**LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**Kennebec Valley Community Action Program:**

**Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties**

**The Opportunity Alliance:**

**Freeport, Brunswick, Topsham, Pownal**

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (commonly called LIHEAP or HEAP Fuel Assistance) provides money to low income homeowners and renters to help pay heating costs. The funds are distributed throughout Maine by 9 Community Action Agencies, in most cases directly to the fuel vendors. The program is not intended to pay for all heating costs, but to assist in paying the heating bills.

If the heat is included in the rent, the client is encouraged to apply their benefit toward their utility bill as long as the bill is in a household member’s name, or they may choose to have a check issued directly to them so they can offset the higher rent cost associated with a heated dwelling.

The Primary Applicant chooses their own vendor as long as the vendor has entered into a Vendor Agreement with MaineHousing. For a list of participating vendors, go to MaineHousing’s website: **mainehousing.org**

This is not an emergency program; it could take up to 8 weeks to receive a benefit (or until MaineHousing receives notification of available funding). Eligible households will be notified via mail. Home visits are available for those who are unable to travel to the Community Action Agency.

ECIP (Energy Crisis Intervention Program):

ECIP provides emergency heating assistance, minor repairs to heating systems, or assistance witha utility disconnection if the primary heating source requires electricity to operate. Households must be LIHEAP eligible, have less than 3-day supply of fuel (e.g. reading of 1/8 tank or less on a standard 275 gallon heating oil tank; reading of 25% or less on a propane tank; “3-day or less” supply standard applies to other delivered fuel types), and have exhausted all avenues of alleviating their energy crisis. ECIP applications are taken November 1 – March 31 (depending on notification of federal funding). ECIP funding is limited.

LIAP (Low Income Assistance Plan):

Low Income Assistance Plan (LIAP) helps low-income homeowners and renters with their electric utility bills. MaineHousing, through Community Action Agencies, accepts customer applications for LIAP as part of the LIHEAP application process. The household must be LIHEAP eligible to enroll in their utility company program. Eligibility is determined by annual income and cost/usage for Central Maine Power customers (each utility has their own program and enrollment criteria). If the household receives a benefit, the credit is reflected on the bill for the following billing cycle. Residents of subsidized housing are not eligible, EXCEPT those who require life sustaining medical equipment for at least 8 hours per day (oxygen pump or ventilator). Those households may be enrolled in both the LIAP program and the oxygen/ventilator programs. Any household living in subsidized housing and not meeting the above requirement are not eligible to participate.

FFY 2015 Poverty Guidelines:

Maximum gross household income is based on the number of people in the household.

For households with more than 10 persons, contact your Community Action Agency (CAA) for eligibility guidelines.



(October 7, 2014)

(United Way of Mid Coast Maine – Heating & Weatherization Assistance Meeting)