

EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE STATE

COVID-19 has put additional stresses and financial burdens on households and families across Illinois. The Pritzker Administration, in partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), is leveraging federal CARES Act funds in the State's 2021 budget to expand assistance and eligibility to serve more families with emergency relief programs as part of the new Help Illinois Families initiative.



More assistance for more needs

Help Illinois Families expands on the existing Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Community Services Block Program (CSBG). If you meet the income requirements and submit your application, you may be eligible for emergency assistance to cover the costs of utility bills, rent, temporary shelter, food, and other household necessities.



Water/
Service
Payment



Food



Financial
Management



Energy
Utility Bill
Assistance



Rental
Assistance



Temporary
Shelter



Employment
Training/
Placement

LIHEAP helps eligible low-income households pay for home energy services. This includes assistance with heating, gas, propane and electricity. More information on services available in your region can be found by visiting your Local Administering Agency (LAA) page.

CSBG offers Illinoisans an opportunity to receive support for an array of essential services including rent assistance, food, temporary shelter, medicine and more. Check your local Community Action Agency (CAA) page for a list of available services near you.

Assistance to more Illinois individuals and families

New eligibility thresholds make Help Illinois Families available to more individuals and families, in response to the bigger challenges many are facing due to COVID-19. But the program will still be available to all current qualifying low-income households, regardless of how COVID-19 has affected them.

An easy online pre-application process

A new online pre-application form makes the process faster and easy. It lets you determine your eligibility and start the application process remotely. All applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. Read on to find out if you might be eligible, and to start the application process.

Application dates and deadlines

Expanded LIHEAP assistance and eligibility applies to applications for the 2021 financial year. These open on July 27, 2020. Applications for the 2020 financial year are available until June 30, 2020, but these do not feature the expanded assistance and eligibility.

CSBG applications are available year-round. The expanded assistance and eligibility already applies to all CSBG applications.

Am I eligible?

If you need help with basic household amenities covered by the programs mentioned above and believe that you may be income-eligible, please review the following before submitting an application:

1. Is my household income within 200% of federal poverty level? If your household's combined income for the 30 days prior to application (gross income for all household members, before taxes are deducted) is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level as shown in the chart below, you may be eligible to receive assistance.

Family Size (total number in household)	30-Day Gross Income Total to Meet Eligibility
1	\$2,127
2	\$2,873
3	\$3,620
4	\$4,367

Add \$747 monthly income per person above 4 people.

2. What documentation do I need to prove eligibility? For each household member, please have the following documents ready to confirm eligibility with your LAA or CAA: social security card; proof of income over last 30 days through paystub, check or copy of check showing fixed income amount (e.g. SSA, VA, DHS benefits) or other proof of documentation for any income source; and utility bill if seeking utility bill assistance or lease if seeking rental assistance.

Start your application!

If you believe you are eligible and do NOT need assistance from a live agent, it's time to start your pre-application form online. Start by visiting helpillinoisfamilies.com to identify your county which will route you to the pre-application form linked to the CAA or LAA servicing your county. If you need assistance with completing and submitting your application, contact the call center at 1-833-711-0374 for live support. The call center will provide translation services in English, Spanish, and other languages if necessary and TDD services for callers with hearing impediments.

Check pre-application status

After your pre-application form has been submitted, your LAA or CAA will contact you as quickly as possible to confirm eligibility and determine the amount of your LIHEAP and/or CSBG benefit. Please keep in mind the volume of requests is very large given the impact of COVID-19 and it may take longer for your application to be processed. Applications will be processed in order of when the application is received - check status with your local CAA or LAA.

Help Illinois Families

is administered by DCEO's Office of Community Assistance. DCEO manages three federal programs; Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG), and the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP).

