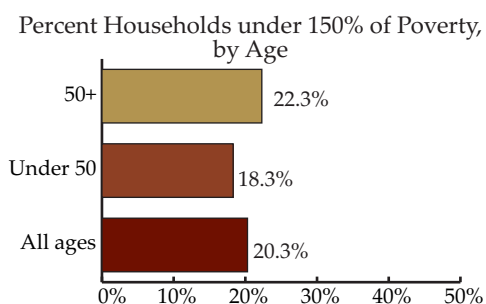


# Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

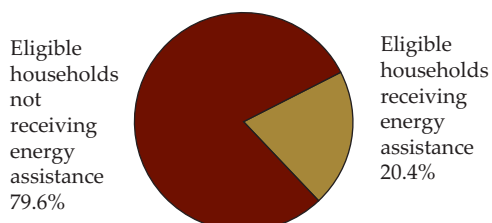
## Maine

### Maine in Brief (2006)

Total state population:	1,321,574
State median income:	\$59,596
Percent households age 50+:	51.1%

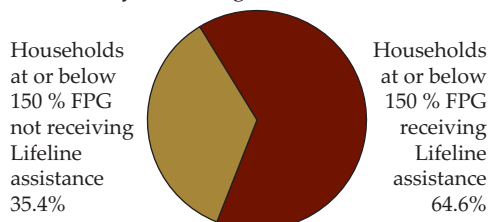


Energy Assistance among Households with Incomes at or Below 150% of Poverty



Telephone penetration rate in state: 96.0%%

Percent Households At or Below 150% of Poverty Receiving Lifeline Assistance



### Telephone Assistance

Lifeline and Link-Up are the primary sources of telephone assistance for low-income households in Maine.

#### Lifeline

Lifeline provides participating low-income households with a monthly credit toward the price of basic local telephone service.

#### Benefits (2006)

Maximum monthly credit: \$13.50

Basic federal support: \$8.25

State support: \$3.50

Federal match: \$1.75

#### Funding (2005)

Federal: \$8,447,251

State: \$2,980,194 (est.)

Local telephone companies recover the cost of providing the state portion of this benefit (\$3.50 per subscriber) in the rates they charge non-Lifeline subscribers for basic local telephone service.

#### Eligibility (2006)

To receive Lifeline assistance, state residents must complete an application with their local telephone provider and certify under penalty of perjury that they are enrolled in any of the following programs:

- Food stamps
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Programs (LIHEAP)
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Beneficiaries must recertify on a periodically to remain eligible for this program.

## Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

### Participation (2005)

Households served: 70,957  
Participation rate: 64.6% (based on 150% of federal poverty guidelines)

### Link-Up

Qualified customers receive a discount on the price of installing new telephone service.

### Benefits (2006)

LinkUp subscribers receive the following:

- A credit of \$30 or a 50% reduction in the charges customers pay for connecting to new telephone service, whichever is less
- The option of deferring payment on the balance of the connection fee (up to \$200) with no interest charges for a period not to exceed one year

### Funding (2005)

Federal: \$358,845

### Eligibility (2006)

Eligibility requirements are the same as for Lifeline.

### Participation (2005)

Households served: 16,410

## Energy Assistance

Low-income energy assistance programs in Maine include the following:

- ⊙ Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- ⊙ Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
- ⊙ Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP)
- ⊙ Electric Transmission and Distribution Utility Statewide Low-Income Assistance Plan

### Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides the

state of Maine with a block grant to help eligible low-income households meet their immediate energy needs. With this grant, Maine distributes payments under the Fuel Assistance Program, Emergency Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP), and Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP), to fund heating, crisis, and weatherization assistance. The state also uses a portion of the LIHEAP grant to supplement the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

### Benefits (FY2006)

Heating: \$1,120 maximum per household  
Crisis: \$300

Clients receive one benefit a year. Benefits are paid to the energy provider unless the client's home energy costs are included in rent, in which case the payment is sent directly to the client.

