

Eligibility for assistance is based on household size, income, fuel type, and geographic location. Households with the greatest need receive the highest level of assistance. Benefits reflect a fixed portion of average fuel consumption based on fuel type. They range from a low of 19 percent of average consumption to a high of 35 percent. Both renters and home owners are eligible for assistance under the Program.

The Program also offers Emergency Energy Assistance to households certified eligible for regular MEAP benefits. This assistance, provided on a one-time-only basis, is for fuel deliveries, utility cut-offs, emergency repairs, blankets, emergency space heaters, or emergency shelter. It may not exceed \$200. Benefits provided are paid directly to energy vendors selected by the eligible household. Vendors deliver fuel to a household until that household's benefit amount is exhausted. Vendors that participate in the Program do so under contract with the State.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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The Weatherization Assistance Program funds local community based service organizations to help low-income, elderly, and disabled/handicapped persons conserve energy. The Program contracts with seventeen local administering agencies (county governments, community action agencies, offices on aging, non-profit organizations) to provide this weatherization assistance.

For eligible households, the Program provides up to \$1,000 in direct weatherization materials installed free of charge by certified workers. Eligibility for assistance is determined by family size and income. The major energy conservation measures for these homes are planned to improve thermal efficiency. Most commonly, they include insulation, storm windows, weatherstripping, caulking, hot water heater jackets, pipe insulation, and clock thermostats. Recipients stay warmer while spending less money on fuel. The Program promotes community awareness of energy conservation, provides jobs, and stimulates the weatherization industry.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

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The Community Services Block Grant Program funds and technically assists eligible anti-poverty community action programs, which work, through a variety of mechanisms, to increase the self-sufficiency of low-income people. The Program also serves as a clearinghouse of information on and access to other State and federal programs useful to community action organizations.

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) was created by the federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. It replaced earlier categorical grants made by the federal Community Services Administration to local community action agencies. Funds from the CSBG are allocated to twelve community agencies and four limited purpose agencies operating in the State. The funds are granted for administrative and program costs to enable local agencies to serve primarily the elderly poor, near poor, and working poor of their communities. The State of Maryland accepted responsibility for the anti-poverty program during fiscal year 1982.

Community Services Block Grant funded agencies include: Allegany County Human Resource Development Commission, Inc.; Anne Arundel County Economic Opportunity Committee, Inc.; Baltimore City Urban Services Agency; Human Resources Development Agency of Baltimore County, Inc.; Dorchester Community Development Corp.; Frederick Community Center; Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.; Howard County Community Action Council, Inc.; Montgomery County Community Action Council, Inc.; Washington County Community Action Council, Inc.; Shore Up!, Inc.; Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc.; United Communities Against Poverty; Maryland Food Committee; Maryland Rural Development Corp.; and Spanish-Speaking Community of Maryland, Inc.

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