

# NOTICE OF ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ~ 2023 – 2024 Heating Season

## Shutoff Protection Programs

### Winter Protection Plan (WPP) ~ Contact: Local Utility Company

The WPP protects account holders, age 65 and older, and low-income customers whose annual household income is at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, from shutoffs and high payments during the heating season (Nov 1–Mar 31). You can apply if you receive any of the following:

- MI Dept of Health & Human Services
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Food Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid

If you are low-income, you must pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month during the protection period. If a past due balance exists when you apply, it must be paid in equal monthly installments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season. If you are low-income and your service was shutoff before you applied for shutoff protection, the utility cannot require a fee, a security deposit nor an amount greater than one-twelfth of your past due balance to restore service or participate in the program. All customers 65 or older are eligible regardless of income. However, you are responsible for all service used. At the end of the protection period, all customers must arrange to pay the outstanding bills before the next heating season. If you are a senior citizen whose utility service may have been shut off before applying for the WPP, the utility company must restore your service during the heating season without any payments. Although no specific payments are required during the heating season, you are encouraged to pay what you can to avoid large payments when the protection period ends. **You are still responsible for paying for electricity usage, but this will prevent a shutoff during the winter months. When the protection period ends, both low-income and seniors must arrange with their utility to pay money owed before the start of the next protection period.**

Number of household members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
150% of Poverty Guidelines Max Income	\$21,870	\$29,580	\$37,290	\$45,000	\$52,710	\$60,420	\$68,130	\$75,840
Add \$7,710 for each additional household member over 8								

### Active Duty in the Military ~ Contact: Local Utility Company

If you or your spouse is the customer of record and either of you are called to full-time active military service, by the President of the United States or the Governor of Michigan, during a national or state emergency or war, you may apply for shutoff protection of your electric service for up to 90 days and may also reapply for extensions of this protection. Your utility company may request verification of active-duty status. Additionally, you must notify the utility company when your status changes. Contact your utility to set up a payment plan for all past due amounts to be paid within 12 months. You are still required to pay for services used while in the program.

### Senior Citizens ~ Contact: Local Utility Company

The account holder, an eligible senior citizen age 65 and older, is protected from disconnection of service during the heating season (Nov 1 - Mar 31) at the customer's documented personal residence. The utility will restore service for the customer during the heating season without payment of the amount due, deposits, reconnection fees, or other charges. At the end of the heating season, the account will be placed on a payment plan and payment must begin immediately. Contact the utility directly to enroll in the WPP.

### Medical Emergency Protection ~ Contact: Local Utility Company

You can receive a medical hold to prevent service from being shutoff for nonpayment on your electric bill for up to 21 days, if you or a member of your household has an existing medical condition that would be aggravated by the lack of utility service. Your condition must be certified by a physician or public health office on a Michigan Public Service Commission approved Medical Certification Form. The form must state the medical condition, medical equipment, and specific time period a shutoff of utility service would make the medical condition worse. You can obtain an extension of the medical hold and a postponement of shutoff of service for a total of 63 days (three separate medical holds) in any 12-month period per household member. Annually, the utility is not required to grant shutoff extensions totaling more than 126 days per household. Customers would be granted a 3-business day grace period from shutoff of utility service for time to have the Medical Certification Form completed. A utility shall not require payment for an after-hours reconnect fee or a deposit as a condition of restoring service. The form is available from your utility, its website and at [www.michigan.gov/mpsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc).

### Critical Care Protection ~ Contact: Local Utility Company

A customer or household can receive shutoff protection or have services restored due to the inability to pay **IF** there is an identified critical care customer in the home and interruption of service would be immediately life threatening. A critical care customer is somebody who requires home medical equipment or a life support system that must be certified by a physician or public health office on a MPSC approved Medical Certification Form. Customers would be granted a three-business day grace period from shutoff of utility service for time to have the Medical Certification Form completed. You will be contacted by the utility when any scheduled service interruptions occur. The utility will also notify you before any remote shutoff of utility services. If critical care status changes, you, or a person in your household, must let the utility know of the status change. However, if a person's status does not change you must submit an updated Medical Certification Form to the utility on an annual basis. The Medical Certification Form is available from your utility's website and at [www.michigan.gov/mpsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mpsc).

