



John R. Kasich
Governor

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Director

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HEAP Summer Crisis Program Begins June 1 *Up to \$250 available for eligible households*

Columbus – Due to the mild Ohio winter and the anticipation of more days of extreme heat this summer, the Ohio Department of Development will begin the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Summer Crisis Program on June 1, 2012 instead of July 1, 2012. The program will run through August 31, 2012. Administered by the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Community Assistance, HEAP assists eligible households with cooling costs.

"This year we are starting the HEAP Summer Crisis Program early as well as expanding eligibility," said Christiane Schmenk, Director of the Ohio Department of Development. "Assisting Ohioans who are vulnerable to heat stroke or other heat related problems due to their age or medical condition is an important part of our mission to support Ohio's communities. This program helps provide a safe and healthy living environment for our most vulnerable citizens during the hot summer days."

The HEAP Summer Crisis Program provides assistance to low-income households with an elderly member (60 years or older), or households that can provide physician documentation that cooling assistance is needed for a household member's health. This includes a person with breathing problems such as lung disease; COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease); or asthma, which affects more than 15 million Americans a year, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Additionally, the HEAP Summer Crisis Program has expanded eligibility for 2012 to include those households facing disconnection of electric service or whose electricity is already terminated.

Eligible households can receive a total benefit of \$250 to purchase an air conditioner or fan, and/or assist in the payment of an electric bill. Residents are encouraged to work with their local community action agency, job and family services, and faith-based organizations for additional assistance.

Last year, more than 40,000 Ohio families were assisted through the HEAP Summer Crisis Program. The gross income of eligible households must be at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines listed below:

Size of Household - Income

- 1 - up to \$22,340
- 2 - up to \$30,260
- 3 - up to \$38,180
- 4 - up to \$46,100
- 5 - up to \$54,020
- 6 - up to \$61,940

For households with more than six members, add \$7,920 for each additional member.

Ohioans needing more information about the program can call the toll-free HEAP hotline at (800) 282-0880. The hearing impaired may dial (800) 686-1557 for assistance. For information on the HEAP Summer Crisis Program, please visit www.energyhelp.ohio.gov.

Also, an important reminder for those Ohioans receiving assistance through the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Plus): It is crucial that participants re-verify their income yearly with a local PIPP Plus provider. Clients who fail to re-verify will be dropped from the program. PIPP Plus standardizes year-round utility payments, making it easier for customers to budget and helping good-paying customers get rid of old utility debt and avoid accruing new debt. For more information on PIPP Plus, please visit <http://development.ohio.gov/Community/ocs/pippplus/>.

*The Ohio Department of Development's **Office of Community Assistance** administers the HEAP Winter and Summer Crisis Programs, the redesigned electric Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP Plus), and other state and federally funded programs that benefit Ohio individuals and families. The **Office of Community Assistance**, housed with the Community Services Division, coordinates its programs to form a comprehensive strategy to build stronger, healthier communities throughout the state.*

*Working with our partners across business, state and local governments, academia, and the nonprofit sector, the **Ohio Department of Development** works to support business attraction and retention efforts by providing targeted investments that assist in job creation, as well as provides assistance and services to Ohio's communities and individuals. Engaged every day in marketing, innovating, investing, and collaborating, the **Ohio Department of Development** works to accelerate and support the teamwork that is necessary for success by providing financial, informational, and technical assistance to those making an investment in Ohio's future.*

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