

Department for Children and Families
Economic Services Division
280 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-1020

Agency of Human Services

[fax] 802-241-0460
[toll free] 800-775-0506

Date: August 14, 2024

Subject: Important Changes to the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program

Starting September 15, 2024, a new law caps the number of rooms that can be utilized by the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program during certain parts of the year. The total number of rooms available Statewide will be:

9/15/2024 through 11/30/2024	1,100 rooms
12/1/2024 through 3/31/2025	No room cap, but capacity will depend on availability
4/1/2025 through 6/30/2025	1,100 rooms

Based on current hotel usage, the number of households eligible for housing assistance will exceed these room caps. As a result, the Department has created a policy to prioritize the most vulnerable households. This policy will go into effect whenever 90% of the hotel capacity has been reached, which we predict to be the case for September 15th. This policy 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 policy is in effect, a notice will be posted on our website:

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/benefits/crisis-housing>

Starting September 15, 2024, 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 policy is in effect, the Economic Services Division will accept applications from 7:45 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, from those identified in the policy as most vulnerable.

Others seeking assistance can apply between noon (12 pm) and 4:30 pm.

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 line will be open on Sunday, 9/15/2024 from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm when the priority policy starts. If you have any questions, need additional support, or want to check how many of your 80 eligible days have been used, please call the Economic Services Division at 1-800-775-0506.