**Energy Assistance Programs**

**State Emergency Relief Program** ~ **Contact:** *MI Dept of Health & Human Services* at [www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)

State Emergency Relief (SER) is a crisis intervention program that provides assistance for energy-related expenses such as heating fuel, electricity, and home repairs. SER is supported by the Federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Eligibility is based on one of the following:

- Demonstration of immediate need (past due/shutoff notice)
- Verified need for energy-related home repair
- Up to \$15,000 in cash assets and \$15,000 in material assets
- Declared need for a deliverable fuel such as propane
- 150% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

Apply online at: <http://michigan.gov/mibridges> Assistance: <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-find-community-partners>

**Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program** ~ **Contact:** *Michigan Veterans Trust Fund* at 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838) or [www.michiganveterans.com](http://www.michiganveterans.com) The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families.

**Home Heating Credit (HHC)** ~ **Administering Agency:** *Michigan Department of Treasury*

Apply for a HHC for the 2023 tax year if you meet the listed household income guidelines and exemptions. You may claim an exemption for yourself, spouse, and other dependents. Call the Treasury Dept at (517) 636-4486, or visit [www.michigan.gov/treasury](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury). To find an agency that assists with tax preparation, contact 2-1-1. Customers of utilities regulated by the MPSC receive protection from shutoff of their heating fuel service from the time of filing of HHC form with Treasury until the time Treasury issues the credit. However, you must contact your utility company to let it know you filed for the HHC. Keep a copy of the HHC form you file with the number of exemptions claimed and the amount of the credit to use when requesting the status of your application. You will still be required to pay for the electric services used during the shutoff protection period.

INCOME GUIDELINES ~ 2023-2024			
Number of Exemptions	110% of Federal Poverty Maximum Annual Income	Number of Exemptions	110% of Federal Poverty Maximum Annual Income
0-1	\$16,038	5	\$38,654
2	\$21,692	6	\$44,308
3	\$27,346	7	\$49,962
4	\$33,000	8	\$55,616
Add \$5,654 for each additional household member over 8			

**Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)** ~ **Administering Agency:** *Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC)*

Once an SER application has been submitted, additional assistance can be sought through agencies that provide MEAP energy assistance programs. Need help applying for State Emergency Relief? <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-find-community-partners> , or call 2-1-1. MEAP is supported by the state’s Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF). A utility that chooses not to collect for LIEAF shall not shut off service to customers for non-payment between Nov 1-Apr 15.

**Michigan Homeowner Assistance Fund (MIHAF)** ~ **Call 1-844-756-4423**

MIHAF provides assistance funds to customers preventing homeowner mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosure, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacement. Applicants must demonstrate financial hardship directly related to COVID-19 on or after January 21, 2020. Eligibility is 150% of Area Median Income. Need help applying for MIHAF: <https://mihaf.michigan.gov/p/home>

**United Way 2-1-1** ~

2-1-1 is a one-stop, 24-hour free phone and online service that links people with information or agencies that can help with utility assistance and other needs. Simply dial 2-1-1 on your phone or visit [mi211.org](http://mi211.org).

**Note: The following optional programs are provided for your information** ~ **Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)** ~ **Administering Agency:** *Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity.*

WAP is a federally funded, low-income residential energy conservation program providing free home energy conservation services to eligible homeowners and renters with a household income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. You are also eligible if you participate in the Department of Health and Human Services Family Independence Program or receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI). If you qualify, a trained inspector will assess your home and determine what measures will be the most beneficial for you. Measures may include adding caulking; weather stripping; wall, basement, and attic insulation and ventilation; and smoke detectors. Contact your local Community Action Agency or go to [mcac.memberclicks.net/agency-locator-map](http://mcac.memberclicks.net/agency-locator-map) for more information or to find the Community Action Agency in your area.

**Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)** ~ **Call 1-877-384-2575**

**Apply:** online, by mail, or at a participating provider: ACP Universal Service Administrative Company [www.affordableconnectivity.gov](http://www.affordableconnectivity.gov)

**Lifeline** ~ **Contact:** *Your Local Landline Telephone Company*