

**Department for Children and Families***Economic Services Division*

280 State Drive

Waterbury, VT 05671-1020

*Agency of Human Services*

[fax] 802-241-0460

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Date: December 10, 2024

Subject: Important Changes to the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program

General Assistance Housing Program is expected to be utilized the most between December 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025. Based on current hotel usage, the number of households eligible for housing assistance will exceed the number of rooms that are available to the program. As a result, the Department has created an administrative procedure to help distribute some of the available rooms to the most vulnerable households. This administrative procedure will go into effect whenever 90% of the hotel capacity has been reached, which we predict to be the case for December 10th. This procedure does not change or modify the current General Assistance Emergency Housing rules. This policy simply establishes the priority with which households will be placed in available hotel rooms. When the administrative procedure is in effect, a notice will be posted on our website: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/crisis-housing>

Starting December 10<sup>th</sup> and anytime the 90% hotel and motel room capacity is reached, households with a member who meets any of the following criteria will be prioritized for available housing assistance because they are the most vulnerable:

- Families with children (19 or under)
- Pregnant people
- Someone experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, hate violence, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that caused the household to lose its housing
- People 65 years or older
- A person who is 50 years of age or older AND eligible under one of these categories:
  - Has a disability
  - Has experienced the death of a spouse, domestic partner, or minor child that caused the household to lose its housing
  - Has experienced a natural disaster, such as flood, fire, or hurricane
  - Is under a court-ordered eviction or constructive eviction due to circumstances over which the household has no control



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When the administrative procedure is in effect, households who meet one of the categories listed above can apply for assistance at any time. All other households can apply for assistance after 12 p.m.

Authorization for the vulnerable households can be granted in up-to 28-day increments. For all other households, authorizations can be granted in up-to 14-day increments.

We understand that these changes may impact your current housing plans, and we are committed to providing as much support as possible during this transition. The Economic Services Housing phone lines are open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. If you have any questions or need additional support, please call the Economic Services Division at 1-800-775-0506.

