



Utility Arrears & Water Assistance Application Requirements:

- **LDSS-2921 Application**, unless you currently receive Temporary Assistance (TA) or have applied within the last 30 days
- **Photo Identification** for all adult household members 18 and older
- **Birth Certificates & Social Security Cards** for anyone not receiving ongoing TA or SNAP
- **Immigration Status** - if not a US Citizen (I-94, Permanent Resident Card, etc.)
- **Verification of household income and resources for the last 4 weeks**
- **Residence, household composition, and shelter expense verification**
- **Shutoff notice/denial of service from gas, electric, or water company**
- **Verification that you are tenant of record and customer of record** (head of household and the person with the utility/water account)
- **Paper copy of your financial statement**, if provided by utility company. If you were not given a paper copy because you completed it over the phone, we may access it on the utility company's website.
- **Pending Account Number** from the utility company, if your service was turned off more than 30 days ago
- **Current water bill and usage printout** from the water company showing your usage and billing over the last twelve months, if applying for water assistance

Steps to Take Before Applying for Utility Arrears Assistance

- (1) Apply for HEAP at 460 Main Street, by phone at 858-7644, or online at www.mybenefits.ny.gov.
- (2) Speak with your worker if you currently receive Temporary Assistance. Placing your utility on voucher may stop disconnection or denial of service. Your worker's phone number can be obtained by calling (716) 858-8000, if needed.

- (3) **Contact the utility company to complete or update your financial statement.** Discuss with the utility company

National Fuel (716) 686-6123	National Grid 1-800-443-1837	NYSEG 1-888-315-1755
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representative your household's monthly income and expenses, as well as any resources available to you. You may be offered a deferred payment agreement (DPA), which may require no down payment, or a small amount you can afford. If you are offered a DPA, this will continue your service and prevent the need to apply for emergency assistance with ECDSS.

- When you accept a deferred payment arrangement, you may be required to submit documents to the utility company to qualify and complete their process.
- If you are not offered a deferred payment arrangement, or if you cannot afford the payment amount requested, you may apply for emergency utility arrears assistance.

Utility Arrears Assistance

If you are otherwise eligible for assistance, Erie County Department of Social Services (ECDSS) may assist you with a one-time payment of utility arrears to prevent disconnection or denial of your gas or electric service.

Utility arrears payments cover a maximum of the last 4 months' bills; if your service has been off longer than 4 months, we may be unable to assist you.

Assistance may be made as an interest-free loan or as a grant. Income limits apply differently for utility arrears assistance.

- If you earn more than your household size might receive in Temporary Assistance, you may be eligible for an interest-free loan.
- If you earn less or receive SSI, you may be eligible for a grant.

Interest-free loans for utility arrears must be repaid within 24 months. Failure to repay your loan in full, or keep payments up-to-date, may result in denial of future utility arrears assistance.

Water Assistance

If you are otherwise eligible for assistance, Erie County Department of Social Services (ECDSS) may assist you with a one-time payment of your current water bill charges, if you have a water account in your name, have fallen behind on making payments, and have received a shut-off notice from the water company.

If your service has been off longer than 3 months, we may be unable to assist you.