

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Several types of energy assistance programs are authorized under state law and funded through a combination of rate payer surcharges and federal grants. These assistance programs are overseen by state departments and agencies though some of these funds are disbursed through grants to community partner organizations.

Customers in need of help should reach out to their utility, [2-1-1](#), their local community partner organization or [DHHS office](#), or the [MI Public Service Commission](#).

State Emergency Relief

State Emergency Relief (SER) is a crisis intervention program administered by MDHHS that provides assistance for energy-related expenses such as heating fuel and electricity. To qualify, a customer must have an income at or below 150% of the poverty level and be past due on their utility bills, facing imminent shut off, or have had their services shut off. Customers interested in receiving SER can apply through [MIBridges](#) or through a paper application that is returned to the local MDHHS office.

Weatherization Services

Customers at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level may qualify for assistance with home improvement projects that will improve the energy efficiency of their home which in turn lowers their energy bills. Local community action agencies are responsible for disbursing these funds and interested customers should reach out to their community agency by calling [2-1-1](#).

Home Heating Credit

The home heating credit is a tax credit available to customers at or below 110% of the Federal Poverty Level. Customers apply for the credit on their annual tax forms through the [Michigan Department of Treasury](#). Customers may apply for the credit even if they are not required to file a Michigan income tax return. The application for the credit must be filed between January 1 and September 30 each year.

Assurance 16 Self-Sufficiency Services

Assurance 16 self-sufficiency services provide households with the tools to reduce their home energy needs and thereby the need for energy assistance. These services include needs assessments, counselling, and assistance with energy vendors. To qualify, customers must be at, or below, 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. Customers interested in receiving Assurance 16 services should call [2-1-1](#).

MI Energy Assistance Program

The [Michigan Energy Assistance Program](#) (MEAP) works with households to provide supplemental bill payment assistance, including enrollment in a longer term (24 month) affordable payment plan for customers of participating utilities, and self-sufficiency services to low-income residents statewide. Importantly, this assistance program can be used for electricity, natural gas, or deliverable fuels like propane, fuel oil, or wood. To qualify, customers must be at or below 150% of the federal poverty level and have received State Emergency Relief assistance.

UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Utility assistance programs are administered by the utilities and approved through the rate case process. These programs may be subject to spending limits established in the applicable rate case.

Residential Income Assistance Credit (RIA)

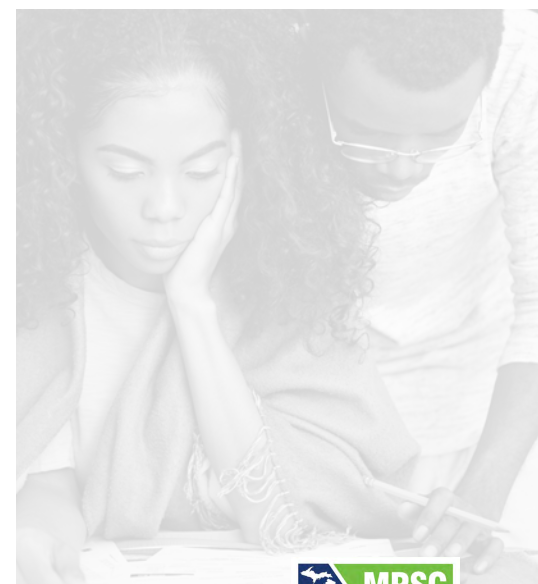
The RIA is a program offered by Consumers Energy (electric and gas), DTE Energy (electric and gas), Indiana Michigan Power, and SEMCO Gas that provides a monthly bill credit (typically limited to the monthly customer charge) for qualifying customers. Qualifying customers have an income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. Assistance amounts, program limitations and requirements, and application information varies by utility. Customers interested in applying for the RIA should contact their utility.

Low Income Assistance Credit (LIA)

The LIA is a program offered by DTE Electric, DTE Gas, Consumers Energy (electric and gas), and SEMCO Gas that provides a monthly bill credit of \$30 - \$40 for qualifying customers. Qualifying customers have an income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. Assistance amounts, program limitations and requirements, and application information varies by utility. Customers interested in applying for the LIA should contact their utility.

Senior Credit

The Senior Credit is available for customers of DTE and Consumers Energy and provides a monthly bill credit of \$3.75 a month. Customers 65 years old and older qualify for this credit but must notify the utility of their eligibility.



SHUT-OFF PROTECTIONS

In addition to the payment assistance programs, several protections exist under MPSC rules to prevent the shut-off of utility service due to non-payment for qualifying customers. Due to the various types of shut-off protection programs, customers seeking shut off protection should contact their utility or the [MPSC](#) with any additional questions.

Medical Emergency Shut-off Protection

Households where a member is experiencing a medical emergency that would be made worse by a lack of utility services are eligible for up to 3, 21 day shut-off holds in any 12-month period. Customers needing a Medical Emergency shut-off hold need to submit the Commission approved [medical certification](#) form to their utility provider. Customers should direct any questions or requests for the form to their utility.

Critical Care Customer Shut-off Protection

The Critical Care Customer protection requires that utilities refrain from disconnecting service where a disconnection would be immediately life threatening. The customer must submit the Commission approved [medical certification form](#) to their utility provider and must renew the form annually as long as the critical care condition continues. In addition to providing shut-off protection, customers who have submitted a critical care customer form to their utility must be informed of any planned service interruptions.

Winter Senior Protection Plan

The Winter Senior Protection Plan prevents the shut-off of utility services for senior customers who are age 65 and older during the heating season (November 1 – March 31). Qualifying customers must notify their utility. Any unpaid balance accrued during the heating season must be paid in monthly installments outside of the heating season.

Military Protection Plan

The Military Protection Plan prevents the shut-off of eligible military customers for up to 90 days with a potential 90-day extension under certain circumstances. Any balance due from the protection period will be split into monthly installments and must be repaid.

Winter Protection Plan

The Winter Protection Plan (WPP) prevents utility shut-off of qualifying customers during the heating season (November 1 – March 31) for reasons of non-payment. Qualifying customers are those at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level and are enrolled in, and making payments under, a monthly payment plan for the duration of the shut off protection period.

Shut-off Protection Plan

The Shut-off Protection Plan is available for qualifying customers of Consumers Energy and DTE Energy. The protections afforded are similar to those under the Winter Protection Plan except that customers up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level may qualify.