medical Assistance programs.

Maryland Commercial Law Code Annotated § 21-111 provides that an electronic record satisfies the retention requirement, if the electronic version is accurate and remains accessible for later reference.

ACTION REQUIRED:

What to Scan

1. Scan all customer documents, including any paper applications and the Rights and Responsibilities form.
2. Scan all customer verification.
 - a. **Do not retain or shred any of the customer's original documents in a paper case record. Return them to the customer after scanning them.**
 - b. This includes copies of birth certificates; marriage licenses, divorce decrees, and other documents that the customer provided for the paper case record.

What to Retain in Hard Copy

1. Retain any documents that pertain to an appeal/fair hearing, administrative hearing; court ordered audit, disqualification or intentional program violation (IPV) decision.
 - a. Send the paper copies of Fair Hearing requests (appeal forms) to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). Scan the hard copy of the appeals form into OnBase prior to sending it to OAH.
 - b. The procedure for providing hardcopies of the hearing information to the customer and Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) has not changed.
2. Retain the original signed hard copy of the DHR-312 Vendor Payment form after scanning it into OnBase. Send the hard copy to Finance to process for payment.

Retention Schedules

The standards established for retaining hard copies of case records and their contents apply to retaining electronic documents within the OnBase system. FIA staff must follow the schedules for FIA as well as for DHMH as they apply to the retention of associated medical assistance program documents. For Long Term Care MA cases, the documents must be retained for a minimum of 6 years.

Intentional Program Violation (IPV) should not be retired. Each IPV penalty builds on the prior penalty (with the exception of the 10 year and permanent penalties) and the documentation needs to be there to justify the action being taken.

FIA Electronic Retention Schedule

COMAR 07.07.07.07 (Record Retention) provides for retaining DHR records for the following periods:

- A. Three years from the closing of the case
- B. At the time of closing of any pending audit covering the records
- C. Three years after the latest federal tax refund offset; or
- D. Five years after a child support payment has been remitted to the Comptroller as abandoned property

DHMH Electronic Retention Schedule

The basis for the LTC retention is the DHR/DHMH Memorandum of Agreement.

The Medical Assistance programs scan records to Maryland State Archives standards.

- A. Retain hard-copy for one year, and then destroy.
- B. Retain all electronic records in secure files for six years and until audit requirements are satisfied (may exceed 6 years in an audit), then destroy.

Please refer to the attachment with the required retention schedule for all case records and documents

ACTION DUE: Upon receipt

INQUIRIES:

Please direct questions regarding this AT to Jeanne Cooper at 410-767-7116 or jeanne.cooper@maryland.gov or Victoria Rideout at 410-767-4037 or victoria.rideout@maryland.gov.

**Family Investment Administration
Guide for the Retention of Electronic Documents**

Cases with associated to Medical Eligibility*		Retention Schedule
All Medical Assistance Applications and Redeterminations	Form letters	*Retain all documents for Medical Assistance Cases for six (6) years. <i>(If there is an associated MA case with the FIA cases—all documents related to the associated programs must be retained for 6 years)</i>
Notices	Verification	
Medical Documentation	Correspondence	
Documents used to establish, delete, correct or maintain medical eligibility		
Legal Documents		Retention Schedule
Fair Hearing/Appeal Documents	Administrative Subpoena	All legal documents remain a permanent part of the record. DO NOT PURGE
Attorney Correspondence	Attorney Representation	
Birth Certificates	Child Custody Order/Adoption Decree	
All information related to an Intentional Program Violation or welfare fraud finding	Marriage License	
Name Change Decree	Power of Attorney	
Referrals	Social Security Cards	
Immigration Documentation	Mistaken Identity Claim Letter	
Correspondence/No Associated MA Programs		Retention Schedule
Authorization to Release Information	Appointment Letters	3 years
Change Form (491)	Closing Letter from Other State	3 Years
Community Action Letter	Correspondence-Custodial Parent General	3 Years
Correspondence-from Govt. Agency (dependent upon content may be permanent)	Customer Notes	3 Years
Employer Correspondence	Employee Termination	3 Years
Military Correspondence (dependent upon content may be permanent)	Quality Control (request to disagree, federal disagrees)	3 Years
Request For Information (1052)	Returned Mail	3 Years
Third party permission		18 Months
		3 Years

