General Assistance

General Assistance helps Minnesotans with little or no income meet their basic needs. It offers a small monthly cash grant to those with a serious illness, disabilities or other issues that limit their ability to work. General Assistance is an interim aid to help while other sources of income are put in place. About 24,000 people a month used General Assistance in 2017.

Eligibility

To be eligible, individuals must:

- Meet one of 13 criteria for eligibility
- Verify income and assets
- Apply for Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability benefits within 30 days if they appear eligible
- Sign an Interim Assistance Agreement, allowing the state to recover state-funded assistance if participants are approved for other maintenance benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income.

The general income limit for participation is $203 per month and the general asset limit is $10,000. Some income and assets are excluded from consideration.

Benefits

The typical monthly General Assistance benefit is $203 for an individual and $260 for a couple. Children under 18 who are not part of a family may receive up to $250. The monthly benefit may be less if a person has other income from work, benefits or any other source.

Emergency General Assistance

Emergency General Assistance provides financial assistance to help pay for food, shelter or utility payment assistance in crisis situations. To be eligible, individuals must:

- Have an emergency that threatens health and safety; the situation must be resolved within 30 days. This assistance is limited to once a year and only while there are funds available.
- Have net income below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline for the previous year.

General Assistance and Emergency General Assistance participants are commonly eligible for Medical Assistance and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Applicants must apply for General Assistance and Emergency General Assistance through their county human service agency.
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