

Home Energy Assistance Program Offers Additional Funding to Dutchess County Residents

Emergency Funds are Now Available

POUGHKEEPSIE – Dutchess County residents who need help to pay their home heating expenses can apply for Dutchess County HEAP Plus, a new program funded by Dutchess County Government and administered in partnership with United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region.

Federal funding for basic HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) has been reduced this year, with eligible individuals/families receiving two heating benefit payments instead of three. Dutchess County's new HEAP Plus program provides \$750,000 in funding to assist vulnerable families and seniors who may not be able to pay their heating bills due to the reduction in HEAP benefits. Additionally, assistance is also available for residents who are slightly above the federal HEAP eligibility requirements.

Assistance available:

- Dutchess County residents previously eligible for up to two payments through federal HEAP can apply for an additional emergency payment through the Dutchess County HEAP Plus program.
- Dutchess County residents whose income falls between 60-80% of the average median income can apply for a one-time payment for home heating assistance.
- Dutchess County residents whose income falls between 60%-80% of the average median income can apply for furnace repair and replacement assistance.

Specific income requirements are available at:

<http://www.uwdor.org/sites/uwdor.org/files/DutchessHEAPsheet.jpg>

Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services Commissioner Robert Allers said, "Thanks to the initiative of County Executive Marc Molinaro and the support of the Dutchess County Legislature, this new program helps to fill the gap created due to cutbacks by the Federal Government to its Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and expands eligibility to those who may be struggling to pay their heating bill but do not meet the federal income requirements. We are pleased to partner with United Way on this important program."

"Partnering with the Dutchess County Government reinforces United Way's commitment to energy initiatives that benefit our entire community," said Donald Hammond, United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region President and CEO. "With recent record-low temperatures affecting our region, it is critical that our neighbors who are struggling get the help they need in order to keep their homes warm and their families safe."

For more information or for applications, residents should contact the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services at 60 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 or call (845) 486-3249.

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