
ENERGY PROGRAMS
LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE (LIEAP)

EP – 300 LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
CHANGE 1-2020
October 01, 2020

300.01 LOW INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIEAP)

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) provides a one-time annual energy provider payment to help eligible families pay their heating expense.

The following sections of the Energy Programs manual also apply to LIEAP:

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300.02 APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

- A. Everyone who wishes to apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) must be given the opportunity to apply without delay during the appropriate application time frame. Appointments are not required for LIEAP applications.

The following is the priority group that can apply for benefits for LIEAP from December 1st through December 31st:

1. Households containing an elderly person age 60 and above or
2. Households containing persons with disabilities that receives services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS). Disabled persons are defined as receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Administration (SSA), or Veterans Administration (VA) disability

EXAMPLES:

- a. An applicant age 50 applies in December. Also, in the home are two children under 18 and another adult age 40 who is disabled and receiving services through DAAS. This household is potentially eligible to receive benefits in the month of December.
- b. A disabled applicant age 45 applies in December. There is another adult in the home age 20 who is not disabled. The disabled applicant does not receive any services through DAAS. This household may apply in December but does not meet the target group eligibility requirements to

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potentially receive benefits during that month. This household will need to apply beginning January 1st through March 31st, or until funds are exhausted, to be considered for approval.

- c. An applicant age 60 applies in January. Also, in the home are two other adults, age 30 and 42. This household is potentially eligible to receive benefits during the month of December.
- d. An applicant age 40 applies in December. Also, in the home is another adult age 65 and a child age 10. This household is potentially eligible to receive benefits during the month of December.

Any household can potentially receive benefits from January 1st through March 31st or until funds are exhausted, if all eligibility requirements are met. If December 1st or January 1st falls on a weekend or holiday, resort to the first working day of the month. If March 31st falls on a weekend or holiday, resort to the last working day of the month.

When an applicant comes into an agency that takes applications and requests to apply during the application taking time frame as defined above, they must be allowed to sign an application on the day they appear.

NOTE: Households that include a Native American who is 18 years of age or older residing in Cumberland, Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland counties, who wish to apply for LIEAP benefits, must do so through the Lumbee Tribe.

NOTE: Households that include an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) living in the five-county service area of Cherokee, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, and Swain counties, who wish to apply for LIEAP benefits, must do so through the EBCI. This includes enrolled EBCI members on and off the Qualla Boundary in the five counties.

- B. Applications taken must be completed by state and local government entities or community-based organizations as well as by social services. Examples of community-based organizations are not-for-profit neighborhood-based organizations, area agencies on aging, and community action agencies. (See EP-200 for additional information.) Completed applications must include the applicant's signature and date. The worker's signature is not required. NC FAST provides a transaction history of the case actions based on the North Carolina Identity Management (NCID) of the user for all applications. This is considered the worker's electronic signature.
- C. A valid social security number is required, when available, ~~for~~ each household member. Applicants not currently active in Food and Nutrition Services, Work First Family Assistance (WFFA), or Medicaid must sign the DMA-5001, Notice of the Use of Social Security Numbers, when Income and Eligibility Verifications System (IEVS) matches are performed prior to the applicant's signing of the DSS-8178, Energy Programs Application or the signature page from the application in NC FAST.
- D. Explain the applicant's rights and responsibilities.
- E. Inform all applicants, either verbally or in writing, that unless the requested information is received within 10 business days from the date of application, the application will be denied.

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- F. Inform all applicants that approval is based on availability of funds at the time of application disposition.
- G. LIEAP applicants must be provided the opportunity to register to vote.
- H. If the provided utility bill is not in the applicant's name, or another adult household member's name, the applicant needs to provide a written statement from the person whose name the bill is in verifying the applicant is responsible for payment of the heating expense. In the event the person is unreachable, accept the applicant's statement.

NOTE: LIEAP funds cannot pay bills in a deceased person's name or in the name of a minor child. In such cases, the applicant should be encouraged to transfer the utility bill into the applicant's name as soon as possible.

300.03 DMA-5093, APPLICATION LOG

Counties must log all individuals requesting to apply for LIEAP. Counties may use the DMA-5093, Daily Reception Log, for Medical and Financial Assistance, or another logging method, as long, as a record is kept and maintained on site.

