



**CLEO**

Community Legal Education Ontario  
Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario

# **Support for residential energy customers impacted by COVID-19**

## **A webinar from the Low-Income Energy Network (LIEN)**

Hosted by CLEO

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# Disclaimer

This webinar is for general information purposes only and is not legal advice. It is not intended to be used as legal advice for a specific legal problem. This webinar was recorded on July 30, 2020 and reflects developments in the law before that date.



# Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that the lands from which we are presenting this webinar are the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississauga of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples are the first educators on this land.



# LOW-INCOME ENERGY NETWORK

## Support for residential energy customers impacted by COVID-19

*LIEN Zoom Webinar*

*July 30, 2020*

**LIEN is a program of ACTO & CELA**

# About LIEN



- ❖ LIEN was formed in 2004 and is a network of over 60 environmental, anti-poverty and affordable housing advocacy groups
- ❖ We seek to raise awareness of, and propose effective, environmentally sustainable solutions to, energy poverty through:
  - outreach to community groups;
  - outreach to the public, e.g. through the media;
  - participating in OEB hearings and legislative processes on issues relating to low-income consumers.
  - working with policy-makers and local utilities to develop workable solutions.

# Content of presentation

## **1) Assistance provided in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:**

- ◆ COVID-19 Recovery Rate: new time-of-use pricing effective June 1 until October 31, 2020; another price structure being developed after that
- ◆ Disconnection ban extended until July 31, 2020
- ◆ COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)

## **2) Ongoing assistance for low-income consumers:**

- ◆ Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)
- ◆ Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)
- ◆ Low-income customer service rules

# COVID-19 Recovery Rate

- ◆ Effective June 1, 2020 until October 31, 2020
- ◆ 12.8 ¢/kWh pricing applies automatically - no customer action is required
- ◆ Upcoming Rate Choice - Effective November 1, 2020: customers will have the choice between the current Time-of-Use plan and the regulated tiered pricing plan

# Disconnection ban

- ◆ On March 19, 2020, the OEB extended the winter ban on electricity disconnections for non-payment for residential customers to July 31, 2020.
- ◆ In addition, the OEB called on distributors to be more flexible on arrears payment arrangements.



# COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)

- ◆ One time, on-bill credit to eligible residential electricity and natural gas customers
- ◆ Utilities and USMPs began accepting applications on July 13, 2020; processed within 10 business days of receipt.
- ◆ No deadline to apply – program will continue until utilities' allocated share of CEAP funding has run out
- ◆ Level of support set at 50% of overdue amounts for individual customers

# COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) contd.

## Electricity customers

- ◆ Maximum of **\$115**
- ◆ **\$230** if electrically heated or use energy-intensive medical devices at home

## Natural gas customers

- ◆ Maximum of **\$80**
- ◆ **\$160** if residing in **Northern Ontario**

# Ongoing assistance for low-income consumers

- ◆ Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)
- ◆ Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)
- ◆ Special customer service rules for low-income customers

# OESP

- ◆ Electricity customers only
- ◆ Monthly, on-bill credit – depends on household income and size
- ◆ Recipients of LEAP, OW and ODSP automatically eligible for OESP
- ◆ Applications processing time: 6 to 8 weeks
- ◆ Reapply every 2 years (every 5 years for seniors, CPP)
- ◆ Minimum credit: \$45/month
- ◆ Maximum credit: \$113/month (medical device or electrically heated)

# LEAP

- ◆ Emergency financial assistance for income-eligible electricity and gas customers
- ◆ Available once a year
- ◆ Disconnected, facing disconnection, or in arrears
- ◆ Maximum of **\$500** per fuel, per household, per year; **\$600** for electrically heated homes
- ◆ Must apply through social service intake agency affiliated with utility company

# Customer Services Rules for Low-Income Consumers

If an applicant **qualifies** for **LEAP** emergency financial assistance, they **automatically** qualify for ALL low-income customer service rules

The applicant must **contact** their utility to access low-income customer service rules and must be assessed as low-income by Social Service Agencies

# Thank you!

Contact us for more information:

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