

# PROGRAM GUIDE



Helping People. Changing Lives. Building Community.  
*Serving Beltrami and Cass Counties*

## A Community Action Agency serving Beltrami and Cass Counties

### **Bi-County Community Action Programs, Inc.**

***Bemidji Office:***

6603 Bemidji Ave N  
P.O. Box 579  
Bemidji, MN 56619  
218-751-4631  
800-332-7161

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8245 Industrial Park Rd NW  
P.O. Box 995  
Walker, MN 56484  
218-547-3438  
800-332-7135

**[www.bicap.org](http://www.bicap.org)**

## OUR PROGRAMS

- ♦ Prepare children and families for kindergarten and beyond
- ♦ Help families meet their home energy needs
- ♦ Make housing more affordable
- ♦ Save energy
- ♦ Help youth learn a trade and life skills



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Early Head Start .....	page 3
Head Start.....	page 4-5
Energy Assistance Program .....	page 6-7
Supportive Housing .....	page 8-11
YouthBuild .....	page 12-13
Weatherization .....	page 14-15

# HEAD START: PRENATAL TO FIVE

Head Start: Prenatal to Five is a school readiness program which helps families provide the best possible opportunities for their children in preparation for Kindergarten.

Programs work with families to make connections in the communities they live, support needs and set goals.



## Home Based: Prenatal to 3 years of age

Program includes weekly home visits and Play and Learn (PALs) opportunities twice monthly, year round.

**AVAILABLE IN: CASS & BELTRAMI COUNTIES**

## Center Based: Young Parent Program: Infants & Toddlers 6 weeks to 36 months of age

Program includes four full days per week of classroom experience September through May. Parents have two hours of classroom experience weekly. This program targets first-time, young parents offering assistance for them to be successful in completing educational goals and be engaged in the development of their child.

**AVAILABLE IN: BLACKDUCK & BEMIDJI**

# HEAD START: PRENATAL TO FIVE

## Center Based: 16 months to 3 years of age

Program includes four full days per week of classroom experience with year-round classes.

**AVAILABLE IN: BLACKDUCK & BEMIDJI**



## Center Based: 3 years to 5 years of age

Program includes four full days of classroom experience per week from September through May.

**AVAILABLE IN:**

- **KELLIHER**
- **BLACKDUCK**
- **BEMIDJI**
- **WALKER**
- **BACKUS**



Program includes a combination of up to three classroom days per week and home visits September through May.

**AVAILABLE IN:**

- **PINE RIVER**
- **PILLAGER**



# HEAD START: PRENATAL TO FIVE

## HOW DO I QUALIFY?

Families at or below the Federal Income Guidelines are given priority, but all families are encouraged to apply.

Please apply online at  
[www.bicap.org](http://www.bicap.org)



**BI-CAP Head Start:**  
Prenatal to Five serves more than 300 families each year in Beltrami and Cass County.

### Our programs offer:

- Assistance for families in keeping children up to date with health, dental and nutrition needs.
- Educational opportunities for families.
- Referrals and support services for families.
- Support & services for children with special needs.
- Mental Health support services for children, families & staff.
- Parent leadership & volunteer opportunities.

# ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Energy Assistance

The Minnesota Energy Assistance Program provides financial assistance to households to help pay a portion of their home energy and heating bills. The grants are based on the household size, income, fuel type, and energy usage. Primary Heat grants are sent directly to the household's fuel and/or electric vendors to assist households' ability to maintain affordable and continuous energy by providing grants to lower their energy burden.



## Crisis Program

Households are eligible to receive a Crisis Benefit if they were determined eligible for a Primary Heat grant and are in a heating or electric emergency situation that the primary heat grant does not resolve. Crisis requests are addressed immediately to avert life threatening and no heat situations.

## Energy Related Repair

This program is available to homeowners experiencing a life threatening situation or a no-heat emergency due to a malfunctioning or nonfunctioning heating system. The program will assist in repairing or replacing the homeowner's primary heating system. Proof of ownership is required. This program is available only to households that were determined eligible for the Energy Assistance Program.

# ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Am I eligible?

- Households must apply between October 1 and June 1 to receive assistance.
- Households must occupy the residence for which the benefits are being applied.
- Households must meet the current income guidelines.
- Household gross income from the prior three months is used to determine eligibility.



## TO APPLY

**Call to request an application today:**

**Beltrami County:**

**218-751-4631**

**1-800-332-7161**

**Cass County:**

**218-547-3438**

**1-800-332-7135**

**An application can be found  
online at [www.bicap.org](http://www.bicap.org)**

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

## Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP)

FHPAP is designed to provide direct service assistance to prevent homelessness and to move homeless families into stable housing. This program, funded through MN Housing, is available in Cass and Beltrami Counties.



## Transitional Housing

BI-CAP owns and/or manages scattered-site transitional housing units in Beltrami and Cass Counties. Transitional housing is interim shelter between homelessness and permanent housing. BI-CAP units are available for families with children. Supportive Housing Specialists and families work together to overcome barriers, develop skills, and create a permanent housing plan.

## Beltrami County Housing Locator Program

The Housing Locator program works with seriously mentally ill individuals who are referred by Beltrami County caseworkers. The Housing Locator works closely with participants to locate and secure housing.