300.04 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

A. General Information

1. Duplicate payments to LIEAP households are not permitted. Establish controls to ensure that households do not receive duplicate benefits.
2. Perform an Energy Benefits Search in NC FAST to check for other energy applications for any household members. If the name, address, and social security number for a household member match that of an applicant already in the NCFast, conduct additional research before approving the application. Evaluate each household member to determine the correct household composition to eliminate the duplication. See Job Aid, Energy – Initial/New LIEAP Application to Case Job.
3. The LIEAP application period ends March 31st of each year. The keying deadline is 10 business days following the application period end date. After such time, LIEAP applications cannot be entered into NC FAST.
4. All LIEAP applications pending after March 31st must be processed within 15 days from the date of the application.

NOTE: Applications are not complete unless all questions are answered and the application is signed by the applicant. Do not key an unsigned/incomplete application into NC FAST

B. Procedures for Completing Form DSS-8116-I, Eligibility Worksheet.

1. It is mandatory to complete a DSS-8116-I, Eligibility Worksheet for an application if:

NOTE: This process is only required if the application is being completed outside of NC FAST.

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- a. A household member has earned and/or unearned income, or
 - b. A household member is an ineligible alien with income, or
 - c. A household member has reserve that is questionable, or
 2. Complete all sections on the DSS-8116-I that apply to the household.
- C. Explain that the applicant has the right to:
1. Receive assistance if found eligible.
 2. Be protected against discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and may appeal such discrimination under Section 504 of the Disability Act.
 3. Have any information given to the agency kept in confidence.
 4. Appeal, if
 - a. Denied the right to apply for assistance on the same day the applicant or the authorized representative went to the local county agency or
 - b. The application was denied or
 - c. The assistance is incorrect based on the county's interpretation of the State regulations or
 - d. A decision is not made on the application in a timely manner.
 5. Withdraw from the assistance program at any time.
 6. Reapply if the household is denied and the situation changes. The household must reapply before the application period expires.
- D. Explain that the applicant's responsibilities are to:
1. Provide requested information needed to determine eligibility within ten business days. Use the DSS-8185 to request needed information. This is the only request provided to the applicant.
- NOTE:** Inform the applicant that if the information is **not** received **by the deadline date**, the application will be denied for failure to provide information. Approval will be based on availability of funds at the time of disposition.
2. Provide verification of social security numbers for all members of the LIEAP household. If verification is not available, accept client's statement.
- E. Local County Agency's Responsibilities
- The County has the responsibility to:

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1. Assist the household in obtaining information to determine eligibility, if requested.
2. Inform the applicant or the authorized representative of the eligibility requirements and hearing rights. You may use the DSS-8117 for this purpose.
3. Ask the applicant to specify the primary type of fuel used most often. Explain to the applicant that the fuel type given at the time of application will not be changed even if the household later changes its primary source of heat.
4. Explain the meaning of fraud to the applicant. Explain penalties for providing false or incorrect information.

F. Prevention of Overpayments

1. Interviews

The key to fraud prevention is skilled interviewing. The interviewing process must involve two-way communication. First, you must be specific and thorough in the questions asked. It is important to phrase questions in a way that the applicant/ representative (a/r) will understand. For example, thoroughly explain specific items included as "income" to avoid the misunderstanding that the only item included is wages. Secondly, listen carefully to the a/r's responses. Give the a/r a chance to respond in their own words. Repeat the a/r's responses back to them to ensure you understand and to give them a chance to add additional information.

2. Other Preventive Measures

a. Intra-agency

Establish communications among the various units in your office. Fraud prevention is the responsibility of the entire agency. Therefore, you must develop a systemic way to report changes and exchange information. Each agency should have several controls in place avoid duplication of payments.

b. Inter-agency

To obtain prompt and accurate information needed to determine eligibility, it is important to establish a good relationship with other agencies, employers, and institutions. Inform them of the program requirements and the importance of receiving prompt and accurate information.

c. Public Awareness

Inform the public about your agency's attempt to prevent fraud. This is important both as a deterrent and as a public relations measure. Information regarding court actions taken against fraudulent clients, amount of collections over a period of time, etc., could be periodically offered to the news media. Publicize the telephone number for calling in reports of possible fraud. Emphasize that such reports are kept confidential. If the public realizes the importance of preventing fraud, you may be able to obtain much more information and cooperation.

