

Energy Assistance in Maryland

Maryland Policies

- **Universal Service Protection Program (USPP):** prohibits the termination of gas or electricity service to low-income residential customers during the heating season for nonpayment.
 - Applicable November 1 through and including March 31 of the immediately succeeding calendar year.
 - Utility customers eligible for the MEAP are eligible for USPP.
 - Relevant Statutes and Regulations: [PUA §7-307](#); [COMAR 20.31.05](#)
 - Annual USPP Report Available at <https://www.psc.state.md.us/commission-reports/>
- **Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP):** assists low-income residential electric customers to retire utility bill arrearages, make current bill payments, and access home weatherization.
 - Administered by the Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) within the Department of Human Services (DHS).
 - Weatherization administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).
 - Relevant Statutes and Regulations: [PUA §7-512.1](#); [COMAR 07.03.22](#)
 - Annual EUSP Report Available at <https://www.psc.state.md.us/commission-reports/>

Grants and Assistance Available

- **Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP):** grants for heating bills.
 - Federally funded through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).
- **EUSP:** grants for current electric bills.
 - Utility spreads out EUSP grant throughout the year to reduce monthly payments.
 - Bill assistance is partially funded through ratepayer funds via electricity bills, Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)/ Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) funds via RGGI auctions, and LIHEAP funds.
- **Arrearage Retirement Assistance:** grants for past due electric and gas bills.
 - Up to \$2,000.
 - Requires a past due bill of \$300 or greater to be eligible.
 - Grant available once every five years with certain exceptions.
 - Electricity arrearage retirement assistance is funded through RGGI/SEIF funds via RGGI auctions.
 - Gas arrearage retirement assistance is funded through LIHEAP.
- **USPP:** turn-off protection for MEAP participants.
 - Requires budget billing to participate.
- **Weatherization:** energy efficiency replacements and upgrades designed to reduce monthly utility bills through more energy efficient homes.
 - DHCD offers several weatherization programs including [MEAP](#), [Weatherization Assistance Program \(WAP\)](#), and the [EmPOWER Maryland Limited Income Programs](#).
 - All programs are offered at no additional cost to participants.
 - Funding for these programs comes from a combination of federal funds via LIHEAP, RGGI/SEIF funds via RGGI auctions, and ratepayer funds through the EmPOWER Maryland surcharge on electricity and gas bills.

Links to Agencies that Can Assist

- **OHEP:** <https://dhs.maryland.gov/office-of-home-energy-programs/>
- **DHCD:** <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Pages/EnergyEfficiency/default.aspx>