



## Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate

# CONSUMERS' FACT SHEET

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

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# Utility-provided Assistance Programs FUEL FUNDS



Utility customers can receive help paying their electric or natural gas bills from their utility company. These payment programs are known as fuel funds, and they offer payment arrangements to low-income customers.

Fuel funds are supported by customer donations, matching funds from the utility or the utility's shareholders. In order to receive fuel funds, customers must meet specific eligibility requirements. Income-eligibility guidelines vary from program to

program. The chart below has the current federal poverty guidelines.

To apply for these fuel fund programs, contact your utility, the non-profit organization or the local community action agency running the program. Be prepared to verify your income to apply. Please note that these funds are subject to availability, and funds may run out before the end of the program term.

Some programs also require **disconnection status**, which is when

## 2019 Income Guidelines

Size of household*	Total Gross Annual Household Income			
	135%	150%	175%	200%
1	\$16,862	\$18,735	\$21,858	\$24,980
2	\$22,829	\$25,365	\$29,593	\$33,820
3	\$28,796	\$31,995	\$37,328	\$42,660
4	\$34,763	\$38,625	\$45,063	\$51,500
5	\$40,730	\$45,255	\$52,798	\$60,340
6	\$46,697	\$51,885	\$60,533	\$69,180
7	\$52,664	\$58,515	\$68,268	\$78,020
8	\$58,631	\$65,145	\$76,003	\$86,860

\* For families/households with more than 8 persons, please contact your local community action agency.

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a customer has either received a disconnection notice or has already been disconnected from their utility service.

Before applying for fuel funds, apply for HEAP and all other utility assistance programs offered by the Ohio Development Services Agency



(ODSA). The utility assistance application is available at their website, [www.development.ohio.gov](http://www.development.ohio.gov), or at your community action agency office.

## **ELECTRIC**

**American Electric Power (Ohio Power, Columbus Southern Power)**

### *Ohio Neighbor-to-Neighbor Program*

**Contact:** AEP at 1-800-672-2231 or [www.AEPOhio.com/helpneighbor](http://www.AEPOhio.com/helpneighbor); or Dollar Energy Fund Inc. at 1-800-683-7036 or [www.dollarenergy.org](http://www.dollarenergy.org).

**Benefit:** Grants vary based on need, and customers may receive only one grant per year. Maximum is \$200.

**Eligibility:** At or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Applicants must have paid at least \$75 on their account in the 3 months prior to their application, but this requirement is waived for senior citizens, veterans and active duty military personnel. All applicants must have a minimum balance of \$50.

**Availability:** Cooling assistance: July 1-August 31; heating assistance: December 1-April 30. <https://www.dollarenergy.org/need-help/ohio/neighbor-neighbor-program/>

## **Dayton Power & Light:**

### *Gift of Power*

**Contact:** The Dayton Salvation Army at 1-800-725-2769 or DP&L at 1-800-433-8500 after the program begins in January.

**Benefit:** Based on need and disconnection notice (does not necessarily follow poverty guidelines).

**Eligibility:** Disconnection status required.

**Availability:** Winter heating season. <https://www.dpandl.com/customer-service/account-center/payment-assistance/gift-of-power/#receive>

**FirstEnergy (Cleveland Illuminating Company, Ohio Edison, Toledo Edison)**

### *Ohio Fuel Fund*

**Contact:** ODSA at 1-800-848-1300 or your local Community Action Agency. Find your local agency by calling 614-224-8500 or at [www.oacaa.org](http://www.oacaa.org). You can also contact First Energy at 1-800-589-3101 (Cleveland Illuminating Co.); 1-800-633-4766, (Ohio Edison); 1-800-447-3333, (Toledo Edison).

**Benefit:** Up to \$300. If you qualify because of a hardship, you may receive up to \$500.

**Eligibility:** Household earnings at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Applicants must have an active account with a balance past due. Applicants must have made a payment within the last 90 days.

**Availability:** Year round, or until funds run out. Apply early in the year to ensure funds are available. [www.firstenergycorp.com/content/customer/help/billingpayments/assistance-serviceprogram/ohio-edison.html#energy](http://www.firstenergycorp.com/content/customer/help/billingpayments/assistance-serviceprogram/ohio-edison.html#energy)

## **NATURAL GAS**

**Columbia Gas of Ohio**

### *Columbia Fuel Fund*

**Contact:** Columbia at 1-800-344-4077 or your Community Action Agency. Find your local agency by calling 614-224-8500 or at [www.oacaa.org](http://www.oacaa.org).

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The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts.

The state agency also educates consumers about electric, natural gas, telephone and water issues.

For more information, please visit the OCC website at [www.occ.ohio.gov](http://www.occ.ohio.gov).



The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel is an equal opportunity employer and provider of services.

**Benefit:** Up to \$250 per heating season.

**Eligibility:** Household earnings at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

**Available:** Winter heating season.

*HeatShare*

**Contact:** Columbia at 1-800-344-4077 or your local Salvation Army at 1-800-725-2769.

**Benefit:** Up to \$250 once per year.

**Eligibility:** Household earnings at or below 175 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

**Available:** Mid-January to Mid-April or until funds run out.

**Dominion East Ohio**

*EnergyShare*

**Contact:** Your local Salvation Army at 1-800-725-2769 or Dominion at 1-800-362-7557.

**Benefit:** Up to \$500 for heating bills and up to \$250 for deposits.

**Eligibility:** Household earnings at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Disconnection status required, except for seniors age 60 and older. Head of household must

be unemployed or have a demonstrated personal or family crisis.

**Available:** For heating assistance mid-January to mid-April, or until funds run out.

**Duke Energy Ohio**

*HeatShare*

**Contact:** Your local Salvation Army at 1-800-725-2769 or Duke at 1-800-544-6900 after the program begins in mid-January.

**Benefit:** One-time assistance payment of \$300.

**Eligibility:** Based on need (does not necessarily follow poverty guidelines). Disconnection status required.

**Available:** Mid-January through April 15 or until funds run out.

***\*Disclaimer: This information is provided as a guide to resources. Customers should be advised that all funds listed are subject to availability. Funds may run out before the end of the program term. Please contact the fund administrators for fund availability.***