



CENTRAL VIRGINIA LEGAL AID SOCIETY

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General Relief

What is General Relief?

General Relief provides limited financial aid to individuals and families. Someone who is eligible for assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) may or may not be eligible for General Relief. Because this is a local program, the types of aid available vary from locality to locality.

Who can get General Relief?

To get General Relief, you must be a citizen, a non-citizen who has permanent resident status, or a non-citizen permanently living in the U.S. under color of law. You must actually live in the locality where you get General Relief. You cannot transfer a General Relief case from one locality to another. If you leave the locality, General Relief is ended. You then should apply in the new locality.

What are the income limits to get General Relief?

You must have low income and low resources. Income limits depend on your household size. The more people in your household, the more the monthly income limit. In general, countable income can't be more than about 30% of the federal poverty limit.

What are the resource limits to get General Relief?

Your countable resources can't be more than \$1,000. The home you live in, household goods, furniture, clothing, and one motor vehicle are not counted. If you give away or sell resources for less than what they are worth to become or remain eligible for General Relief, you will be ineligible for General Relief for at least two years.

How much is General Relief?

The most that a household on General Relief can get is \$500 per month

What categories of people can get General Relief?

This varies locality by locality. In the City of Richmond, limited financial assistance may be provided to individuals and families in the following cases.

1. Able to work but are unemployed (pregnant women only).
2. Unable to work because of a disability, or because of illness in the family.
3. In an adult care residence, a nursing home, a treatment center, halfway house, or group home.
4. Has ongoing medical needs.
5. Has applied for SSI.
6. Has a minor child in the home but does not qualify for TANF because the child is not a close relative.
7. Has emergency shelter needs.
8. Burial assistance up to \$2,130 per burial.

All ongoing General Relief cases must be reviewed every 3 to 12 months to determine whether assistance should continue.

How do I apply for General Relief?

You apply for General Relief at your city or county's Department of Social Services (DSS). The agency has 45 days to decide whether or not you are eligible.

How do I appeal a General Relief decision I disagree with?

If General Relief is denied, reduced or ended, or if you disagree with any action on your General Relief case, you may file an appeal by asking for a fair hearing, in writing, at the local DSS office. You must file an appeal within 30 days of the action. If you appeal within 10 days, you may be able to keep getting General Relief pending appeal.