

Plumas & Sierra County HEAP Program Frequently asked Questions

Question #1: What is the HEAP Program?

Question #2: What are the income guidelines for the HEAP Program?

From our website click on [Download Plumas & Sierra Counties HEAP brochure](#)

Question #3: Where can I get an application for the HEAP program?

Click on [Download a Plumas & Sierra Counties printable HEAP application](#).

Also see the HEAP Brochure for a list of locations where applications are available.

Question #4: I have applied for HEAP and received a notice of eligibility. What happens next?

You are placed on a waiting list, based on the information you have provided. If you are selected from the waiting list (see Question 7), you will be notified by mail to provide the following documents (*do not send originals – they will not be returned*):

- Birth Certificate of applicant
- Current Electric Bill
- Propane or Fuel oil bill (if applicable)
- Proof of income for all members of the household (age of 18 & older) for the most current ONE month period.

Question #5: How long will I wait on the waiting list?

Question #6: I applied for HEAP 4 months ago, why hasn't my name come to the top of the list?

Question #7: How do you determine the order people are placed on the waiting list?

All three questions are variations on a theme – “When will I get help from HEAP?” The best but most unsatisfactory answer is, “It Depends”.

- It depends on your **position on the list** and that depends on the number of priority points you receive (see Question #8). Your position is relative to other applicants (their position is determined by their priority points) and therefore your position can change as applications are added and/or paid or removed.
- It depends on how much **funding** we receive for the calendar year.
- It depends on the **monthly budget** allocation that attempts to assure some funding is available throughout the entire year.

Actually the question becomes, not only, “When will I”, but “WILL I get help from the HEAP Program?” The answer is “Maybe Not”.

The difficult reality is: the demand is so high and the funds are so limited. This means that there is a good chance applicants with low priority points unfortunately may not receive HEAP energy assistance.

Question #8: What are “Priority Points”?

A numerical value that is given to your application based on the amount of “points” you receive depending on your circumstance. Priority points determine your position on the waiting list. Applicants with the same amount of points are ordered on the waiting list by date and time application was received.

- The lower the income, the higher the priority points.
- The higher the Energy Burden (see Question 10) the higher the priority points.
- Extra points are given for:
 - Elderly (age 60-79)
 - Families with children age 5 and under
 - Disabled
 - Frail Elderly (age 80 years and over)
 - Medical Necessity
 - Working

Question #9: Why do I need to provide my electric bill when I am NOT applying for electricity assistance?

Your electric costs are part of the calculation to determine your Energy Burden (see Question #10) which, in turn, helps in determining the total priority points you receive.

Question #10: What is Energy Burden?

Energy Burden is a mathematical calculation. We take your total monthly energy cost (Electric, Propane/Oil and/or Wood costs) and divide it by your monthly income. For example, if your monthly electric bill is \$100 and propane is \$150 and your monthly income is \$1000, your energy burden would be $250/1000$ equals .25 or 25%.

Question #11: I heat with wood. Can I apply for assistance in purchasing wood?

Yes. If you are selected to receive assistance you will be given a “Wood Voucher” and a list of approved wood vendors. You may select the wood vendor of your choice. We encourage you to contact a number of vendors to get the best price that will result in the most amount of wood.

Question #12: If I am denied eligibility what can I do about it?

You may appeal our decision in accordance with our Appeal Procedure. You will be given instructions on how to appeal if you receive a Denial Letter.

For further information, visit our website www.plumascdc.org.