

## **Household Establishment Grant**

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### **What is a Household Establishment Grant?**

A Household Establishment Grant is money paid by your local Department of Social Services to help you buy furniture needed to set up a home or to replace furniture after a disaster like a fire or flood.

### **Am I eligible for a Household Establishment Grant?**

To be eligible for a Household Establishment Grant, you must show that you need furniture to set up a household. You must have income that is at or below 125% of the current Federal Poverty Level if you don't have children, or at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level if you have children in your home. If you need help because of a fire, flood, or other catastrophe, the 125% limitation does not apply.

You may be eligible for a Household Establishment Grant if you are on Temporary (cash) Assistance or SSI.

### **What situations qualify?**

If you are financially eligible, you do not have the furniture you need, you cannot find a home that includes furniture, and:

1. You were referred to a hotel, motel, or homeless shelter by the county Department of Social Services and did not have furniture when you went to the shelter; or
2. You are being discharged from an institution (like a nursing home) and are ready to live on your own or with family who do not have furniture for you; or
3. Your child or children are returning to your home and you do not have furniture for them; or
4. Your current living situation is dangerous to your physical or mental health and you have to move and you cannot find new housing that includes furniture (such as leaving your home due to domestic violence).

You may also be able to get furniture that was destroyed replaced if you can show that the furniture was lost due to a catastrophe (like a fire or flood) and no other resources are available from community agencies.

### **Where do I apply for a furniture grant?**

You should apply with your Temporary (cash) Assistance or Homeless worker at the Rath Building. Otherwise, apply at the Emergency Services office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at 460 Main Street in Buffalo, New York.

### **How do I show that I need furniture?**

Your worker will tell you what you need to prove you are eligible for a Household Establishment Grant. Examples may include a report from the fire department if your furniture was destroyed by a fire, a statement from children's services if a child is being returned to your home, or a statement from a caseworker who knows why you do not have furniture. If you are leaving a shelter or returning from jail, you may not need any additional proof.

**What happens after I submit the application?**

Once your worker has all of the information they need, they will approve or deny your application. The Erie County Department of Social Services has 30 days to approve or deny your application. If your application is approved, someone will call you when the check is ready. Make sure you give your worker a good phone number and, if possible, a good alternate phone number so they can reach you. The Erie County Department of Social Services will tell you what stores accept their vouchers so you can pick out your furniture.

**What if DSS denies my application?**

If your application is denied you should get a written notice. You can call our office and we can review the notice with you. We may agree to take your case. You can call us at (716) 847-0650 and ask for the Health and Economic Security Unit. You also have the right to request a fair hearing if you disagree with the denial.

**How do I request a Fair Hearing?**

You can request a Fair Hearing:

**By Phone:**

Statewide Toll-free 1-800-342-3334: Fair Hearing Requests & Inquiries

**By Mail:**

New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)

Office of Administrative Hearings

P.O. Box 1930 Albany, New York 12201-1930

**By Fax**

Fax No. (518) 473-6735

**Online:**

Forms: <http://www.otda.state.nyus/oah.forms.asp>