

STATE OF VERMONT
AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES

DCF

Department for Children and Families

BULLETIN NO.: 14-10

FROM: Richard Giddings, Deputy Commissioner *RG*
Economic Services Division

DATE: March 28, 2014

SUBJECT: General Assistance Program Rules

CHANGES ADOPTED EFFECTIVE 3/31/14

INSTRUCTIONS

- Maintain Manual - See instructions below.**
- Proposed Regulation - Retain bulletin and attachments until you receive Manual Maintenance Bulletin: _____**
- Information or Instructions - Retain until _____**

MANUAL REFERENCE(S):

2652.3

On July 1, 2013, the Department adopted an emergency rule that established eligibility criteria for vulnerable populations in need of emergency housing in accordance with Section E.321.1 of Act 50 (2013), the fiscal year 2014 Appropriations Act. After receiving feedback from advocates and community partners, the Department filed another emergency rule on August 1, 2013, which revised the eligibility criteria for vulnerable populations in need of emergency housing. That rule was renewed through another emergency rule filing effective November 30, 2013. This bulletin establishes a new effective date for this emergency rule.

In addition, the Agency of Human Services is withdrawing proposed rules 13P032 (DCF Bulletin No. 13-30P), General / Emergency Assistance Temporary Housing in Catastrophic Situations, and 13P033 (DCF Bulletin No. 13-28P), General Assistance Emergency Housing for Vulnerable Populations, until it is known whether there will be legislative action during the 2014 session of the General Assembly that affects the General Assistance housing program.

Emergency Rulemaking Process

The Department expects to file this emergency rule with the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR) and the Secretary of State's Office on or before March 31, 2014.

The Department will post the emergency rule on the DCF website at <http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/rules> and notify advocates and members of the public about the rule.

To get more information about the Administrative Procedures Act and the rules applicable to state rulemaking go to the website of the Office of the Vermont Secretary of State at: <http://vermont-archives.org/aparules/> or call Louise Corliss at 828-2863

For information on upcoming hearings before the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules go to the website of the Vermont Legislature at: <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/Committee01.cfm> or call 828-5760.

Manual Maintenance

General Assistance Rules

Remove

Insert

2652.3

(13-40)

2652.3

(14-10)

Housing

2652.3 Emergency Housing for Vulnerable Populations

Emergency housing is intended to provide up to 28 days of shelter for vulnerable populations who are without housing and do not qualify for temporary housing under rule 2652.2. Applicants may qualify for emergency housing if the household has a member who is:

- A. 65 years of age or older;
- B. in receipt of SSI or SSDI;
- C. a child six years of age or under; or
- D. in the third trimester of pregnancy.

Applicants, without a member belonging to one of the above vulnerable populations, may qualify for emergency housing if the household has a member belonging to a vulnerable population and has been assessed a total of 4 or more points according to the following point system:

Vulnerable Population Category	Points
Disabled Veteran (as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211)	1
Individual with an open case receiving services from the Family Services Division	1
SSI or SSDI applicant with medical documentation of disability	1
Child(ren) between the ages of 7 and 17	2
Individual discharged from a 48-hours or more inpatient hospital stay, within the past 30 days, who has an ongoing medical need related to the hospitalization	2
Individual over 18 years of age discharged from the custody of the department for children and families within the past 3 years	1
Reach Up recipient	1
Individual on probation or parole with the department of corrections who has been incarcerated for 12 consecutive months and released within the past 6 months	1

Applicant households shall be assigned points only once within any vulnerable population category.

Assistance shall not be authorized when appropriate shelter space is available. Available shelter space shall be deemed appropriate absent documentation that the shelter poses health or safety risks to a member of the applicant household.

Applicant households that have caused their own loss of housing within the past 6 months shall not be eligible for emergency housing. Examples of causing one's own loss of housing include, but are not limited to:

- Court-ordered eviction, subject to the limitation set forth in rule 2621(D);
- Voluntarily leaving one's housing, excluding constructive eviction as defined in rule 2622;
- Denial of further accommodations at a shelter, motel, or similar establishment, for not following the rules of the establishment.

Housing

Recipient households who are denied further accommodations at a motel, or similar establishment, for not following the rules of the establishment shall be ineligible for emergency housing for 30 days following the last date the department authorized emergency housing assistance.

Applicant households must contribute 50 percent of gross monthly income toward housing costs.

If verification of eligibility criteria cannot be obtained on the day of application, assistance may be authorized for no more than four days on a conditional basis pending verification. No more than four days of conditional assistance may be authorized within the 30-day period following the date of application.

Authorization for emergency housing may be issued for periods of not more than 14 days.

Emergency housing payments will be allowed for only 28 days in any consecutive 12-month period. The 12-month period is computed from the date of application to the same day of the month 12 months prior. The 28-days need not be consecutive.

The 84-day housing maximum under rule 2652.2 is cumulative for assistance received under rules 2652.2 and 2652.3. An applicant who has received 84 days in temporary housing during a 12-month period is not eligible for any further emergency housing assistance for the same 12-month period. Emergency housing for vulnerable populations is not an entitlement; payments shall cease upon expenditure of the annual appropriation for this purpose.