

Beverly Eaves Perdue
Governor



Lanier M. Cansler
Secretary

State of North Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services

For Release: Immediate
Contact: Lori Walston, 919-855-4840

Date: November 2, 2011

North Carolina Division of Social Services Announces Changes to Low Income Energy Assistance Program

RALEIGH—The North Carolina Division of Social Services has evaluated and updated the application process and eligibility requirements for the state's Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) in accordance with changes mandated by the General Assembly.

Citizens interested in receiving assistance with their heating costs during the cold-weather months need to be aware of these changes to the application process and the eligibility requirements for the LIEAP benefit.

In the past, applications were taken in November and payments were sent directly to program recipients in February. Households participating in the Food and Nutrition Services Program (formerly called Food Stamps) were automatically approved. That is no longer the case. Under the program changes, ALL households must meet income and resource eligibility requirements and must apply for LIEAP funds; there are no longer automatic approvals.

In addition, at the direction of the General Assembly, energy payments will now be made directly to the service provider, such as power, gas or oil companies during the month of the application.

Applications for persons age 60 and above or disabled persons (receives SSI, SSA or VA disability) who are receiving services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) will be taken from **December 1, 2011**, through **January 31, 2012**, or until funds are exhausted.

Note: All members of the household must be 60 years of age or older, or at least one household member must be disabled and receiving services through the DAAS.

If funds remain available after January 31, 2012, any other eligible households may apply during **February** through the end of **March**.

For more information, please contact your local county department of social services. A list of these offices and contact information is available at www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local/.

###

