

December 23, 2009

Tenants of Independence Plaza North
40 Harrison Street
New York, NY 10013

Dear IPN Tenants:

With the New Year just around the corner, and the coldest days of the season still to come, we are taking this opportunity to write to you about a benefit you may be able to take advantage of through the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), a federally-funded program that is intended to help low-income individuals and families with heating costs during the winter. Because the rules for HEAP eligibility are complicated, we thought we would share some of the basic information to ensure that every IPN tenant understands how to access potential benefits. We are also enclosing a chart with some basic eligibility and contact information for your reference.

In order to best ensure that all IPN tenants are informed about and obtain access to benefits for which you may be eligible, we have also reached out to Stellar Management and the state's Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), both of which have been very cooperative.

HEAP Basics

HEAP grants may be available to low-income individuals and households to help with heating costs during the winter months. You may qualify for a HEAP benefit if you:

- (1) Are a U.S. citizen or qualified alien; **and**
- (2) Either have responsibility for heating costs or make undesignated payments for heat in the form of rent; **and**
- (3) Live in a HEAP eligible living arrangement; **and**
- (4) Your income is at or below a certain income, **or** you receive Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance, or Code A Supplemental Security Income (SSI living alone)

If you meet the above HEAP eligibility requirements, your household might qualify to receive a HEAP grant this winter. HEAP benefits differ depending on whether or not you receive Section 8 housing assistance, as we describe below:

HEAP Benefits for Tenants Who Receive Section 8 Housing Assistance

IPN tenants who receive Section 8 housing assistance and meet eligibility requirements for HEAP may qualify for a \$1 per year HEAP benefit. Although \$1 is not much, it is significant because receipt of a

HEAP payment makes it possible for individuals who receive food stamp benefits to be eligible for an increased food stamp benefit. If you receive food stamp benefits and are a Section 8 tenant, you should have received this benefit automatically. If you think you should have received HEAP but have not, you can call the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA)'s HEAP line (a complete list of contact information is included in the attached chart). You should also call HRA if you receive Section 8, but are unsure whether you qualify for food stamps or HEAP.

HEAP Benefits for Tenants Who Do Not Receive Section 8 Housing Assistance


If you meet the income and other eligibility requirements for HEAP, but are not a Section 8 tenant, you may qualify for a regular HEAP benefit of up to \$50 or more. If you do not receive public assistance, you must apply for HEAP benefits if you think you are eligible. More information about HEAP eligibility is available in the attached chart, although individual determinations are made by HRA.


If you apply and are determined eligible for a HEAP benefit, you will receive a notice informing you of the benefit amount and the way in which the benefit will be issued.


Finally, we are working to make it possible for IPN tenants to qualify for emergency HEAP assistance, which is a separate benefit intended to help people who face an immediate heat-related crisis. At the moment, we are urging OTDA to determine that IPN tenants can access emergency HEAP. In the meantime, we are pleased to report that Stellar Management has, at our request, taken the necessary steps that would allow IPN tenants to access emergency HEAP, if OTDA determines that IPN tenants qualify.


If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mary Cooley in Senator Squadron's office at 212-298-5565. Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season, and we hope you stay warm this winter.


Sincerely,

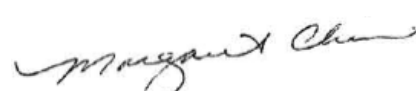

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25th District


Jerrold Nadler
United States Congress
8th District


Scott Stringer
Manhattan Borough President


Deborah Glick
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New York City Council
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Margaret Chin
NYC Council Member-elect
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