

State of Vermont
Department for Children and Families
Office of Economic Opportunity
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Weatherization Assistance Program Overview

The Vermont Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program creates warmer, safer, healthier and more energy efficient homes. Weatherization is an anti-poverty program that puts money saved through energy efficiency back into the pockets of low-income Vermonters.

Statewide Administration of the Weatherization Program:

The statewide program is administered by the Department for Children and Families, Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Three full-time OEO staff administer funding and provide guidance, training, quality control and quality assurance for the program to ensure its effectiveness.

Local Weatherization Providers:

Local Weatherization services are provided by four Community Action Agencies and one non-profit organization as well as a statewide multi-family low-income weatherization provider, 3E Thermal. Except for 3E Thermal, the five Weatherization Assistance Providers are “crew-based” meaning their well-trained employees install the energy saving, and health and safety measures in each home. Weatherization Providers also hire local heating contractors, plumbers and electricians as needed.

Who Benefits:

Vermont homeowners and renters with household income below 80% of area median income (~\$67,300 for a 4-person family) are eligible for no-cost Weatherization service. Due to the existing wait list for service, applicants are prioritized for service based on the following criteria:

- Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP) home
- Household income less than 30% of the state or county median income
- High energy usage in home
- Families with elderly member in the home
- Families with disabled member in the home
- Families with children under 6 in the home
- Time on the wait list

In SFY21, 1,055 households were served with 1,689 total occupants – 490 were elderly, 298 were living with a disability, and 420 were children.

Services:

- **Efficiency Coaching** on energy-saving behaviors and upgrade of electrical efficiency;
- **One Touch Screening & Referral** for health and social service programs, such as the Vermont lead-based paint program, Head Start, aging services, Vermont Quit Hot line, etc.;
- **Energy Audit** of home to identify where the most cost-effective energy efficiency improvements can be made – including blower door testing, infra-red scan and inspection of attics, knee walls, basements and crawl spaces, as well as testing of all combustion appliances for safety and efficiency;
- **Energy Efficiency Renovation** such as insulation and air sealing;
- **Health & Safety Improvements** such as improving ventilation, addressing carbon monoxide and unsafe combustion appliance issues;
- **Home Repair & Vermiculite Remediation** to address structural issues in the home that would otherwise prevent (aka “defer” weatherization);
- **Heat Pumps and Wood Stoves** installed, when appropriate, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- **Quality Control Inspection** to BPI¹ standards.

Impact:

- 4,183 homes were weatherized in the past 5 years
- Approximately 1,312 homes to be weatherized in FY22
- Average cost per job: ~ \$9,539 of which approximately 15% supports health and safety investments
- Estimated 28.7% energy savings per home (energy modeled savings)
- 25% of the homeowners receive a warm handoff to another health or human services program through our nationally recognized “One Touch” process

Single-Family and Multi-Family Homes:

- Both owner-occupied and rental homes can be weatherized when housing income eligible client(s).
- No cost to low-income owner-occupied households.
- Landlords are responsible for correcting any health and safety issues before the Weatherization Program provides no cost energy efficiency measures.
- In FY21, 58% of the homes weatherized were 1-unit homes, 11% were small multi-family homes consisting of 2-4 units, and 31% were large multi-family homes comprising of 5 or more units in the building.
- Approximately 35% of the completed homes each year are mobile homes.

The Big Picture:

- Cost Effective: Testing and analysis of every home
- Effective: Allows low-income households to stay in their home by making it more affordable and safer
- Comprehensive: Tests to ensure that no surface is left uninsulated and the home is safe after Wx
- Holistic: Efficiency Coaching, One Touch Program, “Zero Deferral” Policy, Heat Pumps and Stoves help extend the impact on client lives and further reduce GHG emissions

¹ BPI is the Building Performance Institute. www.bpi.org