



2024 SUMMER/FALL PROGRAM GUIDELINES for Fuel Banks

CONTACT: Applications@operationfuel.org or 860-243-2345

Updated 8/28/2024

PROGRAM UPDATES: www.operationfuel.org/gethelp

Operation Fuel's mission is:

To lead the way so current and future generations can thrive with secure access to heat, power, and water.

Beginning Monday, September 16th, 2024, Operation Fuel will administer an energy assistance program for CT residents who need financial assistance to meet their home energy needs (electricity, gas, and deliverable fuels), without an assets test. For as many weeks as funding is available, Operation Fuel will provide assistance in accordance with these guidelines but with flexibility to meet human needs.

Operation Fuel offers emergency utility and delivered fuel assistance to households who

- 1) fall outside the government assistance programs' eligibility guidelines or
- 2) have exhausted their government assistance and
- 3) demonstrate household income at or below 75% State Median Income (SMI).

INCOME ELIGIBILITY

CT's 2023-24 Income Guidelines to determine applicant eligibility are updated annually by 211.

They are adjusted annually in Operation Fuel's online application portal when the new figures are released and posted at <https://uwc.211ct.org/connecticut-state-median-income-2023/>.

This update is expected between September and October each year.

CT's 2023-24 Income Guidelines, in effect now, are listed below.

Family size	60% State Median Income For utility hardship coding, Aquarion LIRAP, CT Water grant awards	75% State Median Income For Operation Fuel delivered fuel and utility assistance grants
1	\$41,553	\$51,941
2	\$54,338	\$67,923
3	\$67,124	\$83,905
4	\$79,910	\$99,888
5	\$92,695	\$115,870
6	\$105,481	\$131,852
7	\$107,878	\$134,848
8	\$110,275	\$137,845

GUIDELINES

The maximum grant amount will be up to \$500.

Qualified clients are eligible for one energy and one water assistance award per 12 months.

Operation Fuel encourages eligible residents to seek CEAP assistance before applying to Operation Fuel, but CT residents will still be eligible for this program if they received a grant for their primary heat through the CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP).

The program will open on September 16th and close when funds expire. We expect to serve between 2-3000 clients this season, receiving applications through fuel banks and our online portal.

***Operation Fuel staff will make all final approvals.**

Please visit www.operationfuel.org/gethelp to access Operation Fuel's online application link as well as updates on program funding, guidelines, deadlines, and other information.

Fuel banks and clients who need information not listed there may request help by emailing applications@operationfuel.org or calling 860-243-2345.

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.

Operation Fuel's assistance may not result in a bill credit for the applicant.

Additionally, an applicant who has received an Operation Fuel energy assistance grant in the last 12 months is not eligible. In other words, if a client received a grant on June 1, 2024, s/he is not eligible for an Operation Fuel grant until June 1, 2025.

In addition to income documentation, utility applicants must provide payment history showing at least 4 payments in the last 12 months, and a past due bill or shutoff notice.

DELIVERABLE FUELS: Operation Fuel deliverable fuel assistance can only be applied toward future fuel deliveries, not past due balances (unlike utility payments). To guarantee payment, the vendor is required to submit a delivery invoice within 30 days of delivery and within established program deadlines as communicated by Operation Fuel.

Households will be eligible for this program even if they received a grant for their primary heat through the CT Energy Assistance Program (CEAP). Deliverable fuel customers may use this grant for one delivery per client, every 12 months. It is a one-time grant, with no remaining balance after delivery. To preserve funds for the maximum number of residents, an applicant who has received an Operation Fuel energy assistance grant in the last 12 months is not eligible.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

- Eligible applicants must live in CT and demonstrate income up to 75% State Median Income (SMI). Clients can demonstrate proof of income by either:
 - providing income documentation for every household member over the past 4 weeks, or

- demonstrating categorical eligibility by providing a CEAP or SSI award letter from within the past year.
- Clients can apply through Operation Fuel’s online portal, linked at www.operationfuel.org/gethelp or by requesting in person assistance at a fuel bank. Find a fuel bank by visiting <https://operationfuel.org/gethelp/fuel-bank-finder/>
- All applicants must provide a unique email address with application, and up to date, accurate demographic, and income information for all household members.
- Applicants must provide records for each household member, including income documentation for each household member aged 21 and over.
- Applicants from “vulnerable” households will receive priority review. Vulnerable households are those with at least one member of age 60 and above; or age six and younger; or, with a disability.
- Applicants who demonstrate that they are currently shut off or out of fuel will receive priority review.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Applications must include the following documents:

- **ALL: Proof of income:** Documentation of all household members with last 4 weeks of income. Adults without income documentation for the past 4 weeks may attest to that by completing Zero Income, Friends & Family Income, or Self-Employment forms, available at www.operationfuel.org/gethelp.
- **UTILITY:** *Current* utility bill or shut off notice with a past due balance of 30 days or more. (Utility assistance applications.)
- **UTILITY:** *Current* payment history. Please access Eversource, UI, SCG, CNG web portals for account history. If you need access to the web portal for utility account assistance, please contact the utility company directly. (Operation Fuel can provide our contacts if needed.)

Note: Operation Fuel will provide notice to fuel banks and/or clients 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.

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.