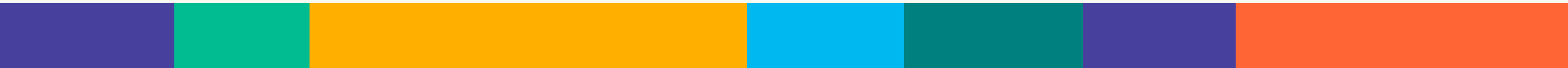




Energy Burdens in Language Diverse Communities

Kiera Alventosa - Energy Democracy Organizer





GreenRoots

GreenRoots works to achieve environmental justice through collective action and education in Chelsea and East Boston.





Energy Democracy

- 250 community members, 97% of whom are monolingual Spanish speakers, on their energy bills in the last 12 months





Energy Bill Discount Barriers

1. Language Barriers

2. Technological Barriers

3. Evidential Requirement Barriers

Discount Rate Application – Eversource of Eastern Massachusetts

EVERSOURCE

If you are receiving one of the benefits listed below, you may also be eligible for Eversource's Discount Rate. If you have any questions about this application, please call us at 800-592-2000, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

☐ **Yes**, I would like to apply for Eversource's residential discount rate. I authorize the agency/agencies providing my benefits to release information to Eversource for enrollment and annual re-certification for the discount rate and to notify Eversource if my benefits are discontinued. I also understand that I am required to notify Eversource if my benefits are discontinued.

Eversource Account Number: _____

Email: _____ **Primary Phone Number:** _____ - _____ - _____

Service Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Eligibility Criteria:

- I am a residential customer (primary residence only).
- My Eversource bill is in my name.
- I am income-eligible for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), also known as Fuel Assistance.
- My household income does not exceed 60 percent of the estimated state median income.
- I am currently receiving benefits under a means-tested program (**check all that apply below**).

I currently receive one or more benefits from the following programs:

☐ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP, Fuel Assistance)*	☐ Emergency Assistance for the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC)*	☐ Veterans Dependency & Indemnity Compensation (DIC): Surviving Parent or Spouse*
☐ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/ Food Stamps) *	☐ Veterans Non-Service Disability Pension*	☐ Health Safety Net Plan - Primary or Secondary (Not Partial) *
☐ Veterans' Service Benefits (Chapter 115) *	☐ Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)*	☐ School Breakfast /Lunch Program*(only for towns that do not offer free or reduced lunch)
☐ State Supplement Program (SSP) for qualified MA Supplemental Security Income (SSI) applicants*	☐ MA Health Connector Plan Types 1, 2 or 3 A*	☐ Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutritional Program*
☐ Mass Health - Basic or Standard* ☐ Head Start*		☐ Public or Subsidized Housing*

***An eligibility letter is required for programs marked with an asterisk (*). Please enclose a copy.**

I certify all the information provided on this application is true. I receive benefits from the program(s) indicated. I am income-eligible and the Eversource residential account above is in my name.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

After you have completed the application and obtained any supporting documents, please submit them using one of the following ways:

- Sign in to your account at eversource.com/discount-rate and securely upload your documents
- Mail copies via U.S. Postal Service to Eversource, ATTN: Residential Discount Rate, 247 Station Drive, NW 200, Westwood, MA 02090
- Fax documents to 781-441-8512



Energy Bill Discount Barriers

1. Language Barriers: All of the information about bills and shutoffs is in English.

Language Justice Solution: Translations into all of the major languages in MA.



Energy Bill Discount Barriers

2. Technological Barriers: Residents do not have digital accounts and are penalized for it.

Technologically Accessible Solution: Accessible online applications without the log-in barrier.



Energy Bill Discount Barriers

3. Evidential Requirement Barriers: The evidence required to prove qualification to low income discount is inaccessible, in English, and places the burden on communities.

Evidential Requirement Solution: Accept EBT cards as evidence and allow for self-attestation.



Shutoff Notices

- Shutoff moratorium this past year ran from October 27th to April 1st
- Shutoff notices are in English resulting in confusion and panic



Protected from Shutoff

**In combination with financial hardship



Winter: No heat shutoff from November 15 to March 15



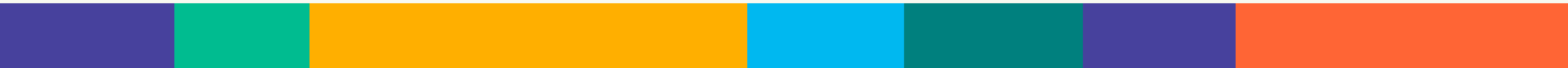
Baby at home: Baby under 1 year old? No shutoff



Serious illness: No shutoff. You will need a doctor's letter.



Elders: Everyone at home 65 or older? No shutoff.





Thank you!

