

division of community services



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# Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Weatherization Assistance Program

## *Fact Sheet*

The Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Task Weatherization Assistance Program (HEARTWAP) is designed to provide heating system repair and replacement services to low-income households. The Community Services Unit (CSU), within the DHCD's Division of Community Services, has administrative, programmatic, and fiscal oversight of the HEARTWAP. The program is operated locally by a network of 20 community-based organizations across the Commonwealth under contract with DHCD.

### **How it works**

The HEARTWAP provides heating system services to low-income households. The program is funded through the Conservation Set-Aside from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP, more commonly known as Fuel Assistance). Services provided by the program provide a more comfortable, safe home and a permanent improvement in the lives of the occupants. The program is operational year around. During the winter months, the program serves primarily as an emergency intervention service to provide assistance to low-income clients having problems with the operation of their primary heating system. Eligible households call the local administering agencies and notify HEARTWAP staff when they are having a problem. Heating system service companies, under contract with the local agency, provide services necessary to keep the heating system operating effectively and safely. The client's dealer of record is utilized whenever possible. Provisions are in place for clients to contact their dealer directly if the emergency occurs during the evening or on weekends. During the spring and summer months, the HEARTWAP provides heating system maintenance services subject to the availability of funds.

(continued)

**Who is eligible**

Households with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty level are eligible for the HEARTWAP. Program eligibility is based on household eligibility for the current year's LIHEAP Program. LIHEAP eligible homeowners are eligible for HEARTWAP services. Tenants are eligible to receive some services, but they are required to first contact their landlord, the party responsible for the maintenance of the heating system.

**Application process**

Applicants must apply for and be determined eligible for the current year Federal LIHEAP (Fuel Assistance) to be eligible for the HEARTWAP. The Head of Household must apply to the local LIHEAP agency. Applicants are required to provide household income information.

**Grants**

HEARTWAP services vary depending on the specific needs of the home. Emergency repairs average between \$50-\$150. Heating system replacements for unsafe, inoperable, and irreparable systems can be \$2,250 for a forced warm air furnace, \$2,500 for a hot water boiler or \$2,750 for a steam boiler. Related asbestos abatement (only when absolutely necessary in conjunction with the heating system work) is allowable up to \$1,200. Prior DHCD approval is required for all heating system replacements and asbestos abatement jobs. Agencies attempt to the greatest extent possible to use available utility funds to supplement HEARTWAP. Clients are requested (but not required) to make an in-kind contribution towards the heating system service.

**For more information**

Please contact the Division of Community Services at (617) 573-1400 or toll free at (800)635-8175. Program staff is also available by appointment to provide assistance.