### Funding (FY2006)

Total: \$63,504,765

Federal: \$52,726,605

Tribal set-aside: \$968,922

Regular net block grant: \$25,835,000

One-time additional net block grant:  
\$294,614

Total emergency/cont.: \$18,331,006

2005 REACH grant: \$1,100,000

Leveraging incentive program: \$172,000

FY2005 Carryover funds: \$2,785,000

Department of Energy: \$3,240,063

State: \$5,000,000

Private/charitable funds: \$5,389,080

The Maine State Housing Authority distributes grants to 11 community action agencies (CAAs) throughout the state. These agencies accept applications, determine eligibility, notify clients, and make payments to energy providers and clients.

The Maine LIHEAP program is funded through a federal block grant. Maine allocates LIHEAP funding in the following manner:

• Heating Assistance:	74%
• Crisis Assistance:	1%
• Weatherization:	15%
• Administration, etc.:	10%

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### Eligibility (FY2006)

State residents with household incomes at or below 150% of poverty (170% if the household includes children age 2 and younger, an elderly person, or a person vulnerable to hypothermia) are eligible for assistance. Priority is given to elderly households.

### Participation (FY2005)

Households served by program component:

Heating: 44,897

Crisis: 4,772

### Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), the U.S. Department of Energy provides Maine with a formula distribution grant to help low-income residents—especially those older, disabled, or living with young children— increase the energy efficiency of their homes, reduce their energy expenditures, and improve health and safety.

### Benefits (FY2006)

Average benefit per household: \$2,744

Weatherization technicians use energy audits to identify and implement energy-saving measures for each home. Examples of these measures include the following:

- Insulating attics, floors, water heaters, and exposed pipes
- Tuning up, repairing, or replacing the furnace or heating unit and/or air conditioner
- Providing ventilation fans—including electric, attic, ceiling or whole-house fans—to increase air circulation
- Stopping air infiltration by weather stripping and caulking around doors and windows, replacing broken glass panes, and installing storm windows

### Funding (FY2006)

Total: \$8,956,565

Federal: \$7,056,565

Department of Energy: \$3,240,063

Additional LIHEAP funds: \$3,644,200

Other: \$172,302

Utility funding: \$1,900,000 (Low Income Appliance Replacement Program)

The Maine State Housing Authority distributes grants to 11 Community Action Program (CAP) agencies throughout the state. These agencies accept applications, determine eligibility, and provide weatherization services, including performing energy audits and implementing suggested measures. The Low Income Appliance Replacement Program is described separately below.

### Eligibility (FY2006)

State residents with household incomes at or below 170% of poverty are eligible for assistance

### Participation (2005)

Households served: 700

### Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP)

The Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP) supplements the state's federally-funded weatherization assistance program by providing eligible households with evaluations and needed repairs and replacements of their heating systems.

### Benefits (FY2006)

Maximum CHIP grant: \$2,500 (lifetime)

The program repairs or replaces dangerous, malfunctioning or inoperable heating systems of eligible households. This may include any or all of the below measures.

- Cleaning, evaluating, servicing or replacing oil, gas, electric, or solid fuel systems
- Replacing oil or gas burners and cracked heat exchangers and installing electrical or mechanical furnace ignition systems;
- Sealing and insulating heating system pipes or ducts in unconditioned spaces, replacing or relocating thermostats; chimney

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cleaning, and installing smoke alarms or fire extinguishers.

In addition, up to \$300 may be used to make minor repairs, clean, tune and evaluate a heating appliance or system in rental units occupied by households eligible for LIHEAP.

### Funding (FY2006)

Not available

The Maine State Housing Authority contracts with community action program (CAP) agencies throughout the state to implement the CHIP program.

### Eligibility (FY2006)

Households with total incomes at or below 170% of poverty are eligible for assistance.

### Participation (2006)

Households served: Not available  
Low-Income Appliance Replacement Program

The Low Income Appliance Replacement Program, mandated through the 2002 Act to Strengthen Energy Conservation, replaces old and inefficient refrigerators in eligible low-income households. This program works in conjunction with state weatherization program administered by the Maine State Housing Authority and Community Action Program agencies throughout Maine.

### Benefits (FY2006)

The program provides energy efficient refrigerators to eligible households, replacing old and inefficient models. Households are also supplied with compact fluorescent light bulbs and energy efficiency education. Also, households with electrically heated water beds are given conventional mattresses.

