

# **News Release**

## **Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers, Inc.**

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### **Home Energy Assistance Program Summer Crisis Program to Continue through August 31 July 30, 2014**

**PAINESVILLE, Ohio**— The HEAP Summer Crisis Program (SCP) began on July 1<sup>st</sup> and applications are again being processed by Lifeline, Inc., Lake County's Community Action Agency. Appointments will be scheduled through August 31, 2014.

It's been a steady season for the HEAP SCP. As of July 30, Lifeline staff completed nearly 300 applications for assistance in the first month of the program. Lifeline has also already distributed nearly 40 air conditioners. Nearly \$40,000 has been expended as of July 30.

"It's been a steady month for the Summer Crisis Program," said Executive Director Carrie Dotson. "We're helping a lot of senior citizens, as well as folks with health issues, so it's really great to be able to offer them this kind of assistance."

The HEAP Summer Crisis Program provides assistance to low-income Lake County households with a senior citizen member (60 years or older) OR households that can provide physician documentation that cooling assistance is needed for a household member's health. City of Painesville Electric customers that have a disconnection notice are exempt from the requirement of having a senior citizen in the household or required physician documentation. These households are eligible for electric bill payment assistance up to \$350 *AND/OR* an air conditioner, for First Energy utility customers, or \$400 *AND/OR* an air conditioner for City of Painesville Electric customers. Applicants may not receive an air conditioner if they have received one in the last three years.

For the 2014 SCP, all applicants must be Lake County residents and have gross annual income at or below 175% of the federal poverty level. Please contact the Lifeline, Inc. Energy Assistance Office to see if you meet eligibility guidelines at (440) 350-9160. Information is also available on the Lifeline website at [www.lclifeline.org](http://www.lclifeline.org)

Through August 31, the Lifeline, Inc. Energy Assistance Office will offer both scheduled appointments and walk-in hours each week. A limited number of walk-ins will be accepted on a first come, first served basis on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 8:30 a.m. Only customers who meet the eligibility requirements and have all required documentation will be able to complete their application process on a walk-in basis. All others will be encouraged to schedule an appointment.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling our automated appointment line at 1-866-223-1471. This line will also give callers a list of the required documents needed to complete an application.

Through a partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging, Lifeline will be offering appointments specifically for senior citizens at a variety of Lake County's Senior Centers throughout July and August. Lifeline staff will be at the Eastlake Senior Center on July 31, the Willoughby Senior Center on August 5, the Perry Senior Center on August 12 and the Madison Senior Center on August 26. All appointments will be made between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and can be scheduled by calling the senior centers directly.

For more information on the HEAP Programs, please contact Lifeline, Inc.'s Energy Assistance Office at (440) 350-9160. Lifeline's Energy Assistance Office is located at 54 S. State Street, Suite 303 in Painesville and opens daily at 8:30 a.m.

Lifeline for the Empowerment and Development of Consumers was founded in 1973 with the mission of helping Lake County residents by providing them assistance and life skills programming that is designed to increase self-sufficiency. In 1980 Lifeline became a participating agency of the United Way of Lake County, UWLC, and in 1987 was designated a community action agency by the Ohio Development Services Agency, ODSA. In 2008, Lifeline was designated as a mental health agency by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Today Lifeline continues with the same mission of helping Lake County's low-income residents break the cycle of poverty and make the transition from agency-dependency to self-sufficiency. Lifeline's current programming includes services in the healthcare, housing & energy assistance, information & referral services and consumer education & job training areas. Our motto is 'helping people, changing lives.' Lifeline is currently funded by the UWLC and by grants through the ODSA, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the Lake County ADAMHS Board, Lake County Department of Job & Family Services, the City of Mentor, the Western Reserve Junior Service League, Bikers Aiding Local Diabetics and through private donors.