



Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services

311 Laurel Avenue
Laurel, Maryland 20707
(301) 776-0442

Energy Assistance Program Guidelines

Energy bill assistance is available to qualifying clients needing emergency assistance with their energy bill. Please apply as soon as you are aware of your need. Processing time for assistance is typically 1-2 weeks.

Do I Qualify for Help?

- Reside or stay in LARS' geographical service area (Zip codes: 20707, 20708, 20723, 20724).
- Have a cut off notice or be without power due to an unpaid balance.
- Have applied for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program or be ineligible.
- Have documentable income sufficient enough to cover monthly expenses moving forward. Applicants must continue receiving income for at least 60 days after assistance.
- Have not received LARS financial assistance within the last 12 months.
- Commit to 6 months of follow-up by LARS Emergency Services staff.

What Can LARS Utility Assistance Program Pay?

- LARS utility assistance covers a portion of the outstanding electric bill.
- Energy assistance amount vary based on funding source and availability. Applicants should expect to financially contribute to their debt.
- Applicants already receiving a housing voucher or subsidy from the State of Maryland (i.e. Section 8) or a utility bill subsidy may be ineligible for the utility assistance program.

What Documents Do I Need to Submit?

- Current Lease, Mortgage Statement, or Property Deed
- Proof of Need: Turn off notice from utility company
- Photo ID for all adult household members
- Social Security card for all household members
- Birth certificates for all children in the home
- Proof of all household income from the last 30 days to include: employment income, unemployment income, disability, retirement, VA benefits, child support, etc.
- All monthly household utility bills from the last 30 days including: electric, gas, and water
- Any additional bills: cable, cellphone, car insurance, car note, credit cards, loans, etc.
- Bank Statements from the last 3 months

Note: LARS reserves the right to request any additional documentation at any point in the application process to assist in determining eligibility.

What's the Process for Getting Help?

The following is a general outline of the Energy Assistance process. Processing time may vary (generally 1-2 weeks) and is dependent upon the submission of all documents and the applicant's payment of his or her portion of the balance due.

1. Applicants must meet with a Case Manager in-person to determine program eligibility.
2. A household budget will be completed by Applicants with a Case Manager.
3. Applicants must submit all required documents as requested by the Case Manager.
4. The Case Manager will submit application to supervisory staff for final decision.
5. Applicants will be informed of their application decision and, if approved, of the amount of assistance.
6. The Participant must submit his/her portion of outstanding balance (*total utility balance due minus LARS' contribution*) in the form of 1) a money order made out to utility company or 2) a payment receipt by the date specified by LARS staff.
7. The Participant must complete any additional supporting documents as requested by LARS on the day the funds are disbursed.
8. Checks issued on the Participant's behalf will be made payable to the utility company and placed in the mail. A promissory note will be sent to the service provider the day funds are disbursed.

How Can I Expedite my Application?

Submit all requested documents in a timely manner. Your application will ONLY be processed for energy assistance once ALL requested documents have been provided.

Apply for assistance as soon as you are aware of your need.