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March 21, 2022

Department of Veterans' Services Advisory Letter #21-001 A

Subject: Heating Assistance Program

ALL:

1. Purpose. To provide instruction on providing additional fuel assistance for FY 2022. For the heating season between November 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022, DVS will reimburse for an additional fuel benefit of up to \$750.00 per family in EMERGENCY aid.
2. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) pre-application. Recipients who currently receive C. 115 benefits and are otherwise eligible must pre-apply for LIHEAP assistance through the local agency administering the program. You can find your local LIHEAP agency on the Internet at <https://www.mass.gov/hed/fuel>
3. LIHEAP Assistance Must be used first. When a recipient is in need of additional heating assistance, they must first use all LIHEAP assistance available to them. Once the LIHEAP assistance is exhausted, then the recipient can apply for additional assistance from DVS.
4. Maximum benefit allowed for reimbursement is \$750.00. DVS will reimburse an expense up to \$500.00 in additional fuel assistance between November 1, 2021, and April 30, 2022, AFTER the LIHEAP benefit is exhausted. If a further need exists, DVS will approve reimbursement of additional \$250.00 fuel benefit. The maximum \$750.00 fuel benefit is the amount paid by the community to the family or directly to the fuel assistance provider
5. Requesting Authorization for Reimbursement. The request for additional fuel assistance must be on a VS-21 for the month in which the VSO made the expenditure. The notes must clearly state this is for additional fuel assistance with all the supporting documentation submitted including documentation of the exhaustion of LIHEAP benefit and a copy of the fuel bill. Prior approval is not needed for this request.

Evan Makrinikolas
Director of Benefits
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