

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Changes to Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program Eligibility

MADISON— In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Department of Administration (DOA) has adjusted the eligibility requirements for residents who are seeking heating and electric assistance through the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP).

Eligibility will be now based on the household's previous month of income, rather than the former requirement of the previous three months income. This move was made to ensure those who are recently affected by the COVID-19 response are able to receive assistance quickly. Additional eligibility requirements are available here: [LINK](#).

The majority of Wisconsin households currently utilize natural gas; however, there are still homes throughout the state that employ alternative fuels such as wood, propane, and heating oil. WHEAP is able to provide financial assistance to households for most fuel types, with payments being made directly to heat and electric suppliers on behalf of an eligible household.

Today's announcement is a continuation of Wisconsin's efforts to ensure the burden of monthly energy costs is limited for individuals and families who are affected by the COVID-19 crisis. A parallel effort to support affected families was made by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) on March 22, 2020 when they directed regulated utilities to stop utility disconnection for nonpayment for all customers.

Residents can apply for WHEAP assistance through county social/human service offices, tribal governments, and private non-profit agencies. Call toll-free **1-866-HEATWIS (432-8947)** or visit the [Where to Apply](#) page for the local agency in your area.

If you are recently unemployed, received a lay off or disconnection notice and are having difficulty paying your energy bills, the DOA Home Energy Plus program may have additional resources available. Crisis assistance, emergency fuel assistance, and emergency heating system repair and replacement for eligible homeowners may also be available based on household need. Additional resource information is here: [LINK](#).

DOA will continue reviewing strategies to limit COVID-19's spread based on guidance from the CDC and DHS Public Health Officials. All individuals are encouraged to do the following:

Stay at home as much as possible. Cancel events and avoid groups, gatherings, play dates, and nonessential appointments.

- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people, when possible.
- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching face, eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and cough and sneeze into your elbow.
- Continue to visit the Department of Health Services [COVID-19 informational website](#), This comprehensive website has resources, updates, and answers to commonly asked questions about COVID-19.

More information regarding the state-wide COVID-19 response is also available [here](#).

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