Verification Receipts	18 Months
X02 Decision Letter	6 Years
FISCAL /No Associated MA Programs	Retention Schedule
FIA Overpayment or until paid if on recoupment	3 Years
Intentional Program Violation (IPV)	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
FIA Vendor Form	3 Years
DHR 312 Vendor Payment	3 Years
Authorization For Reimbursement of Interim Assistance (Form 340)	Retain until the SSI decision has been made or the customer begins to receive SSI
Verification/ No Associated MA Programs	
Address Verification	18 Months
Deficit Budget Form	18 Months
Employment Letter /Paystubs	3 Years
School Verification Documents	18 Months
Child Support/Alimony	18 Months
Day Care	18 Months
Health Insurance Premium	18 Months
Shelter	18 Months
Utility	18 Months
Bank Statement	18 Months
Burial	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
Investments	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
Life Insurance Policy	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
Misc. Assets	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
Real Estate	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
Trust Funds	PERMANENT-DO NOT PURGE
Vehicles	3 Years
Disability Verification (such as FIA-500)	3 Years
Redeterminations/ No Associated MA Programs	Retention Schedule
CIF Redet	18 Months
6-Month Benefit Review Form	18 Months
Other Redet Form	18 Months
Medical Assistance Redeterminations	6 Years
Agreement /No Associated MA Programs	Retention Schedule
WAG	18 Months past the end of the WAG
EA	18 Months
Representative Payee	18 Months past the end of the agreement
Work Program/ No Associated MA Programs	Retention Schedule
Conciliations/Sanctions	Permanent
Family Independence Plan	Permanent
Incentive Information	18 Months
Assessments	Permanent
Timesheet	3 Years
Vendor Referral	3 Years

Work Program Letter	3 Years
Work Schedule	3 Years
Referral Documents/ No Associated MA Programs	Retention Schedule
EBT Referral	18 Months
Community Referral	18 Months
Domestic Violence	PERMANENT –DO NOT PURGE
Informal Child Care Provider	3 Years
Formal Child Care Provider	3 Years
Office of the Inspector General (OIG)	PERMANENT –DO NOT PURGE
Service Referral	3 Years
Substance Abuse/screening	3 Years
Long Term Care Documents	Retention Schedule
Allowance Worksheet	All LTC Documents remain a permanent part of the record. DO NOT PURGE
Consent to Release Info	
Cost of Care/Available Income	
Disenrollment or discharge	
Eligibility Notes	
Excess Resources Reimbursement	
Home Equity Value	
Income and Shelter Expense	
Info to Verify Eligibility	
Joint Bank Account Ownership	
Less than 30 Day Stay	
Lien Information	
Life Insurance Information Request	
LTC Patient Activity	
MMIS Information	
Non-covered Services Request	
Physician Documents	
Representative's Statement	
Resource Consideration in Continuing Eligibility	
Resource Evaluation for Married Couples	
Review MA Eligibility for SSI	
LTC Redet	
Statement of Intent	
Transfer/Disposal of Assets	
Trust/Document Review	

Attachment Z- Outreach Log

OHEP OUTREACH LOG									
AGENCY:									
MONTH:									
ACTIVITY									
Date	Type of Outreach Activity (i.e., Presentation, Media, Mailings, Expos, Table Displays, etc)	# of Contacts Made (i.e. People in attendance)	# of Applications Distributed	# of Applications Collected	Type of Group or Organization (i.e. Aging, Disability, Children, etc)	City or Town where Activity took place	Costs (i.e. Mileage, staff time, postal cost)	Outreach Cost Not Included in Approved OHEP Outreach Funds	Total Cost
	TOTALS	0					\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Comments:									

Attachment AA - MCCU Debt Referral

DEBT REFERRAL

Central Collection Unit
300 W. Preston Street, Room 500
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Tel: (410) 767-1228

Bankruptcy (Complete if applicable Information attached)		
Case Number _____		
Date Filed _____		
State where filed	_____	_____
Chapter 7	13	11

1. CCU Client# (REQUIRED ENTRY) _____
2. Debtor _____
(LAST NAME) (Business Name) (FIRST NAME) MI
3. Debtor Address _____ ☐ Bad Address

City State Zip Code
4. Telephone Number _____ 5. Date of Birth _____
6. Type of Debtor (Check Box) ☐ Individual ☐ Partnership ☐ Corporation
7. Social Security Number _____ (If #2 above is an individual)
8. Maryland Driver's License Number (If Known) _____
9. Taxpayer Identification Number (FEIN) (If Applicable) _____
10. Debt Amount
a. Principal _____ b. Interest _____
c. Collection Fee of 17% will be computed by CCU _____ d. Other _____
11. Agency Account Number (Client Reference) _____
12. Interest Rate (If Applicable) _____ % 13. Effective Date _____
Mo. Day Yr.
14. Nature/Cause of Debt (Include Date of Debt/Service)

15. Agency Contact Person

Name Date of Referral Phone Number

☐ Check here if additional information is on back.
DEM-CCU-33-97

Attachment AB - Advance Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF HOME ENERGY PROGRAMS
ADVANCE NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DISQUALIFICATION HEARING

Case Name and Address:	Local Agency:
	Agency Representative Name:
	Date:
Violator:	Client ID #:

The [redacted] has recently completed an investigation of your Office of Home Energy Programs application.

