



Step Forward HEAP Office Prepares for Winter Crisis Program

CLEVELAND, OHIO, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the Summer Crisis Program comes to a close, Step Forward is preparing for the start of the Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program, beginning November 1, 2021.

Throughout the Summer Crisis Program, Step Forward processed over 1,000 applications and issued over 800 cooling units since the programs start on July 1.

The Winter Crisis Program helps eligible Greater Cleveland residents that are threatened with disconnection, have been disconnected, or have less than a 25 percent supply of bulk fuel in their tank maintain their utility service. This is a one-time benefit and is to be used in emergency situations when residents are faced with disconnection.

Eligible households can receive up to \$175 if they are a client of a regulated utility, or \$900 if they are a client of unregulated utilities such as electric cooperatives and municipal utilities. The assistance is applied to their utility bill or applied to heating system repair costs. Ohioans must have a gross income at or below 175 percent of the federal poverty guidelines to qualify for assistance.

To apply for the program, clients are required to schedule an appointment. For appointment scheduling call, (216) 350-8008 or visit <https://stepforward.itfrontdesk.com>. Appointments are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Walk-ins will not be accepted. Scheduled customers must have all necessary paperwork in hand to receive assistance at the time of appointment.

Clients need to bring copies of the following documents to their appointment:

- Copies of most recent energy bills; utility bills (gas and/or electric), regardless of account status.
- A list of all household members and proof of income for the last 30 days or 12 months for each member.
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency for all household members.
- Proof of disability (if applicable).
- Birth Dates and Social Security Numbers for all household members.

To find a list of required documentation, or to learn more about Step Forward's energy assistance programs, please visit <https://www.stepforwardtoday.org/energy-assistance-programs>.

For more information about the features of the Winter Crisis Program, call (216) 350-8008. To be connected to your local Energy Assistance provider, call (800) 282-0880 (hearing impaired clients may dial 711 for assistance), or visit www.energyhelp.ohio.gov.

Step Forward helps people find hope, believe in their future and take steps to make it a reality. As the State's designated anti-poverty agency for Cuyahoga County, Step Forward is tasked and trusted to lead the fight on the ground against poverty in our community. The nonprofit organization helps low-income individuals and families address immediate needs and build long-term skills to transform their lives through early childhood education programs, adult skills training and other support. Programs include Early Head Start (birth to three), Head Start (three-five years of age); personal development programs to enhance life skills, manage anger or get on track with personal goals; career planning and job training to enable people to learn or enhance skills, earn certifications or improve readiness to pursue and win better job opportunities. Step Forward also delivers the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). For more information, visit stepforwardtoday.org.

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