

Franklin Christian Minister's Forum

Central Help Fund Guidelines

The Central Help Fund is a needs-response fund set up by churches within the Franklin Christian Minister's Forum for people who live within the Franklin zip code. Those funds are authorized by clergy of contributing churches and released by Mary Jeanne Gavin of Community Services who manages the fund for us. It is required that those seeking help meet with the clergy for evaluation and for spiritual counseling in order to attain funds. At such time the person seeking help needs to bring bill notices since funds are only released to the billing agencies.

Pastors from contributing churches are authorized to request Community Services to release money from the fund per the following guidelines. Therefore, a list of authorized pastors needs to be maintained for referral purposes and for requests requiring more than one pastor in order to release funds. Reports will be sent from Community Services to contributing churches as to the distributions from the account and the amounts available for use.

Since people in need tend to wait until a deadline is reached before seeking help, pastors need to set their own limits as to how much advance notice they need in order to deal with the circumstances.

Guidelines:

1. Help is limited to residents within the Franklin zip code.
2. An individual/family must personally meet with a participating pastor who is to ascertain the need and to offer spiritual counseling.
3. Before any funds can be released, persons/families must be screened through Mary Jean Gavin at Community Services.
4. Help with utilities will be limited to \$200. If that amount does not cover the total amount of the bill, the individual/family needs to verify they have covered the overage before help funds are released.
5. Help with rent or mortgage payments will be limited to \$250 per family. Again, if that amount does not cover the total amount of the bill, the individual/family needs to verify they have covered the overage before help funds are released.
6. Above amounts may be increased up to a maximum of \$600 IF DETERMINED TO BE NECESSARY by agreement of 2 participating pastors who have assessed the EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.
7. Gasoline cards valued at \$30 each are available from the fund through Community Services as well. Availability limited to Monday, Tuesday, and Thursdays, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Limit per person/family of 2 cards per year.
8. If an individual/family requiring help from our fund more than twice in a given year will be required to obtain financial planning through Community Services before they can receive any future help from the fund.
9. Help with food will be given by direct distribution by Community Services or other Franklin food banks.
10. Help with clothing will be given by direct distribution by Community Services or other Franklin distribution sites.
11. Churches may designate a percentage of their contribution to the Fund to go to the food shelves at Community Services.

Approved May 5, 2010