

CONSOLIDATED EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (CEAP)

Extra Money for Needy Families

Introduction

CEAP is a Social and Health Services (DSHS) program which provides money to needy families, children and pregnant women facing an emergency. Only those persons ineligible for any other DSHS financial or emergency assistance program may qualify for a CEAP emergency grant.

Who is eligible?

- families with needy children 17 years of age or younger;
- children 17 and under not living with a parent or relative who within the past six months lived with such a person;
- children at risk of foster care placement; and
- pregnant women.

What are the requirements to qualify?

- You need money to take care of a basic need, such as food, shelter or utilities.
- You are a resident of Washington State or have been detained in the state for reasons beyond your household's control.
- You do not have to be a U.S. citizen or have been legally admitted; however, aliens who have been granted temporary resident status are ineligible for five years from date of entry.
- You have not previously received CEAP within the past twelve months.
- Your net family income this month is less than 90% of the TANF (cash welfare)

payment standard, or net income is over this amount but you spent the money which is no longer available to meet family need on medical bills, emergent child care to avoid abuse, dental care to alleviate pain, or on obtaining employment. Please see our publication [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families](#) which includes the standards for the TANF payment amounts.

- CEAP benefits will not be authorized until DSHS has determined that no household member is eligible for TANF, State-funded Assistance or Refugee Cash Assistance.
- You have not refused a bone fide job offer or training for employment opportunity without good cause within thirty days of your application.
- Your household does not contain a member who is under grant penalty for failure to comply with the program requirements of a DSHS financial assistance program.

What emergency needs are covered?

Food, shelter, clothing, minor medical, utilities, household maintenance, transportation to get a child to a home where it can be cared for, and money for job-related transportation or clothing.

How much money can you get?

You may be able to receive up to the TANF payment standard for your household size, depending on how much you need for different emergency needs. DSHS has set

payment maximums, according to household size, for each of the emergent needs. For example, a family of four could receive up to \$476.00 for shelter, up to \$391.00 for food, and up to \$332 for utilities, but could not receive more than \$642.00 total, the payment standard for a four-person household. DSHS will count any cash on hand or income received this month and deduct it from the amount you need to meet your emergent needs. If you feel that DSHS has unfairly counted monies that are not available to meet your need you may wish to request a fair hearing.

How do you apply?

If you do not currently receive TANF, State Family Assistance or Refugee Cash Assistance and are not eligible for Diversion Cash Assistance, go to the local DSHS office and fill out an application. Ask for emergency assistance. If you receive TANF, you may telephone your worker and tell him/her that you need extra money. Make sure that you also apply in writing. You have the right to a written response to your application. You will need to verify unpaid medical bills and shelter costs, but do not have to have a bill to verify requests for other items.

What if DSHS denies my request for help?

You may appeal by requesting a "fair hearing." You must request your hearing within ninety days of the denial. You may call your worker or the fair hearing coordinator at your welfare office and ask for the hearing. You should also put your request for a hearing in writing and drop it off at the DSHS office or mail to Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 42489, Olympia, WA 98504. If it is an emergency, you may ask to have your hearing held as soon as possible by calling the Office of Administrative Hearings at (360) 664-8717 or 1-800-583-8271. This is called an "expedited" hearing.

You may also wish to speak to a supervisor or the administrator of the DSHS office if your worker says DSHS cannot help you. A supervisor or administrator may change the caseworker's decision, and allow your request. However, you should not withdraw your fair hearing request until you receive written notice of the award.

You may have someone represent you at the hearing. Your local legal aid office or welfare rights organization may be able to provide you with advice or representation. For more information, ask for our publication Representing Yourself at a Fair Hearing.

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This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice. This information is current as of the date of its printing, April 2009.

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