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More Help Coming This Winter With Heating Bills

### **Changes To Allow More Residents To Qualify For Help**

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**CINCINNATI** -- A public hearing was held Wednesday at the Community Action Agency to provide answers to people who are faced with less income and rising energy bills.

Residents heard about changes in store that could benefit more people struggling to make ends meet, including changes to income guidelines that would allow more people to qualify for the Home Energy Assistance Program and the Income Payment Plan.

"This really helps because when you have a household of two and one person might have gotten laid off, and now you only have one income," said Robin Avant, HEAP manager. "It will help people in that situation."

Changes to the HEAP program begin in November and the Income Payment Plan changes will take effect in 2010, but the summer has also highlighted the need for increased funding.

"For our summer cooling program, which is stricter than our winter heating program, in six weeks we obligated \$330,550," Avant said.

HEAP will be funded at its full level from the federal government.

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