



## 2025 WINTER PROGRAM GUIDELINES for Fuel Banks

**CONTACT:** [Applications@operationfuel.org](mailto:Applications@operationfuel.org) or 860-243-2345

Updated 12/9/2024

**PROGRAM UPDATES:** [www.operationfuel.org/gethelp](http://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, January 27, 2025, 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).

### **PROGRAM DETAILS**

**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.

The program will open on January 27<sup>th</sup> and close when funds expire. We expect to serve between 3-4000 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](http://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 bank staff can log in at <https://cm2gpct.neworg.com/v3/?PageNum=127> to start or resume submitting client applications.

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

### **INCOME ELIGIBILITY**

Clients earning up to 75% SMI are eligible for Operation Fuel energy assistance grants. Applicants must provide income documentation for the most recent 4 weeks, showing income records for all household members with income and/or 21 years of age.

CT's 2024-25 Income Guidelines to determine applicant eligibility are updated annually by 211; updated in Operation Fuel's online application portal; and posted at <https://uwc.211ct.org/connecticut-state-median-income-2023/>. This update is expected between September and October each year.

**CT's 2024-25 Income Guidelines**, in effect now, are listed below. Clients earning up to 75% SMI will be eligible for Operation Fuel's energy assistance programs.

<b>Family size</b>	<b>60% State Median Income</b> For utility hardship coding; Aquarion LIRAP qualification; CT Water grant awards, WRAP enrollment	<b>75% State Median Income</b> For Operation Fuel delivered fuel and utility (electric, gas) assistance grants
1	\$45,505	\$56,882
2	\$59,507	\$74,384
3	\$73,509	\$91,886
4	\$87,511	\$109,389
5	\$101,512	\$126,891
6	\$115,514	\$144,393
7	\$118,139	\$147,675
8	\$120,765	\$150,956

**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.

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. 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.

Electric, gas, Aquarion Water, and MDC Water 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.

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.

**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 earning income and/or over 21 for the past 4 weeks, or
- demonstrating categorical eligibility by providing a CEAP or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) award letter from within the past year.
- Clients can apply through Operation Fuel’s online portal, linked at [www.operationfuel.org/gethelp](http://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.
  - If paid weekly, will require (4) paystubs; if bi-weekly, will require (2) pay stubs; if monthly, will require (1) paystub. Name and date must be on paystub.
  - Adults without income documentation for the past 4 weeks may attest to that by completing [Zero Income](#), [Friends & Family Income](#), or [Self-Employment](#) forms (also available at [www.operationfuel.org/gethelp](http://www.operationfuel.org/gethelp)).
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- **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 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.

All application communications will be made via email only; Operation Fuel will not call Fuel Bank/ client with application updates. Fuel Banks/ clients can check application review status at any time by logging into their account. Please be sure [applications@operationfuel.org](mailto:applications@operationfuel.org) is a trusted email address and/or check your spam folder regularly.

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.