



Emergency Assistance

What is Emergency Assistance?

Emergency Assistance (EA) is temporary housing and shelter-related assistance for people who are eligible for Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The program is supervised by the state Division of Family Development and administered in most instances, by the County Welfare Agencies.

Types of Emergency Assistance

- Rent, mortgage or utility back payments (excludes phone and cable)
- Eviction-related costs (must be authorized by the state)
- Payment for emergency shelter and emergency temporary housing
- Temporary Rental Assistance
- Transportation to search for permanent housing
- Temporary storage of essential personal possession, if homeless
- Moving expenses
- Security deposits for rent and/or basic utilities
- Clothing and essential home furnishing to ensure health and safety, including a one-time purchase of an air conditioner when medically necessary. The allowance is capped by household size.
- Food (limited to emergencies, a bridge to SNAP)
- Citizenship application fee and associated fingerprinting fee if cost cannot be waived

Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA)

This is a type of Emergency Assistance that provides a temporary rent supplement to avoid eviction and/or maintaining permanent housing.

- Total cost of housing (rent plus utilities) may not exceed the current federal Fair Market Rent for the county of residence according to household composition and number of bedrooms required.
- Family must be able to afford the rent before the TRA ends. (Service Plan and Individual Responsibility Plan must focus on this goal)

Eligibility

- Must be a recipient of WFNJ or SSI
- Must be able to show utility arrears (shut off notice); or
- Must show proof of impending eviction or foreclosure
- Must be homeless or in imminent danger of becoming homeless due to circumstances beyond their control.



Emergency Assistance Time Limitations

- Lifetime limit of 12 months
- Families Receiving WFNJ TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) may be eligible for two, six-month hardship extensions.
- Single people and childless couples receiving WFNJ GA (General Assistance) may be eligible for one, six-month extension.
- Specific groups are eligible for extended emergency assistance up until February 2024
 - Adult SSI recipients
 - WFNJ adult recipients who are:
 - Permanently disabled
 - Caretaker of a permanently disabled child or dependent
 - Chronically unemployable
 - 60 and over
- Seven-Year Look Back
 - If EA was used more than seven years prior to the current application, some months may be excluded from the 12 month life time limit.

Recipient Contribution

Recipients must contribute 30% of their household income toward rent/shelter costs.

Recipient Responsibilities

The recipients must develop and comply with an Emergency Assistance Service Plan to resolve and avoid recurrence of the emergent situation.

Social Services for the Homeless (SSH)

What is SSH?

A county and community based agency administered short-term safety net program offering five core services: Food, Emergency Shelter, Homeless Prevention (such as back rent/utility payment), Case Management and Hotline. Access the program by calling the hotline for the county of residence: <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dfd/programs/ssh/> As of 1/1/2020, call 211 to locate the local process and vendors.

Eligibility

- New Jersey residency
- Individuals and families ineligible for WFNJ cash assistance due to income, lifetime limit, drug distribution or citizenship status.
- WFNJ and SSI recipients who have exhausted their EA lifetime limit.
- WFNJ recipients serving a sanction or who have lost WFNJ eligibility due to a sanction within the last 12 months are not eligible for SSH services.