



Maryland Energy Assistance Funding During Federal Shutdown

Questions and Answers

Updated November 7, 2025

On November 7, Governor Moore issued [Executive Order 01.01.2025.24](#) providing that Maryland will continue to issue Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), Gas Arrearage Retirement Assistance (GARA), and Winter Crisis benefits to customers. This is in response to the federal government's prolonged shutdown, now the longest in the nation's history, and the failure of the Trump Administration to provide funding for the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2026 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) beginning on October 1, 2025. We project that the new Maryland funds will allow over 13,000 eligible Maryland households to receive November benefits to continue to heat their homes and power essential household and medical equipment.

Due to increased heating costs and demands, Marylanders already submitted over 90,000 MEAP applications during the first four months of the State's 2026 fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2025. That is nearly 25% higher than the approximately 72,000 applications submitted during the same time period last year.

In addition to the negative impacts of the federal government shutdown, which are exacerbating the needs of Marylanders seeking assistance with utility payments, heating demand and the average MEAP benefit amount is expected to increase in November as the weather gets colder.

Maryland used LIHEAP funds carried over from FFY 2025 to pay MEAP benefits in October. Federal funds were not released to cover MEAP funds for the month of November. The funds announced today will ensure a continuation of benefits through the month of November.

Is the federal government funding November LIHEAP benefits?

The Trump Administration has not provided LIHEAP funds due to the federal government shutdown that began October 1, 2025. We used previously received federal LIHEAP funds to disburse October MEAP benefits. We have not received any federal guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on this matter.

Will MEAP customers receive their full expected benefits?

Yes, customers will continue to receive their full MEAP benefits through the month of November.

Will MEAP benefits be delivered on time?

Yes, MEAP applications will continue to be processed with benefits issued weekly to utility and fuel providers for approved households.

What if I have a pending MEAP application or am considering applying for MEAP?

We continue to accept applications and process them according to standard eligibility. Customers who complete November applications will be eligible to receive November benefits. Marylanders in need of utility assistance should apply for energy assistance at MarylandBenefits.gov or through their [Local OHEP agency](#).

Will other home energy benefits (such as the Electric Universal Service Program or EUSP) be impacted?

No. EUSP and electric arrearage benefits continue to be processed and issued without interruption.

Will other cash benefits be impacted?

No. Other direct cash assistance programs like Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP), Public Assistance to Adults (PAA), Emergency Assistance to Families with Children (EAFIC), and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) will be delivered on schedule and are not currently impacted by the federal government shutdown.

Are there other utility assistance resources people can access for help during this time?

Yes, customers can go to the following community partners for additional utility resources:

- Fuel Fund of Maryland: A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing financial grants specifically to eligible households at risk of shut-off in the BGE service territory and for bulk fuel (oil/propane/kerosene) users. (<https://fuelfundmaryland.org/get-help>)
- 2-1-1 Maryland: A statewide information and referral service that lists utility/energy bill assistance programs and supports. [211 Energy Support](#)
- Office of People's Counsel [Utility Termination Information](#)
- Dollar Energy [How To Apply](#)
- Salvation Army [Utility Rent Assistance](#)
- Delmarva Fuel Assistance [Bill Payment Assistance](#)
- Community Schools Rental Assistance Program [CSRAP](#) (Baltimore City & Frederick Utility Assistance)
- [Your local Department of Social Services](#)

How do I apply for energy assistance benefits?

We invite customers to continue to keep their information up to date, check their eligibility, and apply for help at MarylandBenefits.gov. You can check the status of your OHEP application at myohepstatus.benefits.maryland.gov.

I am a federal employee, do I need to apply?

An involuntarily-furloughed federal government employee who is not receiving a paycheck as a result of a government shutdown has legal protection under Maryland law. Electric or gas providers cannot cut off service due to unpaid bills.

Federal employees must contact their electric or gas provider before their service is cut off to verify that they are a furloughed employee and agree to a payment plan to pay what they owe after the shutdown ends.

- These protections apply:
 - a. beginning on the eighth day a federal government shutdown is in effect, and
 - b. continue through the seventh day after the federal government shutdown ends.
- To be eligible, federal employees must:
 - a. be a current federal, state, or local government employee,
 - b. be furloughed involuntarily because of a government shutdown regardless of whether the employee is required to report to work during the furlough, and
 - c. be unpaid during the shutdown.

Federal furloughed workers are now eligible for Maryland OHEP utility assistance. Applicants who are furloughed will be processed at zero-income along with providing proof of their furlough letter. However, all household members listed on the application must report their income, which will be counted as the total household income on the application. Additional eligibility requirements can be found at MarylandBenefits.gov.

These protections do not apply to federal contractors. Protections only cover electricity and gas. They do not cover municipal water. For more information, please see <https://response.maryland.gov/federalpublicservants/shutdown>.

How is the state coordinating with utility companies?

We are coordinating with utility partners to support Maryland residents, including the weekly issuance of energy assistance benefits, the request of 55-day holds to prevent utility service terminations, and 30-day medical holds for eligible OHEP applicants.