The department believes you or a household member committed an intentional violation of program rules because:

[redacted]

The department has the following evidence to support the case against your household:

[redacted]

You or your representative may look at this evidence at the local Office of Home Energy Programs agency by calling your case manager to arrange a convenient time. We have included a pamphlet to provide you with additional information.

An Administrative Disqualification Hearing will be scheduled to examine the facts of your case. You can WAIVE your right to an Administrative Disqualification Hearing. If you choose to sign the waiver, you must indicate on the waiver whether or not you admit to the facts as presented in the statement above.

You may mail the waiver to:

[redacted]

Note: A hearing does not preclude the State or Federal Government from prosecuting the individual for the Intentional Program Violation in a civil or criminal court action, or from collecting any over-issuance(s) 7CFR273.16 (e)(3)(iii)(H)

The Office of Home Energy Programs is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. If you need assistance or need to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact your local office or call 1-800-332-6347.

If it is found that you intentionally violated a program rule, you will be disqualified from receiving benefits for the period shown below.

- ☐ 1 Program Year for the 1st violation
- ☐ 2 Program Years for the 2nd violation
- ☐ Permanently for the 3rd violation
- ☐ Other (Specify) _____

It is important that you or your representative be at the hearing. Otherwise a decision will be based solely on information provided by the Office of Home Energy Programs. If you are unable to attend the scheduled hearing, you must contact the local Office of Home Energy Programs at least 10 days in advance of the hearing date to get the hearing rescheduled. If you or your representative fails to appear at a scheduled hearing, you must contact the local Office of Home Energy Programs within 10 days after the date of the hearing and present a good reason for not attending in order to receive a new hearing. If you choose to waive your right to an Administrative Disqualification Hearing, you must return the enclosed form by _____

Month Day Year

For free legal representation call:

The Legal Aid Bureau
500 East Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Telephone:
(410) 539-5340
(800) 999-8904
(800) 458-5340 (TTY)
(410) 539-1710-FAX
<http://www.mdlab.org/>

Attachment 1: Administrative Disqualification Hearing Waiver

Attachment 2: Administrative Disqualification Hearing Pamphlet

Attachment AC - OAH Transmittal Form for DHS

**SEND TO: OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW BUILDING
11101 GILROY ROAD, UNIT B/CLERK'S OFFICE
HUNT VALLEY, MARYLAND 21031-1301
(410) 229-4288**

TRANSMITTAL FOR DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES (DHS)
FAMILY INVESTMENT/SOCIAL SERVICES (FIA/SSA)/CCS

Department of Social Services for

City/County/Region

Location

Contact Person:

Telephone Number:

Date Appeal Filed:

Client's Name:

Agency File No.: (If any)

Please docket the attached appeal. The local department will be represented at the hearing by:

Name:

Title:

Address:

=====

Please Circle/Check Appeal Category:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Food Stamps/SNAP | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 In Home Aide (IHA) | <input type="checkbox"/> 33 Protective Services for Children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Disqualification Referral (IPV) | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 Kinship Guardianship | <input type="checkbox"/> 34 Family Support Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 TDAP | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 35 Refugee Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) | <input type="checkbox"/> 22A Private Foster Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 36 Protective Services (juris. issue) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Mandatory State Supp | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 Adoption | <input type="checkbox"/> 37 Independent Living Prep. Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 PAA | <input type="checkbox"/> 23A Pre-Adoption Placement | <input type="checkbox"/> 38 MD Office of Home Energy Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 EAFC | <input type="checkbox"/> 23B Adoption Subsidies | <input type="checkbox"/> 38A MD Energy Assist. Program Overpayment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Burial Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 F.C. License of Agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> 38B MD Energy Assistance Program IPV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 Access to Public Records | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 F.C. DHS Issued License | <input type="checkbox"/> 51 CAN Contested Case - Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 Legal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 Voluntary Placement (out-of home care) | <input type="checkbox"/> 52 CAN Contested Case - Neglect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 Homeless Program | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 CARE Provider | <input type="checkbox"/> 53 CAN Remand Untimely Filing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 Respite Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 Adult Protective Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 Jurisdictional Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 CARE Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 SSI Reimbursement | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 IPV - FSP/SNAP Trafficking IPV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 Adult F.C. & CARE License | <input type="checkbox"/> 31 Overpayment - Public Assistance Program | <input type="checkbox"/> 58 TCA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 Services to Adults & Adult P.S. | <input type="checkbox"/> 32 Residential Child Care Facility | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 IPV - TDAP |

PLEASE ATTACH APPEAL LETTER AND ANY CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO CASE

OAH-CO-B1
REVISED 6/2020

OAH
WHITE

DSS COPY
YELLOW

EXTRA COPY
PINK

Updated May 2025

Please include the following contacts in all hearing notice correspondence:

DHS CUSTOMER

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

LOCAL DEPT HEARING REPRESENTATIVE

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

OIG INVESTIGATOR (IF APPLICABLE)

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

