Local Commissioners Memorandum

Section 1

Transmittal:	07-LCM-08
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Employment & Transitional Supports
Date:	July 5, 2007
Subject:	e-HEAP Electronic Workbook and e-File
Contact Person(s):	HEAP Bureau (518) 473-0332
Attachments:	Attachment 1: e-HEAP Workbook/e-File Survey
Attachment Available On – Line:	Yes

Section 2

I. Purpose

This is to introduce the revised and expanded HEAP Electronic Workbook (e-Workbook) and electronic filing (e-File) process. For the 2007-2008 program year, local districts and alternate certifiers will have the opportunity to process HEAP applications for active type 60 cases using the HEAP e-Workbook. In addition, all districts may opt to allow e-Filing for eligible applicants.

A demonstration video of the e-Workbook is available on the OTDA website at:
https://otda.state.nyenet/dta/HEAP/HEAPDemoRelease1.wmv

In 2007-08, the e-Workbook will accommodate processing of regular and most emergency benefits. In addition, new household members may be added to the case, and processing of denials has also been enhanced. The e-Workbook assists in the determination of eligibility, calculates and stores an ABEL (Automated Budgeting & Eligibility Logic) budget, writes the WMS payment line and initiates the CNS notice.

II. Background

Over the past several years, OTDA has been piloting a HEAP e-System, which consists of an e-File process for targeted applicants and an e-Workbook. The pilot currently operates in five LDSS (local department of social services) offices. In 2006-07, the pilot was expanded to include one Office for the Aging location.

In districts not included in the HEAP e-System pilot, HEAP application processing continues to be a manual process, using paper applications. Alternate certifiers batch and physically deliver these paper applications to the local department of social services (LDSS). Given even the best of circumstances, this process is cumbersome and time consuming. While the HEAP program has been progressing toward becoming more automated for the LDSS, those changes have not been made available to our alternate certifiers. Taking that into consideration, it was agreed that a tremendous amount of time and effort could be alleviated with the expansion of the e-HEAP Workbook and e-Filing to <u>all</u> local DSS offices and to the alternate certifiers as well.

III. Program Implications

Use of the e-Workbook and access to the e-File process are both optional. Local districts may opt to use the e-Workbook but to not allow e-Filing. However, use of the e-Workbook is required if e-Filing is used.

In 2007-08, the e-Workbook will accommodate processing of regular and most emergency benefits. In addition, denials may also be processed. The e-Workbook assists in the determination of eligibility, calculates and stores an ABEL budget, writes the WMS payment line and initiates the CNS notice.

Local districts may also opt to provide access to the e-Workbook to alternate certifiers or may choose to use the system only within the DSS office. However, since the e-Workbook provides alternate certifiers with the ability to perform inquiry regarding HEAP payments and to create and store an ABEL budget, the effectiveness of application processing by alternate certifiers can be enhanced through use of the e-Workbook.

<u>E-Filing Features</u>

The HEAP e-File process allows those applicants who have received a benefit in the previous HEAP year and who continue to reside in the same county to electronically file an application.

Applicants must enter their social security number on the entry screen. A systems check is then performed using the Welfare Reform Tracking System (WRTS) to determine if the applicant received a benefit in the previous year and is filing the new application in the same county of residence as the previous year's application.

If the criteria are not met, the applicant is routed to the printable version of the application.

If these criteria are met, the applicant is provided access to the e-application. The applicant must complete all sections, including social security number. Successful completion of the application allows the applicant to submit the application electronically. Applications that are missing information cannot be submitted.
Application information is not saved; therefore, if an applicant exits the application prior to submitting it, the application will have to be fully completed if the applicant subsequently accesses it.

E-Filed applications can only be submitted to LDSS offices at this time. These applications are processed in the same manner as a mail-in application. Additional information on processing is included the <u>HEAP Manual</u>.

<u>E-Workbook</u>

The HEAP Electronic Workbook may be used to process e-Filed applications and to build a case from a paper application for HEAP-only cases (case type 60).

The workbook provides an inquiry feature that provides information on HEAP payments in the same manner as the HEAP Inquiry screen.

<u>**Access to e-Filing and/or the e-Workbook**</u>

In order for this initiative to be fully effective, each user must have internet access. Each LDSS will be responsible to establish accessibility for LDSS staff and for alternate certifier staff by setting up LDAP accounts.

Your LAN Administrator will receive instructions, under separate cover, on how to grant entitlements to alternate certifiers.

Alternate certifier staff experiencing problems using this e-Workbook and/or having HEAP policy questions should contact the LDSS HEAP Coordinator.

LDSS HEAP Coordinators experiencing problems accessing this e-Workbook should contact their Systems Administrator, who can create accounts and reset passwords.

For accessibility and other problems related to the use of the e-Workbook itself, the LDSS Systems Administrator should contact 1-800-342-3010.

<u>**Training**</u>

Training on the e-Workbook will be conducted by Deb Hazard, from Empire State Training Associates (ESTA). ESTA also conducts the HEAP Basic Eligibility Training. The training on the e-System will be coordinated with the Basic Eligibility Training to provide workers who will be using this system with the opportunity to gain knowledge on HEAP eligibility and processing and to apply this to the e-Workbook. Dates and registration for this training will be announced at a later date.

<u>**Survey**</u>

In order to facilitate planning and training, we have attached a brief survey designed to provide us with information on potential new participants in e-Filing and the e-Workbook.

Please fill out the attached survey (Attachment 1) which will let the OTDA staff know if you plan to use this process for the 2007-2008 HEAP season. Return this survey to Kathleen McMahon by July 20, 2007. You can e-mail this survey to Kathleen at: Kathleen.mcmahon@otda.state.ny.us or you can fax it to Kathleen at (518) 474-9347.

Issued By   _____
Name: **Russell Sykes**
Title: **Deputy Commissioner**
Division/Office: **Division of Employment and Transitional Supports**

E-HEAP WORKBOOK/E-FILE
Survey

County: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone Number: (   ) _____

Do you plan on using the Electronic Workbook for the 2007-2008 HEAP Season?

_____ Yes, number of potential users: _____

_____ No

If yes, do you plan on your alternate certifier using this process also for the 2007-2008 HEAP Season?

_____Yes, number of alternate certifier sites_____

   Number of potential e-system users: _____

_____No

Will you allow e-Filing, as well as the e-Workbook?

_____Yes _____No

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