

Energy Programs

Individuals and families experiencing a heating or cooling related crisis may apply for assistance through the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP). Applicants can complete a CIP application by mail, email, fax or drop-off at the Columbus County Department of Social Services. A face-to-face interview is not required at this time. In addition, disconnect notices are not required at this time. Applicants can present a final notice or past due utility bill and must have a health related or life threatening emergency to potentially be eligible for crisis funds. Households can apply for the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) and the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) online at www.epass.nc.gov.

The Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) is a Federally funded program that assists individuals and families who are experiencing a heating or cooling related crisis. A household is considered to be in a crisis if it is currently experiencing or is in danger of experiencing a life threatening or health related emergency and sufficient, timely and appropriate assistance is not available from any other source. Life threatening is defined as a household which has no heating or cooling source or has a disconnect notice for their primary heating or cooling service and the health or well-being of a household member would be in danger if the heating or cooling crisis was not alleviated. Each household should be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if there is a heating or cooling crisis.

Applications are taken each fiscal year beginning July 1st - June 30th of the following year or until the CIP allocation is exhausted, whichever comes first.

*Households that meet the following criteria may be eligible:

*Have at least one U.S. citizen or non-citizen who meets the eligibility criteria

*Meet the income test

*Have an energy related crisis

*Have a utility statement that shows how much is owed to alleviate the crisis

*Must have a health related or life threatening emergency to potentially be eligible for crisis funds

The **Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)** applications will be accepted from December 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024 for the priority group. The priority group is defined as:

1. Households containing an elderly person aged 60 and above or
2. Households containing persons with disabilities that receive 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

Anyone who is not defined in the priority group can apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) on January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025 or until funds are exhausted. To be eligible for the LIEAP program, a household must:

- • Have at least one U.S. citizen or non-citizen who meets the eligibility criteria
- • Have income equal to or less than 130% of the federal poverty limit
- • Have resources, such as saving and checking accounts and cash on hand, at or below \$2,250, however resources will not be counted for FY 2024
- • Be responsible for their heating cost

For more information on the energy programs and eligibility, visit the CIP and LIEAP websites.

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/crisis-intervention-program>

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/low-income-energy-assistance>