

## Utility Assistance Available for Recently Laid-Off and Furloughed Employees

Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA) provides utility assistance for low income families through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Applications for the LIHEAP program can be obtained on-line at <https://cmca.us/get-help/energy-assistance/> or at <https://mydss.mo.gov/energy-assistance>.

LIHEAP helps low income households meet their immediate energy needs. Eligibility requirements for LIHEAP are based on income and household size. To qualify for LIHEAP assistance, an applicant must:

- Be responsible for paying home heating and cooling costs
- Be a United States citizen or have been legally admitted for permanent residence
- Have \$3,000 or less in bank accounts, retirement accounts or investments
- Have a household income less than 135% of the federal poverty level (a monthly income of \$2,400 for a family of 3 or \$2,897 for a family of 4).

In addition to LIHEAP, low-income families may also qualify for the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) that helps pay heating and cooling costs when a household's energy is shut off, or threatened to be shut off or is in threat of being disconnected, but may not have received a disconnection notice from the utility provider. Although utility providers may not be shutting off utilities at the present time, it is very important for families to get help now to prevent disconnection of services at a later date.

Central Missouri Community Action is accepting LIHEAP applications by US mail at 800 North Providence Road, Columbia, MO 65203. Prior to mailing the application, applicants need to be sure that they have:

- Answered all application questions completely
- Signed and dated the application
- Included their main fuel bill
- Included income records for household members not receiving food stamps
- Included shut off notice (if in disconnect status)
- Included copies of social security cards for all household members (if not currently receiving public assistance)

Central Missouri Community Action encourages anyone who has recently lost employment income due to the COVID-19 pandemic to apply for the LIHEAP program. The assistance is available to all counties served by CMCA and is honored by all utility companies in the service area.

Please contact CMCA's Energy Assistance Program at 573-443-1100 to answer any questions.

