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## ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR HEATING, COOLING AND WATER BILLS

**The Winter Termination Program** prohibits regulated utility shutoffs from November 15 until March 15 (next week) each year for eligible, low-income New Jersey residents, keeping them safe and warm throughout the winter months. **NOW IS THE LAST CHANCE TO APPLY FOR THIS SEASON.**

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps low-income residents with their heating and cooling bills, and makes provisions for emergency heating system services and emergency fuel.

How to Apply for Home Energy Assistance:

1. Find out if you are eligible for the program: Review the Energy Assistance Program [\*\*Fact Sheet and Income Guidelines\*\*](#)
2. If you are eligible, fill out an application: Download, print and complete the [\*\*Home Energy/USF/Weatherization Program Application\*\*](#)
3. Submit a completed application to your Local Community Action Agency: Choose from the list of [\*\*Local Application Agencies\*\*](#)

For more information or to locate your nearest application agency, please call their toll-free hotline at **800-510-3102**.

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### **New Jersey Lifeline for Seniors and Disabled Adults**

New Jersey Lifeline is a \$225 yearly electric or gas bill credit for seniors or disabled adults in New Jersey.

To qualify, you must be a New Jersey resident, 65 years of age or older, or 18 years of age or older and receiving Social Security Title II Disability benefits.

Your personal annual income (not the household income), cannot exceed \$28,769 if single or \$35,270 if married.

To learn more, see [NJ Lifeline](#) or call the New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Aging at 877-222-3737.

Apply online at [www.aging.nj.gov](http://www.aging.nj.gov). This program is available year-round.

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### **Fresh Start Program**

If you have a balance of \$60 or more on your energy bill when you are enrolled in the [USF \(Universal Service Fund\) program](#), you may be eligible for additional benefits under the New Jersey Fresh Start Program. The Fresh Start Program is a component of the USF program and is usually only available for your first year of participation in USF. However, from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023 any USF beneficiary with an overdue balance of \$60 or more will be automatically screened for Fresh Start eligibility by their electric and/or gas company.

Fresh Start is a partnership between the customer and USF to forgive past due balances and improve your payment record. Simply pay your current monthly charges on time and in full every month and after 12 months of full on-time payments, your pre-USF program overdue balance will be erased. You cannot apply for Fresh Start; if you are eligible for Fresh Start, you will be automatically enrolled by your energy company and will be sent additional information in the mail about how the Fresh Start program works.

If you are on Fresh Start but are not making current monthly bill payments, the utility company can take collection action against you for the new overdue balances you accrue. Any Fresh Start amount you have not earned forgiveness on will be restored to your account as due at the end of the program.

If you are enrolled in Fresh Start, but are unsure of how much you need to pay each month to earn forgiveness on your overdue utility balance, please call your utility company at the number on your bill and ask to speak to a Customer Service Representative who is familiar with the Fresh Start program.

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### **Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)**

New assistance is available to help New Jersey households pay past-due water and sewer bills. A one-time grant of up to \$2,400 will be provided.

**WHO:** Households with past-due water and/or sewer balances with a limited annual income.

- Participants in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) are automatically eligible for LIHWAP assistance if they are water or sewer bill holders. They still need to apply.
- The water or sewer bills must be in the name of an adult residing in the home or the landlord's name. If in the landlord's name, provide a lease showing that the cost of water is included in the rental obligation.
- At least one household member must be a US Citizen, legal permanent resident, qualified alien, or US non-citizen national.

**HOW:** Visit <https://njdca-housing.dynamics365portals.us/en-us/dcaid-services/> to apply, and for more information.

**FURTHER DETAILS:**

- Benefits will be based on the exact amount owed to the utility company, including reconnection, delinquency, and service fees. If you do not have a past-due balance, you do not qualify. Payments will be made directly to the water and sewer vendors.
- Benefits will be provided to eligible households until funding is exhausted.
- You do not need a COVID-19 related impact to be eligible for the LIHWAP program.
- For additional information, visit <https://njdca-housing.dynamics365portals.us/lihwapfaq>

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For questions, email [resourcecenter@ifscclifton.org](mailto:resourcecenter@ifscclifton.org) or call **973-777-7638 x614**.

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