

Department: Community Support Services **Policy Number:** HHS-2505-CSS

Policy Title: Family Violence Prevention Program – Emergency Assistance Funds

Date: 10/25/12 **Revised:** 9/5/2014

Director Approval:  **Date:** 9/5/14

Executive Director Approval:  **Date:** 9/5/14

Commissioner Approval:  **Date:** 9/5/14

Policy Statement

1. The Mille Lacs Band Family Violence Prevention Program emergency assistance funds are for victims of domestic and/or sexual violence who are receiving support services from the Family Violence Prevention Program. The emergency assistance funds provide emergency financial assistance to victims of domestic and/or sexual violence and their immediate needs after escaping an abusive relationship when funds are available. Eligible emergencies are listed and defined in these policies with each request being based on individual circumstances and can only be utilized after all other options have been exhausted.

Purpose

2. To assist victim participants in overcoming barriers that would otherwise impede their ability transition into a nonviolent environment and provide the means to achieve safety and/or independent living.

Definitions

1. Participants is a victim of domestic and/or sexual violence and is receiving services from the MLB Family Violence Prevention Program.
2. MLB Family Violence Prevention Program includes; Community Advocacy, Shelter, Criminal Justice Intervention, Elder Abuse Program and Sexual Assault Program.
3. Travel Expense is defined as necessary expenses while traveling away from home for a funeral or medical emergency and may include gas, food and lodging.

Administration

1. The Family Violence Prevention Program emergency assistance funds will be administered by the Director of Community Support Services and the Administrator of the Family Violence Prevention Program.

2. If an emergency situation arises that does not meet the eligibility criteria in this policy, the Administrator will provide alternative resources and referrals.
3. To avoid conflicts of interest, Family Violence Prevention Program staff is not allowed to review or make decisions for persons who are part of their immediate family.
4. Assistance with rental deposits will not require to be refunded to the Family Violence Prevention Program.
5. The max amount of emergency assistance funds that a participant may receive has a lifetime cap of \$3000 dollars.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Participants must be victim of domestic and / or sexual violence and receiving support services from the MLB Family Violence Prevention Program.
2. Participants may need to use combination of emergency requests; this will be the decision of the program administer eligibility is based on funding balances and participants need.

Eligible Emergencies

Utility Emergency

1. Participants is eligible for a utility emergency up to one hundred percent (100%) of their household electric, telephone or heating bill, not to exceed the \$400.00 maximum.
2. Applicants will be encouraged to apply for the State Energy Assistance Program first before qualifying for the Family Violence Prevention Program emergency funds.
3. A check will be issued to the participant's utility company.

Travel Emergency

1. Participants may be eligible for gas cards for transitioning to a new location.
2. Participants may be eligible for transportation cost such as; airfare, bus fare or train fare to be used to transport a participant to a safe place.
3. Transportation funds are up to the discretion of the Director of Community Support Services and the Family Violence Prevention Administrator. Air Fare travel requires the use of the Band Credit Card and will require review and

approval of the Commissioner of Health & Human Services and will be booked through the MLB travel agent.

Moving Expenses

1. Truck and /or trailer rentals may be used to move a participant to a safe place.
2. Gas for vehicles may be utilized for moving personal belongings to a safe place.
3. Storage units can be included in moving expenses.

Rent/Emergency

1. Participants may request first month's rent to secure safe independent living.
2. Participants may be eligible for one month's rent only in the case of an eviction or to prevent an eviction, and used for participant's household only.
3. Participants must submit their written notice of eviction, with a signed and dated copy of their lease/rental agreement.
4. A check will be issued to the landlord listed on the lease/rental agreement.

Clothing Emergency

- A. A participant who is in need of clothes is eligible for a one-time clothing emergency.
- B. Maximum clothing emergency amount is \$150.00 per person.
- C. A purchase order will be issued to the Family Violence Prevention Program staff and staff will accompany the participant to purchase clothing. Clothing for court is not an emergency; this is provided through our non-emergency funds.

Pet Kenneling Emergency

1. Participants may be eligible for expenses to kennel their pets for up to two months, when there are no other optional safe homes for them.
2. Only MLB approved kennels may be utilized.

Vehicle Repair Emergency

1. Participant is eligible for a Vehicle Repair emergency not to exceed the \$800.00 maximum.
2. Most common used to secure employment or school emergencies are defined as an emergency that hinder applicant's ability to maintain their job or attend school. This is restricted to:
 - Car Insurance – provide current bill

- Auto Repair – provide automobile repair statement.
 - Driver's License Renewal or Reinstatement Fee – provide MN. State document.
3. Other Emergency may include
- a. Application fee, fees for obtaining birth certificates and other necessary documents, personal needs, portable safety lighting, bed, couch and small appliances, prescription co-pays and phones. These expenses are considered on an individual basis.

Referrals

1. The Family Violence Prevention Program may make referrals to county, tribal, and state programs, which may be better suited for the participant's needs ad specific situation. For example; Food distribution, Public Health, Family Services, and the Energy assistance Programs.

File Documentation

1. The Family Violence Prevention Program staff shall maintain confidential files in a locked file cabinet that include the participant's documents of victimization, full name and address, proof of emergency assistance paid and follow up progress reports.

Falsification of Information/Misuse of funds

1. Any participation who falsify information to acquire assistance, sell their emergency goods to another or do not use their services as stated in their request, will not be eligible for future Family Violence Prevention Program emergency assistance funds.

Emergency Assistance Grievance Procedure

If the participant is denied emergency services for any reason, inform the person that these services are only for domestic and sexual violence cases. It can only be used as a last resort in an emergency and only when funds are available. If they feel that they are being unfairly treated by a staff member's decision to provide emergency needs, instruct them to follow the following steps:

1. Speak with an Advocate on duty and fill out a Complaint Form.
2. You may request a meeting with the program administrator to discuss your complaint.
3. If this proves unsatisfactory, you may request a meeting with the Director of Community Support Services to review your complaint. This decision in final.