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d. Benefit Search

To avoid duplicate payments, perform an Energy Benefits Search in NC FAST. The purpose of this search is to assist the county with identifying possible duplicate issuance of benefits. The search can be completed by using social security numbers, addresses, or names. See Job Aid, Energy – Initial/ New LIEAP Application to Case Job

300.05 INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. Applicants are not required to complete applications in the office nor have a face-to-face interview. Applications received in the agency by mail, email, fax or dropped off will require an interview, however, this interview can be conducted by telephone. If the applicant cannot be reached by phone, send a DSS-8185 including a date and time for an interview.

B. Applicants who contact the agency by phone wanting to apply for LIEAP should be interviewed at that time and offered the opportunity for a telephonic signature. Mail the applicant a DSS-8185 requesting necessary verifications. Only mail the completed DSS-8178 for signature if applicant declines the option to complete a telephonic signature.

1. Telephonic Signature Option. For Phone interviews client has the option to provide a telephonic signature over the phone.

Worker will summarize the information to which the household assents and allows a verbal signature from the applicant that is documented by the worker. The documentation will be included in a case note in NC FAST to demonstrate that the client has signed the application. Document "Telephone Signature" in the Income Support Application
→Contact Tab→Notes

The documentation in NC FAST should include the client's name, date, time of telephone interview and the client's response to indicating agreement to this verbal attestation of signature over the phone.

C. Application Procedure for Telephone Interviews

1. Complete the application interview.
2. Accept telephonic signature unless client declines. If client declines mail the application form (DSS-8178). Mail the (DSS-8185) to the applicant if verification is needed.
3. Allow the applicant 10 business days to return the application and/or required verifications. Record the pending date on the (DSS 8185). This is the only request sent to the applicant.

NOTE: Applications are not complete unless all questions are answered, and the application is signed, or telephonic signature is accepted. Do not key an unsigned application into NC FAST.

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300.06 ACTION TO TAKE WHEN AN ENERGY PROGRAMS APPLICATION (DSS-8178) IS COMPLETED BY THE COUNTY

A. When an application is:

1. Complete

The application is complete if all questions have been answered and documented on the application form. It must be signed by the applicant, ~~or~~ the authorized representative **or with a telephonic signature.**

Key the application in NC FAST. See Job Aid, Energy – Initial/New LIEAP Application to Case Job. A system generated notice of eligibility is mailed or given to the applicant.

2. Incomplete

The application is incomplete if all the questions have not been answered and documented or it is not signed, **or telephonic signature has not been completed.**

a. Telephone Call

(1) If the information needed to complete the application can be obtained by the telephone, call the applicant.

(2) Document the telephone call and the information received in the case record.

b. DSS-8185, Notice of Incomplete Application

(1) List on the DSS-8185 the information needed to complete the application. Inform the household the completed application must be returned within 10 business days. Also, inform the household that approval will be based on availability of funds at disposition. Record the due date on the DSS-8185; **and**

(2) Document on the log or in the case record the date you sent the DSS-8185. Keep a copy of the DSS-8185 in the case file.

B. Requested Information Returned

When all the requested information is received:

1. Document in the case record the date you received the requested information.

2. Determine if any changes have been reported.

a. If **no** changes are reported, process the application within **two** of all business days.

b. If changes are reported, determine if the change affects eligibility or

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benefit level. If yes, contact the household by phone to resolve the change. If unable to contact the household by phone, send the household a DSS-8185 requesting the information. Allow the household 10 business days to respond. Process the application within ~~two~~**2** business days of receipt of the requested verifications.

If information is not received, deny the application on the 11th day.

If the change does not affect the eligibility or benefit level, document the received change information in NC FAST and process the application within 2 business days.

C. Actions to Take If You Receive an Application after the Deadline

You must:

1. Verbally or in writing notify the applicant that the application was received **after** the deadline and it will not be processed; and
2. Document your verbal contact with the applicant or file a copy of the letter in the case record.
3. You may, for easy reference, maintain a log of all applications received after the deadline.

300.07 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligibility for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program is based on certain non-financial and financial requirements. Each applicant's household must meet all requirements. Eligibility criteria is discussed in Sections 300.08 through 300.10, and 300.13.

