Dollar Energy Fund Opens 2026–2027 Hardship Program for West Virginia Households

Utility Assistance Grants Now Available for Income-Eligible Families Facing a Utility Crisis

CHARLESTON, WV, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dollar Energy Fund's 2026–2027 Hardship Program opens today and is accepting applications from households that are currently experiencing a utility termination or have a pending termination of their service. A grant from the program is applied directly to a customer's utility account, enabling them to maintain or restore basic gas, electric, water or wastewater service. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis through September 30, 2027, while funds are available.

The Hardship Program helps limited-income individuals, families and senior citizens who are struggling to keep up with basic household expenses. Many recipients have employment income or receive retirement or disability benefits but may not qualify for state or federal assistance programs. For these households, Dollar Energy Fund often serves as a final option when other resources are limited.

The need for assistance continues to grow as families face higher everyday costs. During the 2025–2026 program year, more than 5,300 West Virginia households received a combined $1.9 million in assistance.

"Families across West Virginia are facing higher costs for housing, food and utilities, and many are just one unexpected expense away from falling behind," said Chad Quinn, Chief Executive Officer of Dollar Energy Fund. "Today is an important reminder that help is available. We encourage anyone facing a shutoff or struggling to keep up with their utility bills to seek assistance as soon as possible."

Customers facing a utility crisis should begin by contacting their utility provider, which can help determine eligibility and provide information about the assistance programs available for customers in need.

New this year, customers can apply for assistance through MyApp Connect, Dollar Energy Fund's new online platform launching today alongside the new program year. MyApp Connect makes assistance more accessible by allowing customers to apply anytime, from any device, using one application and one set of income documentation across all participating utility programs, rather

than repeating the process for each. More information is available at MyAppConnect.com.

Customers who prefer to apply in person can complete an application through one of Dollar Energy Fund's community-based agencies. Customers can ask their utility provider for a referral to a participating agency or use Dollar Energy Fund's Agency Finder at www.dollarenergy.org/agency to find a location near them. In addition to application assistance, these local partners can connect families with other resources, including financial counseling, transportation assistance, childcare support and housing services.

In West Virginia, Dollar Energy Fund assists customers of Appalachian Power, Hope Gas, Mon Power, Potomac Edison, Mountaineer Gas and West Virginia American Water. Income limits vary by utility and are based on the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines:

- Up to 150 percent: Appalachian Power, Hope Gas, Mon Power, Potomac Edison and Mountaineer Gas
- Up to 200 percent: West Virginia American Water

Each grant covers the exact amount needed to prevent or restore service, up to a maximum set by each utility.
Additional eligibility guidelines may include a household demonstrating a sincere effort to pay their utility bills over the past three months and having an outstanding balance on their account. Applicants may also be required to first seek available assistance from federal and state programs if they meet the eligibility criteria. Guidelines for some utility companies may require that utility services be disconnected or at risk of termination to qualify.

Guidelines and program details are subject to change throughout the program year. The most up-to-date information can be found at www.dollarenergy.org/need-help.

Across the country, Dollar Energy Fund provided $37.3 million in hardship grants to more than 76,000 households last year. Throughout more than 40 years of operation and across its 18-state service area, Dollar Energy Fund has provided more than $400 million in grants to over one million households, positioning itself as a national leader in utility assistance program administration.

The organization relies on public contributions, with utility partners providing dollar-for-dollar matching funds to maximize the impact of each dollar donated. Contributions can be made online at www.dollarenergy.org/donate, by sending a check to Box 42329, Pittsburgh, PA 15203, or through participating monthly utility bills. All donations are tax-deductible, and 100 percent of funds collected from West Virginia donors are used to assist limited-income families in the state.

For more information about Dollar Energy Fund, how to apply for utility assistance, or how to make a donation, please visit www.dollarenergy.org.

About Dollar Energy Fund, Inc.

Dollar Energy Fund was founded in 1983 and has grown to become the largest hardship fund in Pennsylvania and one of the largest programs of its kind in the United States. Dollar Energy Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization in the state of Pennsylvania. Since 1983, the organization has provided more than $400 million in utility assistance grants to more than one million limited-income families and individuals. In addition to Pennsylvania, the organization assists limited-income households in Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia. Individuals interested in contributing to Dollar Energy Fund can do so through their utility bills, by sending donations directly to Box 42329, Pittsburgh, PA 15203, or through the organization's website. Additional information can be found at www.dollarenergy.org.

Thomas Meinert
Meinert Mashek Communications
+1 412-427-5762
tom@mm-comm.com

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