

Attention Douglas County Residents

***You or someone you know may
qualify to receive assistance with:***

- Utility Costs***
- Property Taxes***
- Medicare***

An Outreach Initiative Sponsored by:



Atlanta Regional Commission, Area Agency on Aging

www.agewiseconnection.com

November 2011- March 2012

Information contained in this document is subject to change.

Please call numbers listed for updated information.

Douglas County – Senior Citizen Utility Discount Programs (2012)

General Guidelines Include: • Annual household income restrictions. • Must live at address where utility is provided. (Please check with company)
 • Billing must be in name of qualified person.

LIHEAP Program	Natural Gas	Electric	Phone	Water
<p>BENEFITS</p> <p>The Low Income Home Energy Assistance program helps Georgians with heating bills. Qualifying applicants receive a payment sent to their home energy supplier, for gas, electricity, propane gas, wood coal or kerosene. When funds are available, cooling assistance is offered during the summer months. The benefit amount ranges from \$310 to \$350 depending on one's yearly income level. Family income can not exceed 60% of state median income. For a one-person household, that would be \$21,504; for two person \$28,116; for three person \$34,728; for four people \$41,340; for five people \$47,964; for six people \$54,576; for seven people \$55,812; for eight people \$57,060.</p> <p>LIHEAP Program Period</p> <p>For Homebound individuals and seniors (age 65+) November 1 – all others December 1 – April 30 or until funds are exhausted.</p> <p>For more information contact: Tallatoona Human Resources Department 6287 Fairburn Road Douglasville, GA 30314 770-949-6339</p>	<p>BENEFITS</p> <p>Discounts on per-therm rates and customer service fee for senior citizens.</p> <p>Application Process</p> <p>1. For general senior discounts, contact the gas provider of your choice and ask for the senior rate. A comparison chart is available through the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) Web site: www.psc.state.ga.us</p> <p>2. Customers with a total household income of \$14,355 or less and are 65 years of age or older qualify for a credit of up to \$14.00 to their bill. The bill must be in the name of the senior who applies for the discount. The credit is applied to the Atlanta Gas Light Company base charge portion of the bill. For an application, call your provider or Atlanta Gas Light at (770) 994-1946 or visit the Georgia PSC at Web site above.</p> <p>3. For questions about natural gas providers senior discount programs contact: Georgia Public Service Commission 244 Washington St., SW Atlanta, GA 30334 404-656-4501</p>	<p>BENEFITS</p> <p>Georgia Power offers \$20.00 off monthly bill.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Total household income must be \$21,660 or less. Applicant must be 65 years or older with proof of age. Bill must be in applicant's name. <p>Application Process</p> <p>Call the telephone number on your electric bill (1-888-660-5890) or visit your nearest Georgia Power office to obtain an application. Mail applications to: Georgia Power BIN #10101 241 Ralph McGill Blvd, Atlanta, GA 30308</p>	<p>Lifeline is a government program that offers qualified low-income households a discount on their monthly local telephone bill. For more information, visit www.lifelinesupport.org/li/low-income/lifelinesupport.</p> <p>BENEFITS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> \$13.50 off monthly bill Connection charge waived prior to connection of service. <p>Application Process</p> <p>Must be a recipient of one or more of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Atlanta Gas Light or electric senior citizen discount Medicaid beneficiary SSI recipient Public Housing LIHEAP assistance Food stamps <p>Contact: AT&T 4th Floor 304 Pine Ave. Albany, GA 31702 1-800-288-2020</p> <p><i>*Other telephone companies may offer this discount. Check with your provider.</i></p>	<p>Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority 8763 Hospital Drive Douglasville, GA 30134 (770) 920-3823</p> <p>Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority offer Senior Citizen discount on water and sewer base rates. The discount on the water base rate is \$6.48 and the discount on the sewer base rates is \$2.31. Must be 65 or older with income of \$24,900 or less and it must be the resident's primary residence to qualify. Call for an application or can apply in person at the office. Application must be notarized.</p>

You May Qualify for the Medicare Savings Program (2012)

Income Guidelines subject to change April 1, 2012

What is the Medicare Savings Program?	A federal program designed to assist individuals pay their Medicare premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance.
Who qualifies?	Individuals with Medicare
How do I qualify?	Qualifications are based on income and assets. See below for guidelines.
Where do I apply?	Call GeorgiaCares at 1-866-552-4464 (option 4) or apply at the Douglas County DFCS 770-489-3000

Program Name	Program Will Pay	Income Guidelines* (Monthly)	Asset Guidelines*
<input type="checkbox"/> QMB Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries	Medicare 2012 Part B Premium \$99.90	Individual – \$928 Couple – \$1,246	Individual – \$6,680 Couple – \$10,020
	Medicare 2012 Deductibles & Coinsurance <input type="checkbox"/> \$140 Annual Deductible <input type="checkbox"/> 20% Co- payment		
<input type="checkbox"/> SLMB Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary	Medicare 2012 Part B Premium \$99.90	Individual – \$1,061 Couple – \$1,420	Individual – \$6,680 Couple – \$10,020
<input type="checkbox"/> QI-1 (Qualifying Individual)	Medicare 2012 Part B Premium \$99.90	Individual – \$1,190 Couple – \$1,595	Individual – \$6,680 Couple – \$10,020

You May Qualify for the Low Income Subsidy Program for Medicare Part D

What is the Low Income Subsidy for Medicare Part D?	A federal program designed to assist individuals pay prescription costs
Who qualifies?	Individuals with Medicare
How do I qualify?	Qualifications are based on income and assets. Monthly income must be less than \$1,300 as an individual or \$1,712 as a couple. Assets must also be less than \$11,710 as an individual or \$23,410 as a couple
Where do I apply?	Call GeorgiaCares at 1-866-552-4464 (option 4) or Social Security at 1-800-772-1213

* If burial expenses have not been pre-paid, each person can exclude \$10,000 from their assets (designated burial allowances).

