



LOW-INCOME ENERGY NETWORK

Support for residential energy customers impacted by COVID-19

LIEN Zoom Webinar

July 30, 2020

LIEN is a program of ACTO & CELA

About LIEN



- ❖ LIEN was formed in 2004 and is a network of over 60 environmental, anti-poverty and affordable housing advocacy groups
- ❖ We seek to raise awareness of, and propose effective, environmentally sustainable solutions to, energy poverty through:
 - outreach to community groups;
 - outreach to the public, e.g. through the media;
 - participating in OEB hearings and legislative processes on issues relating to low-income consumers.
 - working with policy-makers and local utilities to develop workable solutions.

Content of presentation

1) Assistance provided in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- ◆ COVID-19 Recovery Rate: new time-of-use pricing effective June 1 until October 31, 2020; another price structure being developed after that
- ◆ Disconnection ban extended until July 31, 2020
- ◆ COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)

2) Ongoing assistance for low-income consumers:

- ◆ Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)
- ◆ Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)
- ◆ Low-income customer service rules

COVID-19 Recovery Rate

- ◆ Effective June 1, 2020 until October 31, 2020
- ◆ 12.8 ¢/kWh pricing applies automatically - no customer action is required
- ◆ Upcoming Rate Choice - Effective November 1, 2020: customers will have the choice between the current Time-of-Use plan and the regulated tiered pricing plan

Disconnection ban

- ◆ On March 19, 2020, the OEB extended the winter ban on electricity disconnections for non-payment for residential customers to July 31, 2020.
- ◆ In addition, the OEB called on distributors to be more flexible on arrears payment arrangements.

COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)

- ◆ One time, on-bill credit to eligible residential electricity and natural gas customers
- ◆ Utilities and USMPs began accepting applications on July 13, 2020; processed within 10 business days of receipt.
- ◆ No deadline to apply – program will continue until utilities' allocated share of CEAP funding has run out
- ◆ Level of support set at 50% of overdue amounts for individual customers

COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) contd.

Electricity customers

- ◆ Maximum of **\$115**
- ◆ **\$230** if electrically heated or use energy-intensive medical devices at home

Natural gas customers

- ◆ Maximum of **\$80**
- ◆ **\$160** if residing in **Northern Ontario**

Ongoing assistance for low-income consumers

- ◆ Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)
- ◆ Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)
- ◆ Special customer service rules for low-income customers

OESP

- ◆ Electricity customers only
- ◆ Monthly, on-bill credit – depends on household income and size
- ◆ Recipients of LEAP, OW and ODSP automatically eligible for OESP
- ◆ Applications processing time: 6 to 8 weeks
- ◆ Reapply every 2 years (every 5 years for seniors, CPP)
- ◆ Minimum credit: \$45/month
- ◆ Maximum credit: \$113/month (medical device or electrically heated)

LEAP

- ◆ Emergency financial assistance for income-eligible electricity and gas customers
- ◆ Available once a year
- ◆ Disconnected, facing disconnection, or in arrears
- ◆ Maximum of **\$500** per fuel, per household, per year; **\$600** for electrically heated homes
- ◆ Must apply through social service intake agency affiliated with utility company

Customer Services Rules for Low-Income Consumers

If an applicant **qualifies** for **LEAP** emergency financial assistance, they **automatically** qualify for ALL low-income customer service rules

The applicant must contact their utility to access low-income customer service rules and must be assessed as low-income by Social Service Agencies

Thank you!

Contact us for more information:

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