

Storage of Furniture and Personal Belongings

I have to move and have to put my belongings in storage but I can't pay the monthly bill. What can I do?

You can apply for help with your storage payments at the Erie County Department of Social Services. You must be in a temporary living situation, such as a homeless shelter or staying with a friend or relative.

Who can get help with storage bills?

People who have Temporary (cash) Assistance and/or SSI are financially eligible for storage assistance. However, you do not have to be on Public Assistance to get help with storage. If you have a child living in your household, your income must be at or below 200% of the current Federal Poverty Level. If you do not have any children in your household, your income must be at or below 125% of the current Federal Poverty Level. If you need help because of a fire, flood, or other catastrophe, the 125% limitation does not apply.

How long can I get help with storage?

DSS will pay for storage as long as you are still in temporary housing. You will be required to show that you are still in a temporary living situation. You may also have to show that you are looking for permanent housing.

Is there a limit to the amount that can be paid for storage?

No. There is no limit to the amount that can be paid for storage. DSS does not pay late fees, so make sure you find out when to send in the monthly bill to avoid late fees.

Is there a limit to the amount of furniture and belongings I can put in storage?

Yes. The law limits storage to enough furniture for your household size plus other essential household items. That means DSS does not have to pay for storage of multiple beds if you are the only person in your household. Essential items can include legal documents, medical equipment, clothing and linens, kitchen items, electronics, toys and baby items, etc.

How do I apply for storage?

In Erie County, you can apply with your Temporary (cash) Assistance worker or your Homeless Unit worker if you have one. Everyone else should apply at the Emergency Services office located on the 2nd floor at 460 Main Street in Buffalo.

What if I put my possessions in storage, but did not notify DSS, will DSS pay?

Sometimes. DSS does not have to pay for storage for months prior to application for help. Sometimes they will though, so make sure to ask.

What if DSS asks me for documents I cannot get?

If you cannot get the documents, but have tried your best to get them, tell your worker. DSS has a duty to assist you in getting all the required documentation.

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 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.ny.us/oah.forms.asp>