

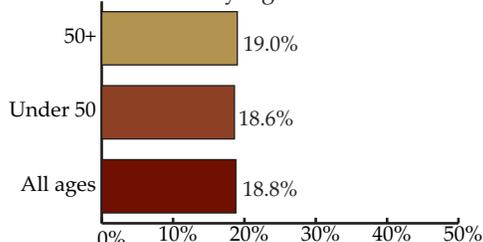
Energy and Telephone Assistance in the States

Ohio

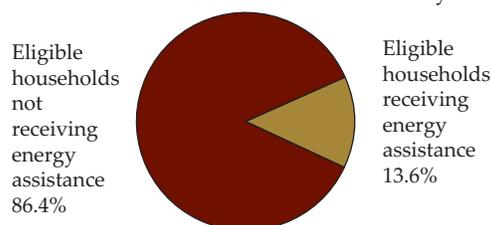
Ohio in Brief (2006)

Total state population:	11,478,006
State median income:	\$66,066
Percent households age 50+:	48.1%

Percent Households under 150% of Poverty, by Age

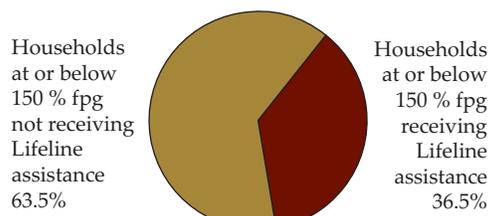


Energy Assistance among Households with Incomes at or Below 150% of Poverty



Telephone penetration rate in state: 93.6%

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 Ohio.

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
 Additional federal funding: \$1.75

Funding (2005)

Federal: \$33,963,470
 State: \$13,165,320 (est.)

Eligibility (2006)

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

- Medicaid
- Food stamps
- Supplementary Security Income (SSI)
- Federal public housing, Section 8
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- National School Lunch Program
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Beneficiaries must recertify with their local telephone provider periodically to remain eligible for this program.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 313,460
 Participation rate: 36.5% (based on 150% of the federal poverty guideline)

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Link-Up

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

Benefits (2004)

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: \$930,351

Eligibility (2006)

Eligibility requirements are the same as for Lifeline.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 54,012

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

- LIHEAP—Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- Weatherization Assistance Program
- Percentage of Income Payment Plan

While both gas and electric customers are equally eligible for all of the above assistance, the Ohio electric restructuring law has made it easier for customers to apply for these programs. The Energy Assistance Application allows applicants to complete a single application to be considered for all of these programs.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)—Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides the state of Ohio with a block grant to help eligible low-income households meet their immediate energy needs. With this grant, Ohio distributes payments under the regular Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and the Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program to fund heating and crisis assistance. The state also uses a portion of the grant to supplement funding for Ohio's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Benefits (FY2005)

Heating: \$350 maximum per household
Crisis: \$325 maximum per household

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. Heating assistance is available from September 1 to May 31; emergency assistance is available November 1 to March 31.

LIHEAP-eligible state residents age 65 and older who were eligible for the state's discontinued Energy Credits Program are now eligible for a higher HEAP benefit.

Funding (FY2006)

Total: \$248,989,254

Federal: \$ 173,989,254

Net block grant: \$100,194,550

One time additional net block grant:
22,064,048

Total emergency/cont.: 41,967,031

Leveraging incentive program: \$2,277,625

FY2005 carryover funds: \$7,486,000

State: TANF Funds: \$75,000,000

The Ohio Department of Development, Office of Community Services, accepts applications, determines eligibility, and makes payments to

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energy providers and clients for regular heating assistance. The department distributes grants to local community action agencies (CAAs) throughout the state to accept applications, determine eligibility, and make payments to energy providers and clients for emergency assistance.

Ohio allocates LIHEAP funding in the following manner:

- Heating assistance: 45%
- Crisis assistance: 26%
- Weatherization: 15%
- Administration, etc.: 7%
- Carryover to the following fiscal year: 7%

Eligibility (FY2006)

State residents with household incomes at or below 150% of poverty are eligible for assistance. As \$75,000,000 in TANF funds were added to LIHEAP funds, the eligibility requirement rose to 200% of the federal poverty guideline for households eligible for TANF, and 60% of the state median income for LIHEAP eligibility.

Participation (2005)

Households served by program component:

Heating:	264,159
Winter/year-round crisis:	141,561
Summer crisis:	23,031
Weatherization:	3,935

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), the U.S. Department of Energy provides Ohio 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: \$3,250

Weatherization technicians use energy audits to identify and implement energy-saving measures

for each home. Examples of these measures include the following:

- Insulating attic, walls, floors, water heater and exposed water distribution pipes
- Tuning up, repairing, or replacing the furnace or heating unit and/or water heater
- Providing exhaust ventilation fans to insure adequate indoor air quality
- Stopping air infiltration by weather-stripping and caulking around doors and windows, replacing broken glass panes

Funding (FY2006)

Total Federal: \$32,418,865

Department of Energy: \$15,501,009

Additional LIHEAP funding: \$16,917,856

The Ohio Department of Development, Office of Energy Efficiency, distributes grants to 34 community action, local government, and nonprofit agencies throughout the state. These agencies accept applications, determine eligibility, and provide weatherization services, such as performing energy audits and implementing suggested measures.

