



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Air Conditioners Available for Low Income New Yorkers

JACK M. MARTINS July 22, 2011

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New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner/CEO Darryl C. Towns announced assistance for low-income New Yorkers whose health issues pose a medical emergency during the extended period of hot weather forecast for the state in the coming days.

New York State has set aside \$3 million in funding through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) that will provide air conditioning units for more than 3,700 households.

Eligibility for the program is determined by:

- 1) LIHEAP low-income guidelines. (For a four-person household, the maximum gross annual income to qualify is approximately \$48,000.)
- 2) Having at least one household member who has been diagnosed with a chronic or acute medical condition which is aggravated by exposure to extreme heat situations.
- 3) A doctor providing written documentation (dated within the last six months) that air-conditioning assistance is critical to prevent a heat emergency.

Households that have a working air conditioner or have received one from the State in the last 10 years are not eligible.

The cooling program is administered by NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) with funding provided from the federal Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) funds, through the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

HCR issued a Request for Proposals to solicit vendors to administer the cooling program on the local level. Twenty-four awardees were selected from across the state, with awards ranging from \$1.75 million to serve all of New York City to \$5,000 to provide services in smaller Upstate counties.

Under the terms of the grant, one air conditioner will be awarded to an eligible household or dwelling unit; installation and labor are included. Grants do not include an additional HEAP cash benefit to cover the cost of operating the air conditioning unit.

Questions regarding HEAP program should contact NYS HEAP Hotline at 1-800-342-3009. Those who want to see if they qualify under HEAP's income guidelines should visit www.mybenefits.ny.gov.