300.08 VULNERABILITY

To be eligible, a household must be vulnerable at the time of application. A household is vulnerable if it has a heating source billed separately and are subject to the rising cost of heating for the heat expense. Accept the applicant's statement about the vulnerability status for the household.

1. If a household lives in a private living arrangement with a heating source and heat costs are billed separately, it is fully vulnerable.
2. If a household lives in public housing where heat costs are billed separately from the rent, it is fully vulnerable.
3. An applicant who lives in a private living arrangement who does not receive a separate bill from the energy provider, they are not vulnerable.
4. A household in public housing where heating costs are included in the rent, are not vulnerable. This includes households whose rent is increased to cover excess heating costs. This also includes individuals who have paid excess for heating in the last 12 months. For additional verification of a heating arrangement in public housing, contact the local public housing authority.
5. A person living in an institution is not vulnerable.

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NOTE: Receipt of a utility allowance does not affect vulnerability status. Section 8 households are considered in a private living arrangement.

If an applicant is living in another arrangement which is not listed above, contact the Economic and Family Services Section for assistance at 919-527-6300 or dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

300.09 INCOME

Households meet income eligibility if the total household members' countable income for the base period (month(s) prior to application) is equal to or less than 130% of the current poverty level.

Refer to the Income Section of the Integrated Eligibility Manual at <https://economicbenefits.nc.gov> for types of income to count, how to verify income and which income deductions and base periods to apply.

No. Eligible In Household	Maximum Countable Income	No. Eligible In Household	Maximum Countable Income
1	\$1,382	14	\$7,692
2	1,868	15	8,177
3	2,353	16	8,662
4	2,838	17	9,148
5	3,324	18	9,633
6	3,809	19	10,118
7	4,294	20	10,604
8	4,780	21	11,089
9	5,265	22	11,574
10	5,750	23	12,060
11	6,236	24	12,545
12	6,721	25	13,030
13	7,206	26	13,516

If there are more than 26 in a household contact the Economic and Family Services Section at (919) 527-6300 or dss.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov for the maximum countable monthly income.

300.10 HOUSEHOLDS WITH AN INELIGIBLE ALIEN

A. Computation of Gross Countable Income

1. Follow instructions in the appropriate section to determine the gross countable income household members.

To determine who is a qualified or non-qualified alien, please refer to Section 225.04 of the Food and Nutrition Services Certification Manual.

2. To compute countable income of an ineligible alien (if it is determined not to be terminated income) you must:

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a. Qualified Ineligible Aliens

Include this member's prorated countable gross income. For instructions on proration, refer to d below.

b. Treatment of Income of Non-Qualified Ineligible Aliens

Count all the non-qualified ineligible alien's income when applying the manual gross income test for eligibility purposes; do not include the nonqualified ineligible alien in the household size. If the household's income exceeds the gross income test, deny the application.

EXAMPLE: A LIEAP Unit consists of four persons. The head of household, who is an undocumented alien, is employed and has earnings that exceed the maximum income level for a household of three. Deny the application.

If the household's income does not exceed the gross income level, include this member's prorated countable gross income. For instructions on proration, refer to d below.

c. Determine if the ineligible alien paid room/board in the base period to the LIEAP household. Exclude the room/board payment from the ineligible alien's gross income since the room/board payment is counted as income for another LIEAP household member. The exclusion cannot exceed the amount of the room/board income.

d. Divide the gross countable income of each ineligible alien by the total number in the household [including the ineligible alien(s)]. This is each person's pro rata share.

e. Multiply the pro rata share amount by the number of eligible household members in the LIEAP budget. This figure is the prorated amount to count in the budget for the ineligible alien(s).

EXAMPLE: A household consists of seven persons. The household contains two ineligible aliens. One is employed and earns \$700 per month. The other has \$70 unearned income per month.

Ineligible Alien 1:

\$700 divided by 7 = \$100 (pro rata share)

\$100 x 5 (eligible household members) = \$500

\$500 = Income of this ineligible alien to be counted for remaining eligible household members in the LIEAP budget. This is the prorated amount.

Ineligible Alien 2:

\$70 divided by 7 = \$10 (pro rata share)

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$\$10 \times 5$ (eligible household members) = \$50

\$50 = Income of this ineligible alien to be counted for remaining eligible household members in the LIEAP budget. This is the prorated amount.