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

## **Emergency Solutions Grant- Rapid Rehousing (ESG-RR)**

A program funded through MN Department of Human Services designed to get people into housing as soon as possible with minimal time spent homeless. The program provides for short to medium term rental assistance and accompanying housing support services to address barriers, identify goals and work toward housing stability. Available to those at or below 30% Area Median Income. Tenants must pay 30% of their income toward rent.

## **Cass County Scattered-Site Rapid Rehousing**

Available for homeless families and individuals. Participants in this program find affordable units on the open market and pay 30% of their income towards rent. Services include housing support services for up to 24 months to address barriers to housing stability.



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

## DHS Long-Term Homeless Services Grant

BI-CAP is one of six partners (five Community Action Agencies, and Evergreen Youth & Family Services) for the DHS Service Grant.

Service dollars are available to households who are experiencing

long-term homelessness by MN State definition. This program is available in Cass and Beltrami Counties and is funded by the State Department of Human Services (DHS).



## Housing Trust Fund Rental Assistance Program

Housing Trust Fund Rental Assistance is accessible to clients who appear as High Priority Homeless on the Coordinated Entry Priority Lists. The program provides a rental subsidy based on income for up to 60 months. The program is available in Cass and Beltrami Counties and is funded by MN Housing. Tenants pay 30% of their income for rent.

## Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing serves homeless individuals with a documented disability. Participants receive a rental subsidy and accompanying housing support services. PSH is offered in both Beltrami and Cass Counties.

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

## Homework Starts With Home (HSWH)

Rental assistance and housing support services for homeless families with school-age children, Pre-K to 12th Grade, and unaccompanied youth in Beltrami County.

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

BI-CAP is a SNAP Outreach site to provide information regarding SNAP benefits and assist applicants to apply for food support.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**To request housing assistance, please call: Beltrami**

**County:** (218) 751-4631 or (800) 332-7161

**Cass County:** (218) 547-3438 or (800) 332-7135

# YOUTHBUILD



## YouthBuild

YouthBuild is a comprehensive work training program with five components: Education, Construction, Leadership Development, Case Management support, and Placement Services. Orientation for entry into the program is every six months.

BI-CAP YouthBuild partners with Cass Lake Bena ALC and ABE to provide on-site teaching staff for participants to earn their high school diploma or equivalency. Participants perform skills assessments, explore careers and post-secondary options, write résumés, and learn other life skills like budgeting, cooking, vehicle maintenance, gardening, and more.

Construction is a method by



**BI-CAP's YouthBuild program works with youth, ages 16-24, who have left the traditional school system.**

**Participants average approximately 29 hours per week earning minimum wage while participating in all components of the six-month minimum program.**

# YOUTHBUILD

which participants can give back to the community.

This teaches them valuable work readiness skills while building a credible work history through the process of building a single family home from ground-up. The home is then sold to a low-income community member. Service Learning and Community Volunteering are also built into the program.

Participants have the opportunity to be a part of the Policy Committee to represent the student body as well as experience increased responsibility as they alternate weekly leadership roles. One to two Interns are also chosen to assist staff based on their attendance and performance over the duration of the program.

YouthBuild staff utilize community partners and program resources to try to help participants resolve barriers, such as: transportation, housing, child care, and acquiring their driver's permit/license. Participants also receive employment and post-secondary placement assistance as they are ready to exit the program.



## REGISTRATION

If interested in the YouthBuild Program, please fill out an application at 3023 Mill St. NE, Bemidji.

Call 218-333-9836 with questions.

# WEATHERIZATION

## DOE Weatherization

BI-CAP's Weatherization department works with clients to improve the energy efficiency, health and safety, and to decrease the energy consumption of their home.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Homeowners who applied for Energy Assistance are referred to this program.

Priority is given to elderly and disabled households with high energy consumption and single head of households with children. Agency Energy Auditors perform pre- and post-inspections with the use of blower doors. This test checks the air tightness of the home, allowing the energy auditor and contractor to identify air leaks, central air quality, and prevent over tightness. All measures performed must be determined to ensure cost effectiveness utilizing the Weatherization Assistant software.

The auditor creates a customized work order and local contractors install the identified energy efficient and health and safety measures. A certified Quality Control Inspector ensures all work is completed correctly and that the home is safe for the occupants.

## WHAT IS WEATHERIZATION?

The following energy saving measures are eligible activities:

- **AIR SEALING**
- **UPGRADING FURNACE EFFICIENCY**
- **INSULATION FOR HOMES SHELL**
- **HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES**
- **IN SOME CASES DOOR AND/OR WINDOW**



# WEATHERIZATION

There is no cost to the recipient of weatherization.

Weatherization measures are performed on both mobile homes and houses, utilizing insured and licensed local contractors.



## Conservation Improvement Programs

The BI-CAP Weatherization department partners with several local utility companies to implement the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP). This program is designed to help income qualified customers save money on their electric bills. Agency Energy Auditors perform an electric analysis to determine the energy saving needs of the household. Items provided include, LED lightbulbs throughout the home, water saving showerheads, faucet aerators, refrigerator and freezer replacement and outlet timers to plug in vehicles. In some cases, additional weatherization measures may be provided such as insulation and air sealing.

Participants must be approved for Energy Assistance (to verify they meet income guidelines). This program ends in December and Starts again in January.





*BI-CAP subscribes to a policy of equal access/opportunity. Applicants for services will not be discriminated against on the basis of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, nor military status.*

## **Mission -**

*To help low-income people obtain self-sufficiency.*

## **Vision -**

*A thriving, healthy and inclusive  
Beltrami & Cass County.*