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Shapiro Administration Announces Start of the 2023-24 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Season

Enola, PA – Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh and Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) Chairman Stephen DeFrank, Vice Chair Kim Barrow, and Commissioner Kathryn Zerfuss visited Tri County Community Action today to announce the start of the annual Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) application process for the 2023-24 season.

LIHEAP is a federally-funded program administered by DHS that helps with home heating bills so Pennsylvanians with low incomes can stay warm and safe during the winter months. Assistance is available for renters and homeowners. The [LIHEAP](#) application period for both cash and crisis grants is open from November 1, 2023, to April 5, 2024.

“Keeping your home warm during the coldest and darkest months of the year is a necessity, not a luxury. Every Pennsylvanian deserves the dignity and peace of mind of knowing that their heat will not be shut off this winter and they can keep themselves and their families safe and warm,” said **Secretary Arkoosh**. “LIHEAP helps many of our fellow Pennsylvanians make ends meet by providing cash or crisis grants directly to their utility or home heating fuel provider. If you or someone you know needs help or could benefit from this program, I encourage you to apply for LIHEAP today.”

LIHEAP is distributed directly to a household’s utility company or home heating fuel provider in the form of a grant, so the individual or households do not have to repay assistance. While last season’s LIHEAP benefits were supplemented by additional American Rescue Plan dollars, this season’s benefits will return to more traditional amounts. The minimum LIHEAP cash grant is \$300, and the maximum cash grant is \$1,000.

The LIHEAP crisis grant is for people who meet the income limits and are in jeopardy of having their heating utility service terminated, have a broken heating equipment have already had their heating utility service terminated, or who are out of or have less than two weeks’ worth of deliverable fuel, such as fuel oil, propane, coal, or wood. The minimum LIHEAP crisis grant is \$25, and the maximum crisis grant is \$1,000.

“Working in combination, the annual winter LIHEAP grants along with various PUC-required utility assistance programs help hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania households stay

connected, safe, and warm,” said **DeFrank**. “We strongly encourage families to apply for LIHEAP and also *#CallUtilitiesNow* to discuss all the affordability options that are available.”

Tri County Community Action (TCCA) is part of a statewide network of community-based organizations addressing social determinants of health. TCCA works to eradicate poverty by integrating services and programming across entire families through a multi-generation/whole family approach, and to connect community development initiatives to overall individual wellbeing. As children, parents, and families grow and change across their lifespan, TCCA aligns opportunities to help them pursue their goals and thrive, optimizing each person’s potential.

“LIHEAP embodies more than just heating assistance; it serves as a foundational cornerstone for overall well-being,” said Jen Wintermyer, Tri County Community Action Chief Executive Officer. “It’s not only about keeping families warm, but also about maintaining their unity within communities, their involvement in education, and their role as productive citizens. Without this program, thousands would face homelessness, entering a detrimental cycle that would erode family stability, employment, and more, ultimately pushing them further behind. We express immense gratitude for the LIHEAP program, as it truly adopts a proactive approach, preventing further crisis and harm for Pennsylvanians.”

During the 2022-2023 LIHEAP season, 312,169 households statewide received \$125,572,518 in LIHEAP cash benefits, and these households received an average season benefit of \$402. More than 135,000 households statewide received \$98,923,752 in LIHEAP crisis benefits, and these households received an average payment of \$688.

The income limit for LIHEAP is 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level; for an individual, that is a gross income of \$21,870 per year, and for a family of four, that is a gross income of \$45,000 per year.

Pennsylvanians can apply for LIHEAP and other public assistance programs online at dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS or by phone at 1-866-550-4355. Pennsylvanians do not need to know their own eligibility to apply for these programs. Those who have applied and were denied previously but have experienced a change in circumstances can reapply.

More information about LIHEAP is available at dhs.pa.gov/liheap.

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