

# C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation

“Community Action Agency”



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## C.E.F.S. Announces the Start of the Energy Assistance Program

*The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is available for income qualified households beginning October 2, 2023*

*[Effingham]*— C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corp., as administrator of the Energy Assistance Program in Effingham County, is pleased to announce that funds are available to assist income-eligible households with their natural gas, propane and/or electric bills and furnace assistance for inoperable heating systems.

The program will begin taking applications on **October 2, 2023**, for seniors, people with disabilities and families with children under the age of six years.

On Wednesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, households that are disconnected from their utilities, have a disconnection notice or have less than 25% in their propane tank can start applying for assistance.

All other income eligible households can start applying December 1, 2023.

The application end date is now changing to August 15<sup>th</sup> instead of May 31<sup>st</sup>. Applications will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis through August 15, 2024, or until funding is exhausted. Households that receive a one-time benefit may return during this period for a Reconnection Assistance or Furnace Assistance benefit(s). Due to funding, new Percentage of Income Payment (PIPP) applications will not be taken for PY 2024.

Households must be at or below 200% of the federal poverty level to receive a benefit from LIHEAP. The 30-day income guidelines for LIHEAP are based on Federal Poverty Guidelines, State Median Income and the number of persons living in the household. The income guidelines are as follows: 1-\$2,430, 2-\$3,287, 3-\$4,143, 4-

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5,000. Go to [www.cefseoc.org](http://www.cefseoc.org) or [liheapillinois.com](http://liheapillinois.com) to know income limits for households with 5 members and more.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides one-time benefits to income eligible homeowners and renters to help with energy bills and for reconnection of energy service. Propane customers who are part of the priority group are encouraged to apply when the program opens in October. Propane prices typically increase during the winter months so by applying early propane customers will see their LIHEAP benefit go further.

Appointments can be made by contacting the C.E.F.S. Effingham County Outreach office at 1010 W. Jefferson St. Effingham, phone 217-347-7514 Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Appointments can be made with the outreach office starting on September 18, 2023.

In order that no one is denied the opportunity to make an application we will continue to take applications in-person, by phone, or electronically. Any special accommodation can be arranged by contacting the local C.E.F.S. Outreach office.

The following documentation is required for all applications:

1. Proof of gross income from all household members for the prior 30-day period beginning with the date of application.
2. Proof of Social Security numbers or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) for all household members. Individuals without a SSN or ITIN can still apply and C.E.F.S. will advise accordingly.
3. A copy of current heat and electric bills issued within the last 30 days.
4. A copy of rental agreement (if renting) showing that utilities are included, the monthly rental amount and landlord contact.
5. Other documents may be needed based on your household situation. If you have questions regarding this, please call our office.

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