

Utility Assistance Video Transcript

Let's be honest. Dealing with utility bills can be tough. But getting help shouldn't have to be.

So, today we're going to walk through the THDA portal together, step by step, to make applying for assistance as simple and stress free as it can possibly be.

You know, staring at a high utility bill is stressful enough. The last thing you need is for the application process to feel like some kind of impossible puzzle. And that's exactly why we're doing this—to cut through all that confusion and show you exactly what to do.

So, our whole goal here is to guide you through every single part of the LIHEAP application, and that stands for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. We're going to cover everything from getting your documents together all the way to hitting that final submit button. You'll know exactly what you need to do to get it done right.

So, here's a quick look at where we're headed. We'll start with what to do before you begin. Then we'll create an account, fill out the application, add everyone in your household, upload your documents, and finally we'll talk about what happens after you submit.

OK, first up—preparation. I know it's tempting to just jump right in, but taking a few minutes to get organized now is probably the best thing you can do. Trust me, it's going to save you so much time and a lot of potential headaches later.

Think of this page as your success checklist. Before you even think about opening the website, just take a minute and gather these items. Having your ID, your proof of income, and that latest utility bill all ready to go will make the whole thing so much easier.

Alright, got your documents? Perfect. Now it's time to actually create your account. This part is really straightforward, and we're going to go through it together right now.

So, when you land on the login page, your eyes should go right to that “Register here” button. See it? It's right there under the main login area. That's where you're gonna click to get started.

Creating your profile is really just three super simple steps. You'll fill in your basic contact info, you'll hit that submit button, and then you'll just hop over to your e-mail inbox to look for the activation link. Easy as that.

Now, here is a really, really important tip. That activation e-mail—it's sent automatically, so a lot of e-mail systems think it's junk. You have to check your spam or junk folder. Look for an e-mail from do not reply at Smart Simple Mailer so you can finish getting set up.

OK, so once you found that e-mail, click the link and set your password. You are in. Now you can log back into the portal and get started on the main application itself.

Your dashboard is gonna look just like this. All you have to do is find that big button that says “Create Application,” the one with the +, and give it a click.

The whole application is organized into these three tabs right at the top: application information, household information, and uploads. It's pretty simple—just start with the first one and work your way across.

Listen up, because this is maybe the most important tip I can give you. See that “Save Draft” button at the bottom of the page? Make that button your best friend. Click it often, and definitely click it before you switch to a different tab. You don't want to lose any of your work.

All right, next up is the household information tab. This section is so, so important, and you really need to pay close attention here. You have to provide details for every single person who lives with you because your eligibility is usually based on the total income and size of your household.

Now, this is the part where people sometimes get tripped up, so listen close. You have to add every person in the house by clicking that +. And yes, that includes you. Even if you're the one filling everything out, you still have to add yourself as a household member.

So, for each person you add, you'll put in their details, and then you have to list out all the income they received in the last 30 days. Being really thorough right here is what's going to make sure your application is totally accurate.

You are so close—we're in the home stretch now. Let's get this thing over the finish line.

This last tab is where we're going to use all those documents you gathered way back at the beginning. On this uploads tab, the system actually makes it super clear what you need to provide. Just keep an eye out for any field that has that little red * next to it—that's the system's way of telling you, “Hey, this one's required.”

Now, what if you click submit and see a big red “submission failed” message? First things first—do not panic. I promise, this is actually a good thing. The system is helping you. It will tell you exactly what's missing. Let's go back, fix that one little thing, and try again.

And there it is. This is the screen we have been working for. Once everything is filled out and uploaded correctly, you'll get this beautiful “submission successful” message. Take a second to celebrate, because you did it. Your application is officially in.

OK, so hitting submit was a huge deal, but the journey isn't quite over yet. Let's just quickly talk about what you should expect while your application is being reviewed.

The first thing is to just set your expectations about the timeline. There are a lot of applications, so the whole review process can take a while—sometimes up to 110 days. It's good to know that up front.

And while you wait, you've still got a small job to do. It's so important to keep an eye on your e-mail and your spam folder for any revision requests. If you get one, you only have 15 days to respond.

And please, whatever you do, do not submit a second application. It will only slow things down.

And finally, if you're ever curious about the status of your application, you don't need to call anyone. You can find out what's going on anytime you want just by logging back into your account. The status will be right there on your dashboard, keeping you informed and putting you in control.