Eligibility (FY2006)

State residents with household incomes at or below 150% of poverty are eligible for assistance. Priority is given to households with elderly, disabled, or very young members.

Participation (2005)

Households served: 6,207

Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)

Ohio requires all regulated gas and electric companies to accept payments from qualified low-income households that are based on a percentage of the household's income.

Benefits

From November 1 to April 15, PIPP allows qualified low-income customers of investor-owned, regulated utilities to pay 10% of their gross monthly income to the utility company providing the primary heat source and 5% (or

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3% for very-low-income customers) to the utility company providing the secondary heating source. If one company provides both gas and electric services, or the customer has an all-electric home, the payment is 15% of the gross monthly income. In summer, the customer pays the current bill or the respective percentages, whichever is higher.

PIPP participants with high energy use may be selected for participation in the state's Electric Partnership Program (EPP), a low-income energy-efficiency program mandated by the state's electric restructuring law. These households are educated about reducing electric use and receive in-home audits and implementation of electric and thermal energy-efficiency measures such as energy-efficient lighting, refrigerators, or water heaters.

Eligibility (2005)

The customer must have a total household income at or below 150% of poverty.

Funding (2005)

Electric PIPP: \$207,000,000
Universal service charge: \$207,000,000

The electric PIPP is funded by a portion of a per kilowatt hour surcharge on all customers of investor-owned electric utilities in Ohio. The gas PIPP is collected through rates charged to non-PIPP customers of all regulated gas utilities in Ohio.

The Office of Community Service (OCS) forwards the information to the relevant utility companies, which then enroll eligible customers in the program and determine their payment and primary and secondary heating sources.

Participation (2005)

Average annual electric PIPP accounts (2005):
209,254
Average annual gas PIPP accounts (2005):
77,914

Electric Partnership Program (EPP)

The Electric Partnership Program, originating from the state's restructuring legislation, reduces electric consumption by eligible utility customers through free energy efficiency services and consumer education.

Benefits (2006)

Trained crew members conduct audits of eligible households and identify appliances or systems that use the most electricity. The crews design individual solutions for each unit that could include measures as varied as light bulb replacement, refrigerator/freezer replacement, heat pump repair/replacement, or installation of a water-bed cover.

Funding (2006)

Total: \$12 million annually from the universal service charge.

Funding comes from a portion of the electric universal service fund rider affecting customers of the five investor-owned electric utilities in the state.

The Ohio Office of Energy Efficiency administers the EPP, contracting with professional crews to provide energy audits and services. The Office of Community Services (OCS) in the Ohio Department of Development accepts applications and verifies customer eligibility.

Eligibility (2006)

Households with high energy consumption that are eligible for PIPP are also eligible for the Electric Partnership Program services.

The Office of Energy Efficiency coordinates efforts with the state's LIHEAP and PIPP administrators to monitor the monthly consumption, bill payment, and account balances of PIPP customers. Households that exceed a predetermined threshold are eligible to participate.

Participation (2006)

Expected participation: 8,000 -10,000 households per year.

Seasonal, Health-, and Income-Related Disconnection Policies

Seasonal

From November 1 to April 15, the Ohio Winter Protection Plan requires utilities to add 10 extra days to the customary 14 days notice given to low-income residential natural gas or electric customers facing service disconnections. The plan also prohibits natural gas or electric service disconnections for utility customers with incomes at or below 150% of poverty who are enrolled in the state's Percentage of Income Payment Plan (see program description above). From October 22 to April 12, the winter reconnect rule allows residential customers who are facing natural gas or electric service disconnections—or who have already had their service disconnected—to pay a minimum of \$175 and agree to a payment plan to have service maintained or restored.

Health

Ohio requires utilities to delay disconnection of residential natural gas or electric service for nonpayment if such an action is certified by a medical professional to be dangerous to health. Disconnections are also prohibited if such actions would make operation of necessary medical or life-support equipment impossible or impractical. Medical certificates may be renewed twice, for a maximum period of 90 days in any 12-month period.

Deferred Payments

Utilities are required to offer customers in danger of disconnection for nonpayment either of the following payment plans:
Six monthly payments on arrearage and full payment of current bills
Payment of one-third of the balance due each month

Low-Income

Utilities are prohibited from disconnecting residential service at any time during the year if the customer has a household income less than or equal to 150% of the federal poverty guideline, participates in the Percentage of Income Plan, and applies for all energy assistance for which she or she is eligible.