



Need Help Paying for Utilities?

1. I'm struggling to pay my utility bill, what can I do?

- Utility assistance is available through the **Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)** for home heating and the **Electric Universal Program (EUSP)** for electric utility bills.

2. Who might be eligible for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)?

- MEAP helps income eligible heating customers, homeowners, renters, and roomers (boarders) in Maryland.
- The amount of assistance is determined through the Office of Home Energy Programs, part of the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services.
- If your heat is included in your rent, and you do not receive a rental subsidy (Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, etc.), you may receive either:
 - A payment through your participating landlord, OR
 - A direct benefit paid to you, to be used towards your rent.
- If your heat is paid through a sub-metering company, you may be eligible for either
 - A benefit to participating landlords for utility costs. OR
 - A direct payment to help you pay your heating bill.
 - You may be eligible for this benefit even if you receive a rental subsidy.

3. Who might be eligible for the Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP)?

- EUSP helps income-eligible homeowners or renters in Maryland who meet income requirements AND have an electric utility bill in their name.
- The amount of assistance is determined through the Office of Home Energy Programs, part of the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services.
- If eligible, a grant will be sent directly to your electric utility to help pay past due, or ongoing bills. Benefits may help reduce monthly bills.
- **You must agree to Budget Billing to receive EUSP. (*More info about Budget Billing is at the end of this document*)**

4. What if my electric bill has an outstanding balance?

- The Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP) may assist with past due bills.
- All benefits are paid directly to your electric company.

5. What if my Washington Gas bill has an outstanding balance?

- The Maryland Energy Program (MEAP) may assist with past due bills.
- All benefits are paid directly to the gas company.





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6. How do I apply?

- Applications are at www.Montgomerycountymd.gov/ohep
- Or you may apply online at <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>.
- You may mail an application to 1301 Piccard Dr., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850,
- You may email an application to ohep@montgomerycountymd.gov
- You may fax an application to 240-777-4099

7. Do I need to have a Social Security number to apply?

- You do not need a social security number to apply, but there does need to be someone living in the household who is a legal resident, with a social security number.
- Eligibility is based on the number of people living in the household with legal status.
- Income for ALL household members is used to determine the amount of the benefit.

8. Does MEAP effect my eligibility for Electric Universal Program (EUSP)?

- No, if you qualify for both MEAP and EUSP, both benefits may be received

9. How do I know if I might be eligible? How long does it take to find out? How will I know the status?

- Eligibility guidelines and the required documents are at www.Montgomerycountymd.gov/ohep
- You may follow up by contacting our office by email, ohep@montgomerycountymd.gov or by calling 240-777-4450 (MD RELAY 711).
- Processing is usually within 45 days, but may be slightly delayed, because more people are applying.
- Visit www.myohepstatus.org to check on the status of your application, or, contact our office by email, ohep@montgomerycountymd.gov or by calling 240-777-4450 (MD RELAY 711).

10. How often am I eligible to receive this benefit?

- The program year is from July 1-June 30, so you may receive a benefit only once during that annual period.
- If you receive a benefit in May, you may reapply in July for the new year.





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11. Does my stimulus payment (Economic Impact Payment checks) and/or federal unemployment supplement count as income for eligibility?

- No, we will not count the stimulus payment, and we will not count the extra \$600 received through unemployment.

12. What is the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), and how do I apply?

- The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) can make needed improvements and repairs, at no cost to eligible households to make a home more fuel efficient.
- You may apply for Weatherization when you seek assistance with utilities through the Office of Home Energy Program, part of the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services,

13. What if I have a broken furnace?

- MEAP offers a furnace repair/replacement service on a limited basis.

14. About Budget Billing:

- Budget billing is an option provided by utility companies to help spread out annual utility bills into even monthly payments.
- Monthly payments are determined by the utility company based upon an average of your last twelve months usage.
- Your utility bill will explain how much you have paid for the year, compared to how much you have used.
- This will help determine if you are using more (or less) than the budgeted amount.
- You may contact your utility company to request an estimate of your budgeted amount, and to learn more about budget billing.
- This information may help you to decide if you'd like to apply for a EUSP benefit.
- You may make additional payments as needed. You may contact your utility company if you feel your budget is underfunded.

15. Can I be placed on a Utility Budget Plan?

- The Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) also offers the Utility Service Protection Program (USPP).
- USPP provides MEAP eligible households access to an "even monthly payment program."
- This allows for your bills to be the same amount throughout the year.
- USPP provides protection from service disconnection.
- Failure to pay monthly payments may cause you to be removed from the USPP.

