



**For Immediate Release:**

November 2, 2020

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## Heating Assistance Available through HEAP Winter Crisis Program

The Ohio Development Services Agency and Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency want to let Ohioans know that assistance is available to help with their heating bills this winter. The Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program started November 1 and helps income-eligible Ohioans pay their heating bills and can assist with fuel tank placement, fuel tank testing, and furnace repair. The program will be open until March 31, 2021.

“As the pandemic continues into the winter, it is important that Ohioans are able to stay safe and warm in their homes,” said Lydia Mihalik, director of the Ohio Development Services Agency. “The Winter Crisis Program can ease the burdens of families. Ohioans who need help with their energy bills should visit [energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://energyhelp.ohio.gov) to learn more about the program.”

Locally, 2,900 families in Hamilton County were assisted through the Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program from November 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020.

“We know what a disruptive and confusing time this is, and we want the community to be assured help is available and we are here for the long haul,” says Mark B. Lawson, CAA president/CEO. “Since the pandemic started, we have retooled many of our systems that were face-to-face, and we are in a position to work with agility and empathy to meet the increased demand.”

The Winter Crisis Program assists low-income households that have been disconnected (or have a pending disconnection notice), need to establish new service, need to pay to transfer service, have 25% (or less) of bulk fuel supply remaining, or have a household member who was diagnosed with COVID-19 in 2020 to help stay warm this winter.

Ohioans can visit [www.energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://www.energyhelp.ohio.gov) to start their application prior to their required agency interview with Cincinnati CAA. To schedule an appointment call, (513) 569-1850.

Eligible households can receive a payment for their main heating source and/or their secondary heating source (electric). The program can also assist with fuel tank placement, fuel tank testing, and furnace repair. Ohioans must have a gross income at or below 175% of the federal poverty guidelines to qualify for assistance. For a family of four, the annual income must be at or below \$45,850.

For more information about the features of the Winter Crisis Program locally and what is needed to apply, contact Cincinnati CAA at (513) 569-1850, and select option 1 or 2. Additional information can also be found at [www.energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://www.energyhelp.ohio.gov).

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