

## Emergency Shelter

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### What are the laws governing Temporary Housing in Erie County?

New York State law requires that the Erie County Department of Social Services (ECDSS) provide temporary shelter for persons who are experiencing homelessness in Erie County.

Placement in a shelter (or hotel) must continue as long as the person experiencing homelessness remains homeless and is following the emergency shelter rules and regulations (see below), and is searching for permanent housing.

Persons experiencing homelessness and persons in an emergency situation may be eligible for assistance from ECDSS with security agreements, moving expenses, storage fees, and furniture grants.

### What are the Emergency Shelter or Temporary Housing Assistance rules?

DSS requires that you:

1. Cooperate in the completion of an assessment of your housing and housing-related Public Assistance needs.
2. Cooperate in the development, carrying out, and completion of an Independent Living Plan.
3. Actively look for housing other than temporary housing. You must complete and document a minimum of five (5) apartment searches per week. Apartments should fall within the Housing and Emergency Services Rental Guidelines below. (These amounts can be higher if you receive income other than public assistance.)

1P HH	2P HH	3P HH	4P HH	5P HH	6P HH	7P HH	8P HH
\$300-\$325	\$400	\$475	\$525	\$575	\$600	\$650	\$700

4. Comply with all other Public Assistance requirements applicable to you. These requirements include complying with work requirements. Work requirements can include looking for work, participating in training, accepting jobs and work assignments, and participating in rehabilitative services. You may also have to comply with Child Support Enforcement. In addition, you will have to apply for and follow through on applications for any income or resources that reduce or eliminate the need for Temporary Housing Assistance. If you do not comply with these requirements or you commit acts that endanger the health and safety of yourself or others, your Temporary Housing Assistance could be discontinued, sanctioned or denied.

### What if I am denied or discontinued Temporary Housing Assistance?

If you feel you were wrongly denied, sanctioned or discontinued, you can request a Fair Hearing. You have 60 days from the notice date to ask for a Fair Hearing. If you request a hearing within 10 days of your discontinuance, you are entitled to "aid continuing." This means DSS must keep you in the shelter until you get a hearing decision or you default your hearing. Call us at 847-0650 immediately. We will review your case and tell you how to challenge Erie County Department of Social Services' decision, or we may agree to take your case.

**What if I need help?**

If you or someone you know need help or have been denied these services call our office at 847-0650 to speak to a representative from the Homeless Task Force at Neighborhood Legal Services.