



2023 SUMMER/FALL PROGRAM GUIDELINES for Fuel Banks

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Operation Fuel ensures equitable access to energy for all by providing year-round energy assistance, promoting energy independence, and advocating for affordable energy.

Operation Fuel offers emergency energy assistance to households who 1) fall outside the government assistance programs' eligibility guidelines or 2) have exhausted their government assistance. Such assistance shall be given in accordance with these guidelines but with flexibility to meet human needs.

GUIDELINES

Beginning Tuesday, August 1, 2023, Operation Fuel will administer an energy assistance program for clients who need aid with meeting their home energy needs (electricity, gas, and deliverable fuels). This program will be for households living up to 75% of state median income. There will not be an assets test. **The maximum grant amount will be up to \$500.**

GRANT AMOUNT

One time grant up to \$500 per household, per year. Deliverable fuel customers may use this grant for one delivery per year. ***Operation Fuel staff will make all final approvals.**

PROGRAM DATES

The Program will start Tuesday, August 1, 2023, and end Friday, November 10, 2023. Operation Fuel may shorten or extend the program season, as funding permits.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

ELECTRIC OR GAS UTILITY: To qualify for a grant toward their electric or gas bills, applicants must have at least one of the following criteria: a shut-off notice, have no utility service, must need assistance with making a required payment to maintain a payment arrangement, or have a past due balance of 30 days or more. Households will be eligible for this program even if they received a grant for their primary heat through the CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP). That said, Operation Fuel encourages eligible residents to seek CEAP assistance before applying to Operation Fuel.

DELIVERABLE FUELS: To qualify for a grant for an emergency fuel delivery, applicants must have at or below 1/4 tank of fuel. Operation Fuel deliverable fuel assistance can only be applied toward future fuel deliveries. The vendor is required to submit a delivery invoice for payment within 30 days of delivery. Households will be eligible for this program even if they received a grant for their primary heat through the CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP).

Additional eligibility requirements include:

- Total household income is within 75% state median income. For hardship coding and/or electric and gas hardship programs, household income cannot exceed 60% of state median income.
- Applicant has not received an Operation Fuel energy assistance grant during the 12-month period of which they are applying. In other words, if a client received a grant on August 22, 2023, he/she is not eligible for an Operation Fuel grant until August 22, 2024.
- Applicant has made a total of 4 payments within the 12-month period of which they are applying. 3 payments throughout the year and 1 payment during the winter moratorium. Applicant must show a pattern of payments. If applicant makes all 4 payments within one month or days prior to applying, they will not qualify.

Some emergency examples can include but are not limited to the following:

- Client is suffering from job loss and is collecting unemployment or exhausted unemployment benefits.
- Client's health is threatened (ie needs utility to refrigerate medications or baby formula).
- Client needs utility to keep medical equipment operational.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Applications must include the following documents:

- *Current* utility bill or shut off notice with a past due balance of 30 days or more. (Utility assistance applications.)
- *Current* payment history. Please access Eversource, UI, SCG, CNG web portals for account history. If you need to sign up for access to the web portal, please contact Operation Fuel staff. (Utility assistance applications.)
- **Proof of income:** Documentation of all household members with last 4 weeks of income. (Utility and deliverable fuel assistance applications)
 - If the household has adults (18 and older) without income, please leave a note in the system providing an explanation as to why the adult does not have income. For example, "Note: Adult child goes to school full time and does not work."
 - If the household has not had income in the last 4 weeks, an Operation Fuel notarized Zero-Income form is required. All questions on the form must be answered. **Note subsidies such as housing, SNAP, cash assistance, child care, etc. are not sufficient to demonstrate income.** For example, if an applicant indicates the only source of income in the home is SNAP benefits, the applicant must complete a Zero-Income Form.
- **ALL zero income, family and friends support, and self-employment worksheets must be notarized. This includes handwritten notes from an applicant's employer, family, friends, and hand written child support statements.**
 - Copy of the signed application – signatures from the applicant & intake worker. (Utility and deliverable fuel assistance applications.)

Note: Operation Fuel will provide notice to fuel banks via email or voicemail if an application is incomplete. If an incomplete application is still pending after 30 days, the applicant may be required to re-apply as the household circumstances may have changed. Additionally, Operation Fuel may deny a fuel bank fee in these cases.

2022-23 Income Guidelines (Will be updated for 2023-24 when data is available)

Family size	60% State Median Income For utility hardship coding	75% State Median Income For Operation Fuel grants
1	39,761	49,702
2	51,996	64,995
3	64,230	80,288
4	76,465	95,582
5	88,699	110,875
6	100,933	126,168
7	103,227	129,035
8	105,521	131,903

An Operation Fuel energy grant is not an entitlement to all CT residents who fall within the income guidelines. Grants to households are approved at the discretion of local fuel banks and Operation Fuel staff. Applicants are asked to first utilize the CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) before seeking assistance from Operation Fuel.