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Policies & Procedure

FFY24 A16 reports due October 15

Service Providers must submit their FFY24 [Responsive Energy Self-Sufficiency and Outreach Report](#) (Appendix 7C) by today, October 15, 2024 via eap.mail@state.mn.us.

Any Service Providers with an approved FFY24 *Proactive Energy Self-Sufficiency Plan* must also submit a [Proactive Energy Self-Sufficiency Report](#) (Appendix 7B) by October 15, 2024 via eap.mail@state.mn.us.

eHEAT DEED updates

Service Providers reported that in some instances the DEED reported wages were not properly calculated in eHEAT. Specifically, the quarterly reported “Total” was not divided by three to get the “1 Month amount”.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Add Income Information". At the top, there are dropdown menus for "Income Source" (set to "Wages"), "Verification Source" (set to "DEED"), and "Worksheet" (set to "please select"). To the right, a field for "1 Month Amount(\$)" contains the value "4,755.00". Below this is a table titled "Deed Wage Detail" with columns: Employer, Name, Year, Quarter, Amount, and Update Date. The table contains one row with Year "2024", Quarter "2", Amount "\$4,755.00", and Update Date "10/09/2024". At the bottom left, a "Total (\$)" field contains the value "4,755.00". Red boxes highlight the "1 Month Amount(\$)" field and the "Total (\$)" field.

It was determined this issue was caused when both “Bypass” AND “Submit” were pressed instead of selecting one action (Submit/Bypass/Mismatch) and then pressing “Close” to close the worksheet.

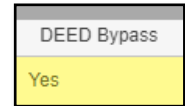
To help prevent further errors:

- The button names have been updated to provide clarity.

- “Submit” is now “Accept Worksheet.”
- “Bypass” is now “Bypass Worksheet.”

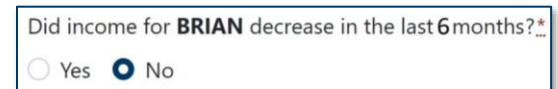


- Additionally, if “Bypass Worksheet” is pressed and then “Accept Worksheet” is pressed instead of “Close,” eHEAT will add the DEED income and properly calculate it.
 - Please note that if you intended to bypass but pressed the “Accept Worksheet” button, either before or after pressing “Bypass Worksheet,” bypass will be overridden.
 - Staff should always verify the “DEED Bypass” column is “Yes” if you don’t want to use the DEED income.



Corrected online app income decrease question

On October 9, Commerce corrected the online application to ask if the household income had decreased in the last six months. The question previously asked if there was an income decrease in the last month. It now matches what is asked on the paper application.



If a household appeals, and would have been eligible or benefited from a known income decrease in the past six months, the Service Provider must reconsider the application.

Thanks to Service Providers for alerting Commerce of the mismatch.

ERR fuel type changes policy updates

Commerce is implementing the changes below in red to the **Fuel Type Changes** section (Ch. 6 ERR, p. 11) of the *FFY25 EAP Policy Manual*:

Elective Fuel Type Changes

Upon request of the homeowner, ERR funds may be used to change fuel types during a replacement as follows:

- The cost of a new heating system with a new fuel type does not exceed the cost of a new existing fuel type heating system by more than 5%. The costs included in this analysis must include a connection deposit, tank setting, LP fuel line burying, fuel tank, the minimum amount of delivered fuel necessary for leak testing (which must be itemized in the ERR invoice – Gallons * cost per gallon = \$XX), chimney repair, ductwork, and other repairs, when applicable. If a household is switching from oil, wood, or biofuel to propane or natural gas, the difference can be as high as 20% without Commerce approval. Commerce must approve in advance any cost difference larger than 20%.
- The household may not pay toward the additional cost of a replacement for the furnace they prefer over the furnace EAP would install.

Fuel for Leak Testing

- To pay for fuel necessary for leak testing, the Service Provider must first use available Primary Heat funds. If the household is then Crisis-eligible, Crisis funds may be used.
- Fuel for leak testing must be itemized in the ERR invoice when paid with ERR funds.
- ERR funds may be used for leak-test fuel, but only if all Primary Heat and Crisis funds are exhausted. A combination of Crisis and ERR may be used, e.g. if \$50 of Crisis is available, but minimum fill is \$100, the Service Provider can supplement with \$50 of ERR funds.
- If ERR is paying for the leak-test fuel, it can pay for up to a minimum fill. This is the minimum amount required by the energy vendor to get a delivery. The amount allowable for ERR is capped at the Crisis max amount (currently \$600) – handle any outliers as exceptions.
- The household or Service Provider may pay with non-EAP funds to get a full fuel delivery, beyond the amount necessary for leak testing.

