

H-EAT (Heat and Eat) Program

What is the H-EAT (Heat and Eat) Program?

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NOTE: Glossary words are highlighted. Click on any glossary word to see its definition.

What is the H-EAT (Heat and Eat) Program?

H-EAT is a special fuel assistance program for food stamp households who do not pay a separate heating or cooling bill. Households in the H-EAT program usually get increased food stamp benefits and are eligible for discount rates from their utility companies.

The H-EAT Program is run by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) identifies households who are eligible.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for the H-EAT Program, a household must:

- be getting food stamps
- have gross household income no greater than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines
- be getting less than the maximum food stamp benefit for their household size
- not have claimed the heating deduction when applying for food stamps

Homeless households and Bay State CAP households are not eligible for H-EAT.

What benefits will I get?

H-EAT households get these benefits:

- a \$1.00 H-EAT fuel assistance check each year. (Note: Getting government fuel assistance allows households to qualify for special food stamp rules.)
- eligibility for discount utility and telephone rates. See Utility Discounts.
- special food stamp rules that increase food stamp benefits for most households.

The Food Stamp Program has special rules for households that get fuel assistance. Fuel assistance households are allowed to use the heating standard utility allowance (SUA) when calculating shelter costs, even if they do not pay a separate bill for heating fuel. (See 106 CMR 364 Food Stamps: Determining Household Eligibility and Benefit Level)

The heating SUA increases the shelter cost deduction and usually increases the household's food stamp benefits. See Food Stamps - What are the standard utility allowances? for more information about SUAs.

How do I apply?

You do not have to apply for H-EAT. The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) automatically checks your food stamp information to see if you qualify. If you are eligible for H-EAT, the DTA will send you a notice about the program and let you know if your food stamp benefits have increased.

In addition, you will get a \$1.00 H-EAT fuel assistance check from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and a brochure explaining how to apply for utility discounts and LIHEAP fuel assistance.

If you think you are eligible for H-EAT but did not get a notice from the DTA, talk to your DTA caseworker, or call the DTA at 1-800-249-2007.

You can also call the DHCD at 1-800-632-8175 for more information.

Useful links

The following web sites contain related information that you may find useful. MassResources.org and Community Resources Information, Inc. (CRI) are not responsible for the content of these sites.

1. **Food Stamp Heat and Eat (H-EAT) Fuel Assistance Program Initiative (DTA Field Operations Memo 2007-31)**
Background information, Eligibility rules, and client benefits for the H-EAT Program. Also explains the role of the DTA and DHCD in running the program. Includes the H-EAT Program brochure. (requires Adobe Reader)
 2. **Code of Massachusetts Regulations - Food Stamps: Determining Household Eligibility and Benefit Level**
Massachusetts regulations 106 CMR 364 regarding the calculation of food stamp benefits, including an explanation of standard utility allowances and use of the heating/cooling SUA by fuel assistance households (requires Adobe Reader)
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