

Missouri LIHEAP and weatherization programs.

Grants can help Missouri families pay their heating bills and save money. The services available are the LIHEAP Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program as well as Weatherization. The two programs were designed to help families save money on their utilities and can also distribute financial assistance for paying heating bills during the cold winter months.

These resources can mainly help families and individuals that spend a large amount of their household income on paying their energy bills. Priority is given to the elderly, those with physical disadvantages, children, and others that are hit hardest by excessively high utility and heating bills.

Low Income Energy Assistance in Missouri

Emergency services and financial assistance is offered as part of the Missouri Low Income Home Energy Assistance. One part of the program is known as the Energy Crisis Intervention Program, however the more standard part is the Regular Heating component. Eligibility requirements for either of these will be based on the household size, their income, available resources and who has responsibility for the payment of home heating bills.

LIHEAP can provide financial support for paying your primary heating and utility bills. Or it can offer more material type assistance, which includes things such as furnace and central air replacement and repair, blankets, emergency lodging, shelter, or air conditioners. It can even provide for things like wood stoves. All assistance from the Missouri Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program depends on many factors, including total federal government funding levels and whether an applicant is qualified or not.

A focus of any aid is on those who spend a large amount of their total household income on paying their utility bills. Some of the other qualifications in order to receive LIHEAP include you need to be a United States citizen, be fully responsible for paying home heating and cooling bills on your own, meet specific income guidelines, and have very limited financial assets, including cash, in a bank account.

Energy Assistance in Missouri will give people a one-time grant. The money needs to be used to help pay your heating bills during the colder months of October-March. All types of fuel are covered by LIHEAP, including electricity, heating oil, propane, kerosene, wood, coal, and more. The total amount of the payment you receive will be based on factors including the number of members in your household, total income, and your fuel type. Call 855-373-4636.

Emergency situations can be addressed from the Energy Crisis Intervention Program. This is an option for families that are threatened with a shut off, or who currently have no heat or fuel. While there are limits in place, in general the amount of help someone receives will be based on the amount of money needed to settle your emergency with the energy company or vendor.

Note that the crisis program even works during the summer (if funding is available). So during a hot stretch during the summer money can be used to pay cooling bills. The Winter ECIP is available from October-May.

The **Missouri Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program** is called LIWAP. The goal is to lower utility bills and as a side benefit to improve the comfort and safety of a home while ensuring health and safety. The program provides free home improvements and conservation to Missouri's low income households, especially those homes with children, senior citizens, the elderly, those with physical disadvantages, and people with medical conditions. For many of these lower income people, the decision to pay the monthly heating bill may mean deciding between staying warm, having prescription medication for that month, or buying groceries. It is overseen by the state Division of Energy.

Many households that have received weatherization services can reduce their annual utility bills by up to 35 percent. So this frees up money and allows clients to pay for other basic necessities. It also offers homeowners better health and safety measures, can reduce risk of death from home fires due to utility disconnection, and can ideally eliminate heat-related illnesses or even death. Once someone is found to be eligible and is enrolled, an auditor from the Missouri community action agency will conduct a review and energy audit of the home. This will be done in order to determine the next steps to take. They will then install energy efficient measures on the home. Some of the free LIWAP measures include air-sealing drafty areas of the home, adding insulation to walls and attics, and the program can even pay for the repair or replacement of certain appliances such as refrigerators. The Division of Energy monitors the work of the agencies to ensure state and federal guidelines are followed.

Contact your local community action agency in Missouri, or dial 855-373-4636. The non-profit agency will ask the individuals to complete the appropriate forms and applications. Be prepared to have income documentation to verify eligibility and your low income status.