### Funding (FY 2006)

Total: \$1,900,000  
Utility funding: \$1,900,000

Funding for this program is included in the rates of the state's three largest investor-owned utilities.

Central Maine Power Company: 0.15 cents/kilowatt hour

Bangor Hydro-Electric: 0.03 cents/kilowatt hour

Maine Public Service: 0.03 cents/kilowatt hour

### Eligibility (FY2006)

Households with incomes at or below 150% of federal poverty guidelines, or 170% of the federal poverty guideline, if household has an older member or a young child are eligible for the Low Income Appliance Replacement Program.

### Participation (FY2006)

Energy Efficient Refrigerators: 2,500 households  
Compact Fluorescent lamps: 30,000 households

## Electric Transmission and Distribution Utility Statewide Low-Income Assistance Plan

The Statewide Low-Income Assistance Plan requires all 12 utilities in the state to create or maintain a Low-Income Assistance Program (LIAP) to make electric bills more affordable for low-income customers, and to make assistance available to low-income customers throughout the state. Maine's three investor utilities offer a Percent of Income Payment Plan (Central Maine Power), a rate discount program (Bangor Hydro), and a bill credit program (Maine Public Service).

### Benefits (FY2006)

Central Maine Power: Central Maine Power operates a Percent of Income Payment Plan that allows participants to pay a fixed percentage of their income for energy; the percentage varies based on the customer's level of poverty and electric use.

Bangor Hydro-Electric: Low-income customers of Bangor Hydro-Electric who are enrolled in the state's LIHEAP program receive a reduced rate, termed the "Low-Income" rate. The percentage discount that eligible customers receive depends on their income and rate of use.

Maine Public Service: Under PowerPact, low-income customers who promise to pay their

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energy bills between November and March receive a credit to their account of \$85, \$100, \$125, or \$200, depending on income and use.

The Statewide Low-Income Assistance Plan requires participants to agree to accept no-cost energy management programs offered by or through their utility, the Maine State Housing Authority, or any other federal or state agency. Each utility's assistance plan, with the exception of those utilities offering a Percent of Income Payment Plan, is required to have four distinct levels of benefits, based on the participant's income.

### Funding (FY2005)

Total: \$6,300,000

The plan is funded through the contributions of each of the 12 transmission and distribution utilities in the state, each required to contribute 0.5% of annual revenues to a central fund. The fund, known as the Statewide Low-Income Assistance Plan Fund, is administered by the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA). It is also authorized to receive state appropriations and interest from investment of fund monies. MSHA redistributes funds to each utility based on the number of LIHEAP-eligible customers the utility serves. Community action programs throughout the state accept applications, determine client eligibility, and inform the utilities of customers who are eligible for assistance. The Maine State Housing Authority coordinates administration of the individual low-income assistance programs offered by each utility with the delivery of LIHEAP.

### Eligibility (FY2006)

State residents eligible for LIHEAP and not receiving a housing subsidy are eligible for the program.

### Participation (2005)

Households served: 21,000

## Seasonal, Health-, and Income-Related Disconnection Policies

### Seasonal/Low-Income

Maine prohibits utilities from disconnecting residential natural gas or electric service for nonpayment between November 15 and April 15 if the customer's account is less than three months overdue, or if the amount owed is less than \$50. During these protection dates, Maine also requires regulated utilities to offer LIHEAP participants, SSI recipients, and state residents with household income at or below 185% of poverty the opportunity to pay a portion of each winter bill as it becomes due, and the remaining portion of the bill(s) in installments during the nonheating months.

### Health

Maine requires utilities to delay for up to 30 days disconnection of residential service for nonpayment if a physician certifies in writing that such an action would adversely affect the health of the customer or a permanent household resident. A certificate delaying disconnection can be renewed up to three times in 12 month periods.

### Deferred Payments

Maine prohibits utilities from disconnecting residential service for nonpayment whenever a customer pays a "reasonable" portion of the account balance and agrees to a deferred payment arrangement to pay the balance owing.

### Emergency Moratorium

The Public Service Commission may declare a partial or complete moratorium on termination or disconnection of utility service including gas and/or electric service in cases of general weather or health emergency.