Medically Necessary Fuel Type Changes

ERR funds may be used to change fuel types in medically necessary situations when the household provides a letter signed by a licensed medical doctor, a licensed physician assistant, or a nurse practitioner stating the need or disability. Medically necessary excludes short-term disabilities. In some cases, more than one household member must provide the signed medical statement for a fuel type change to be allowable. Examples include:

- If the fuel change is requested because the current heating fuel type negatively affects a household member with an issue such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, only one medical letter is required.
- If the fuel change is requested because a household member is physically unable to carry wood to the furnace, multiple household members may need a medical letter. If other household members can supply the wood, a fuel change is not medically necessary. Service Providers must address situations on a case-by-case basis. For example, a very young household member is not expected to supply the wood to the furnace, even if they are physically able to do so.

All related costs including a connection deposit, tank setting, LP fuel line burying, fuel tank, the minimum amount of delivered fuel necessary for leak testing (which must be itemized in the ERR invoice, Gallons * cost per gallon = \$XX), chimney repair, ductwork, and other repairs may be charged to ERR when the fuel type change is medically necessary. See the **Fuel for Leak Testing** section above for details on using EAP funds for leak testing.

EV & MC paper agreements for companies with few households

In lieu of signing the agreement in eHEAT, energy vendors (EV) and mechanical contractors (MC) that serve fewer than 10 EAP households a year may use a paper version of the agreement. Service Providers have the EV/MC hand-sign and date the agreement, then the Service Provider sends an electronic copy to ehat.doc@state.mn.us and Commerce EAP staff sign the agreement in eHEAT for the EV/MC.

These are now available on the EAP Toolkit:

- [Agreement Between EV and SP - fewer than 10 HHs](#) (Appendix 15A)
- [Agreement Between MC and SP - fewer than 10 HHs](#) (Appendix 16A).

Initial program assessment has begun

Commerce is conducting initial FFY25 program assessment activities. Commerce completes a remote initial program review for all Service Providers and selects some for an in-person Initial Program Assessment Visit (iPAV) based on Service Provider risk assessment and other factors.

Program Performance Auditors (PPAs) will reach out to Service Providers to coordinate these activities.

Active eHEAT user review due October 28

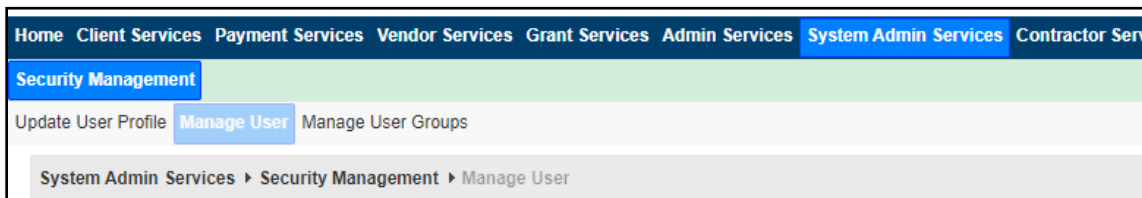
The eHEAT system has controls to prevent unauthorized or unnecessary eHEAT access, and protect sensitive data. Service Providers must have processes in place to manage eHEAT access, including regular eHEAT access checks and during on- and off-boarding.

Commerce requires a quarterly eHEAT user review to identify and disable any users with outdated permissions. Service Providers can use the **Active User Report** to get a downloaded list of active users.

Service Providers must review and either approve, change, or remove access for each active user and email an attestation to eap.mail@state.mn.us **by October 28**. Circumstances requiring user access changes or deactivations in eHEAT should be explained in your attestation email.

Follow these steps to review active users' access in eHEAT and notify Commerce of the completed review:

- Go to System Admin Services-->Security Management-->Manage User



- Search for active users by your 'Organization Name' and the 'Active' toggle showing 'Yes' then click 'Go'



- The results show all active users in eHEAT. Service Providers should validate that all users are active staff and that eHEAT access is necessary for their current role. Any users not meeting the criteria should be changed or deactivated and the circumstances recorded.
- Service Providers must send an email to eap.mail@state.mn.us attesting they have reviewed and validated all active eHEAT users. Circumstances requiring user access changes or deactivations in eHEAT must be explained in your attestation email due by October 28, 2024.
- **Attestation email example:** *“This email confirms the eHEAT active user certification for <SP Agency> was completed on <Date>. All users have eHEAT access necessary for their current roles.”* List the users and describe the circumstances for all user access changes identified through the certification.

Cold Weather Rule reminder

A reminder of what the PUC-governed Cold Weather Rule does:

- Provides residential utility shut off protection between October 1 and April 30
- Covers renters if utility account is in the household name and is the primary heat source
- Requires the household to make and keep a payment plan

Please note the **PUC does not offer financial assistance**. More information is available on the PUC website at mn.gov/puc/cwr.

Key dates

- October 15 – FFY24 Assurance 16 reports are due
- October 15 to November 15 – First federal award typically received
- October 31 – *Expenditure Detail Report* and *Final Closeout Package* are due
- November 1 – *Energy Vendor Audit* is due



Notices

EAP in the news

[New MN law, heating aid take the chill out of energy burdens](#), **Public News Service**