3. Terminated Income

If an ineligible alien's income has terminated, see **302.02 IV** above to determine the amount of gross income. Prorate this amount. (See A., 2. c. above for instructions on how to prorate.)

B. Deductions

1. Do not allow a medical deduction for an ineligible alien, even if he is a specified person.
2. NC FAST **automatically** deducts the standard work-related expenses using the table in **VIII. B.** above. The standard work-related deduction is based on the prorated income counted in the LIEAP budget.

EXAMPLE: A household consists of three people (one of which is an ineligible alien). The ineligible alien has \$300 gross wages. Count \$200 of his gross wages in the LIEAP budget. The standard deduction would be \$40. (This is based on the \$200 that is counted in the LIEAP budget.)

3. If paid by an ineligible alien.

Prorate the monthly child care costs used to determine the current benefit or payment. See example below for instructions on how to prorate.

EXAMPLE: To prorate, you must:

Divide the amount (child care, etc.) by the total number in the household [including the ineligible alien(s)]

Multiply this amount by the number of eligible household members. This is the prorated amount (child care deduction, etc.)

A household consists of three people (one of which is an ineligible alien). The ineligible alien has paid \$60 in child care costs.

$\$60$ divided by 3 = \$20 (pro rata share)

$\$20 \times 2$ (eligible household members) = \$40

\$40 = allowable child care costs

300.11 RESOURCES

Household members meet the resource requirement if the total household members' countable resources are \$2,250 or less as of the date of the application.

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Accept the household's statement unless questionable. A resource is considered questionable when there is reason to believe that the reported value is incorrect. When determining the value of a checking or savings account, subtract any outstanding withdrawals and any funds remaining that were counted as income in the LIEAP application. When verifying assets, document on the DSS-8116. Allow the client ten (10) business days to provide verification of stated resources. Verification of resources should be requested using the Form 8185.

Ineligible aliens' assets shall be countable towards the household's total resources.

If the Household's resources exceed \$2,250, deny the application.

COUNTABLE AND NON-COUNTABLE RESOURCE ITEMS

RESOURCE ITEMS	COUNTABLE	
	YES	NO
Cash on hand	X	
The current balance of savings account (s)	X	
That portion of checking or savings account other than the monthly income deposited to meet the household's needs.	X	
Stocks, bonds, mutual fund shares, and savings certificates.	X	
Funds in a retirement account that are accessible (such as 401K, NC State Retirement, etc.)	X	
Funds in a retirement account that are accessible, including IRA and Keogh Plans	X	
Revocable trust funds.	X	
Life estate and remainder interest, if saleable or non- saleable		X
Net proceeds from a business, including a farm, which has been discontinued.	X	
Equity in real property not used as a home or income producing	X	
Federal Emergency Management Assistance or Disaster Assistance		X
Household or personal belongings (includes essential and non-essential personal property)		X
Motor vehicles		X
Primary residence, including mobile home, and all contiguous property		X
Income producing property		X
Insurance (including burial, term, and whole life cash values)		X
Value of prepaid burial contracts		X
Value of burial plots		X
Savings of a student under age 18 who is saving his money for school expenses		X

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Relocation assistance payments		X
The portion of monthly income deposited in a checking account to meet monthly needs		X
Non-saleable life estate or remainder interest		X
Heirs' property		X
HUD community development block grants		X
Real property (land or buildings) including mobile homes		X
The remaining balance of any lump sum payment received prior to the month of application	X	

300.12 BENEFIT DETERMINATION AND METHOD OF PAYMENT

- A. Benefits are based on the household's size and income at the time of application. The income limit is 130% of the federal poverty level. To determine benefit levels, the income limit is broken down into two categories so that families with the lowest incomes receive the higher benefit. There are three benefit level amounts designated according to household size and income. Households that heat with coal and/or wood will receive a benefit of \$300 regardless of household size; however, the income will still need to be at or below the 130% income limit.

Benefits are paid directly to energy providers who have an approved energy provider agreement on file with the county. Counties may want to establish additional agreements with the energy providers, such as a promise to pay, purchase order, etc. for households whose primary heat source is kerosene, fuel oil and the like.