A Tax Break for Douglas County Homeowners

Homestead exemptions provide a significant reduction in annual property taxes and are available to individuals who own and reside in a home in Douglas County. The property must be the legal residence for all purposes (including filing of Federal and State income taxes, registering any owned or leased vehicles, registering to vote, etc.) on January 1 of each year to qualify for or retain an exemption. Applications for all exemptions may be made year round, but must be made prior to April 1st to be effective in the calendar year in which the application is made. Apply on-line at www.douglastaxcommissioner.com.

Senior or special exemptions must be applied in person in the Tax Office with proof of age (Drivers License or State ID), eligibility, and Douglas County tag registration. Age requirements reflect the age of the property owner as of **JANUARY 1st** of any given year. Mobile home owners must own the land and home to qualify. These exemptions are also **automatically renewed** each year unless there is a change in ownership of the property, or unless you no longer meet the eligibility requirements. The following are exemptions available in Douglas County if you meet the above requirements:

- **Regular Homestead** - A reduction of \$2000 off the assessed value for state and school taxes and \$6000 for county taxes; must own and occupy home as your legal residence. Qualification of this exemption automatically qualifies you for the county floating exemption which applies to the county tax portion only - as your assessment increases on your home, your COUNTY exemption goes up to offset (does not apply to improvements).
- **65 Year Old** - a reduction of up to \$8000 for COUNTY tax. Requirements include a) proof of your age and b) proof your NET income for the previous year did not exceed \$10,000 (husband and wife) (DOES NOT include social security or retirement UP TO A SPECIFIED AMOUNT.)
- **65 Year Old FOR STATE TAX ONLY** - a reduction of 100% of the assessed value of home and up to 10 contiguous acres of land AND \$4,000 on balance of value. Proof of age required.
- **65 Year Old - Villa Rica Resident** a reduction of 100% assessed value for CITY TAX ONLY. Requirements include a) proof of your age and b) proof your NET income for the previous year did not exceed \$10,000 (husband and wife) (DOES NOT include social security or retirement UP TO A SPECIFIED AMOUNT.)
- **65 Year Old** - City of Douglasville Resident - a reduction of \$4000 off the assessed value for CITY TAX only. Requirements include a) proof of age; b) your home is within the City of Douglasville limits; and c) your total combined income from ALL sources cannot exceed \$10,000.
- **All School** - a reduction of ALL your assessed value for SCHOOL tax. The only requirement is that you are 62 YEARS OF AGE as of JAN 1 and you must provide proof of age upon applying.
- **Disabled Persons** -a reduction of up to half your assessed value for school tax. You must provide documents from two sources (Doctors and/or Social Security) stating 100% permanent disability.
- **Disabled Veteran** - a reduction of up to \$50,000 of your assessed value for state, county, and school tax. Requirements include a) a letter from the Veteran's Administration stating you have been adjudicated by the VA as being totally and permanently disabled and entitled to receive service connected benefits; or b) a letter from the Veteran's Administration stating you are an unremarried surviving spouse or a minor child of the above described veteran, provided you continue to occupy the home as your residence.
- **Unremarried Surviving Spouse of a member of the armed forces who was killed in any war** or armed conflict will be granted up to \$50,000 homestead exemption for state, county, municipal and school purposes. The surviving spouse will continue to be eligible for the exemption as long as they do not remarry. Documentation from Secretary of Defense proving spousal benefits required.
- **Unremarried Surviving Spouse of a Firefighter or Peace Officer** killed in the line of duty - Exemption is 100% of all ad valorem taxes. Documentation required.
- **Floating Homestead** - a freeze on your assessed value for state and county purposes only. Owner must be 62 years or older, gross income cannot exceed \$30,000 (includes income from all sources and of anyone living in house). Applies to homestead and no more than 5 contiguous acres. ONCE THIS EXEMPTION IS APPROVED, TAXPAYER LOSES ANY EXISTING HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION FOR STATE AND COUNTY TAXES. CAUTION: THIS EXEMPTION MAY INCREASE YOUR TAXES.
- **Homeowners Tax Relief Grant**, authorized for the first time by the Governor and the General Assembly in 1999, provides a tax relief credit in an amount up to \$8,000 in assessed value for all homeowners who are receiving one of the homestead exemptions. Effective in 2009, this relief is reviewed annually by the General Assembly, and is contingent upon a thriving economy. If granted, the relief will be shown on the property tax bill for State, county, and county school purposes as a credit against taxes that otherwise would have been due.

Tax Commissioner's Office

8700 Hospital Drive • Main Floor, Douglas County Courthouse • Douglasville, Georgia 30134
770.920.7272 • www.DouglasTaxCommissioner.com

Other local tax exemptions may be offered by your local city. Contact your local city government for more information.