



Utility Assistance Program Guidelines

Funded with HUD Community Development Block Grant- COVID (CDBG-CV) Funds

Program Overview

With the passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Emergency Security (CARES) Act, the City of Allen received \$256,000 in COVID-19 emergency relief funding through the CDBG program. These funds are limited to CDBG eligible activities and subject to CDBG program requirements. In addition, they must be used for a COVID-19 related impact. On July 28, the City Council adopted the 2020-2021 CDBG Action Plan, which programmed these funds for public service and assistance activities.

The Community Enhancement and Community Services Departments have developed a program to use these funds to operate an emergency utility assistance program. The program provides up to six months of subsistence payments to eligible families in order to bridge a financial crisis directly related to a COVID-19 financial loss. The assistance will initially be used solely for City utility bills since CARES Act funds that are being provided for similar assistance in Collin County cannot be used for City utility bills.

Since the funding source for this program is CDBG funds, the program must meet federal guidelines established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Applicants will have to meet federal income eligibility guidelines to qualify.

Who is eligible?

Minimum qualifications for applicants include the following:

- Must be an Allen resident,
- Must be a U.S. Citizen or Legal Permanent Resident,
- Must have experienced a documented decrease in household income **due to the COVID-19 pandemic**. *Note: Income documentation must be provided for pre-COVID loss up to the date of the application. The applicant must meet the income guidelines listed below both at the time of the income loss and as of the date of the application. For example, if a family of four's income was \$100,000 pre-COVID loss, it would have to be at or below \$68,950 following the loss and as of the date the application is submitted.*
- Have not received duplicated benefits from another grant source,
- Have a documented income that does not exceed 80% of Area Medium Income, as outlined below:

FY 2020 Income Limit Category	1 PERSON	2 PERSON	3 PERSON	4 PERSON	5 PERSON	6 PERSON	7 PERSON	8 PERSON
80% of Collin County 2020 Area Median Income Maximum	\$48,300	\$55,200	\$62,100	\$68,950	\$74,500	\$80,000	\$85,500	\$91,050

What assistance is provided?

- Up to 6 months of payments for delinquent utility accounts for charges incurred after the COVID related income loss (defined as a loss occurring after March 1, 2020.) Payment is made directly to the utility provider. Only unpaid expenses qualify.
- Will include payments for owed charges of water, wastewater, waste services, drainage, HHW and taxes for a City of Allen utility bill.
- Late fees and penalties will be waived.
- Water charges will be adjusted to full amount of the monthly minimum water bill each month and \$2.99 per 1,000 gallons for all water use above 1,500 gallons.
- Wastewater charges will be adjusted to the full amount of the monthly minimum wastewater bill each month and \$1.24 per 1,000 gallons of water used up to 10,000 gallons of water used. The maximum residential wastewater bill is for 10,000 of water use.
- Full monthly charges for waste services, drainage, HHW, and taxes will be paid.

Application process:

- Applications will be made directly to the Community Enhancement department through a standard online application form through ZoomGrants.
- Community Enhancement staff will review applications for eligibility and facilitate completion of the application process.
- Once qualified, Utility Billing will provide the adjusted payoff amount and amount eligible for assistance (some accounts may not be paid in full but will be adjusted per criteria above).
- Payment will be made from grant funds to utility accounts.
- Community Services will adjust accounts and provide confirmation that utility account has been credited with the eligible assistance.

The funding is programmed for FY 20-21, so payment transactions cannot occur until after HUD releases funds, which is estimated to be around October 16, 2020.

Where do I apply?

Applications are online at https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/Allen_CDBG-CV_UTILITY_Assistance

What documentation do I need to provide in my application? City Staff reserves the right to request additional documents on a case by case basis to verify income. At a minimum applicant shall provide the following:

_____ Photo identification for all household members 18 years or older (Driver's license, passport, permanent resident cards, etc.)

_____ Social Security cards of all household members

_____ Documented COVID related income loss (Post March 1, 2020). Documentation to include, but not limited to:

_____ Furlough or termination letter or other documentation from an employer explaining a job loss due to COVID. If that is not available, then applicants can upload a Letter of Explanation in lieu of.

_____ Paycheck stubs and bank statements (all accounts: savings, checking, etc.) for each member of the household 18 years or older showing pre and post COVID income loss and income up to the date of the application. *For example, if you lost your job on March 20, 2020, then the City would need to see February's pay stubs/bank statements and all bank statements and check stubs up to the most recent available at the time of application.*

_____ Verification of any other sources of earned and unearned income for all family members 18 years or older (Social security, SSI, unemployment, Medicaid, child support, alimony, retirement, Section 8, etc.)

_____ Most current investment account or retirement plan statement (annuity, 401K, IRA, CD, etc.)
Liquid accounts will be counted as income.

_____ Any other assets and their value: rental properties, car collections, coin collections, etc.

_____ If self-employed, copies of company profit and loss statements, bank statements, assets

_____ Most recent water bill.

This program is available to City of Allen residential utility customers who are delinquent on their bill and meet the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant -COVID (CDBG-CV) requirements for as long as funding is available.