If a county has a LIEAP balance of \$500 or less, approval for an even \$200, \$300, \$400, or \$500 may be given. Partial payments such as an amount of \$70 or \$100 for LIEAP are not allowed.

If a household moves and leaves a credit balance with the energy provider, settlement of the credit is between the household and the energy provider. If the energy provider is aware of the household's new energy provider, the credit balance can be forwarded to the new energy provider. If the energy provider is unable to contact the household to settle a credit balance, the county is responsible for trying to locate the household. If the county is unable to locate the household, the credit balance should be returned to the local county agency. The local county agency would return the funds to the controller's office via the DSS-1571 and notify DSS automation at 919-527-6270 to credit the county's funds in NC FAST.

NOTE: Explain to applicant that if the household moves or ends service prior to the energy provider receiving payment and a credit balance is the result, the household should contact the old energy provider with the new energy provider information so payment can be forwarded.

- B. The chart below reflects the benefit levels based on household size and income category.

Income Ranges by Family Size
Percentages of 130% Poverty Income Limit

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Household Size	0 – 50% (Represents 0 - 65% of 100%)	51% - 100% (Represents 66 - 130% of 100%)
Payment Amount	\$400.00	\$300.00
1	\$0 - 691	\$ 692-1,382
2	\$0 - 934	\$ 935 – 1,868
3	\$0 - 1,177	\$ 1,178 - 2,353
Payment Amount	\$500.00	\$400.00
4	\$0 - 1,419	\$ 1,420-2,838
5	\$0 -1,662	\$ 1,663-3,324
6	\$0 - 1,905	\$1,906-3,809
7	\$0 - 2,147	\$ 2,148-4,294
8	\$0 – 2,390	\$ 2,391-4,780
9	\$0 - 2,633	\$2,634-5,265
10	\$0 – 2,875	\$2,876-5,750
11	\$0 – 3,118	\$3,119-6,236
12	\$0 – 3,361	\$3,362-6,721
13	\$0 – 3,603	\$3,604-7,206
14	\$0 - 3,846	\$3,847-7,692
15	\$0 – 4,089	\$4,090-8,177
16	\$0 - 4,331	\$4,332-8,662
17	\$0 - 4,574	\$4,575-9,148
18	\$0 - 4,817	\$4,818-9,633
19	\$0 – 5,059	\$5,060-10,118
20	\$0 - 5,302	\$5,303-10,604
21	\$0 - 5,545	\$5,546-11,089
22	\$0 - 5,787	\$5,788-11,574
23	\$0 – 6,030	\$6,031-12,060
24	\$0 - 6,273	\$6,274-12,545
25	\$0 – 6,515	\$6,516-13,030
26	\$0 – 6,758	\$6,759-13,516
Households heating with Coal and/or Wood will receive \$300.00		

300.13 PAYMENTS FOR DECEASED, INCARCERATED, OR INSTITUTIONALIZED PAYEES

If an applicant becomes deceased after a LIEAP payment has been made to energy provider and the payment results in a credit, the county should verify if there are any other adults remaining in the household. If so, the credit will remain. If there are no other adults residing in the applicant's household, the energy provider is responsible for returning the credit amount to the local county agency. The county will forward the payment amount with a cover letter giving identifying information, reason why submitted, and date of death if known, to the Clerk of Court to be applied to the deceased payee's estate.

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If no administrator has been appointed to the applicant's estate, the Clerk of Court disburses the funds as follows:

- Provide for spouse's and children's needs for the year as allowed by law.
- Pay or reimburse others for funeral expenses up to a maximum of \$2,000.
- Pay or reimburse others for hospital, medical, and physician's bills incurred during the individual's last illness (not to exceed a period of 12 months).
- Pay the balance to the surviving spouse or to the heirs if there is no spouse.

If the Clerk of Court returns a check to the local county agency and states the payee's estate has been settled, the local county agency would **refer to job aid Energy-Overpayment Underpayments in NC FAST Help to process funds that have been returned.**

If a LIEAP payment is made to an energy provider and it results in a credit due to the applicant becoming incarcerated or institutionalized and there are no other adults in the home; the energy provider is responsible for returning the payment amount to the local county agency. The local county agency would **refer to job aid Energy-Overpayment Underpayments in NC FAST Help to process funds that have been returned**