



Frequently asked questions about the Ashland Emergency Fund

How is the Ashland Emergency Fund funded?

The AEF is funded entirely through donations. The AEF is a private, charitable organization, so we are not part of the government, nor are we a line item on any governmental budget. Like other charitable organizations in town, we sometimes do receive a small grant from the town, but the AEF is not a government agency.

Who does the AEF help?

The AEF helps residents of Ashland, MA. No one from outside of Ashland is eligible for our assistance.

Who decides whom the AEF assists?

A qualified social worker first vets an applicant. Often this process involves looking at the finances of the applicant and assisting them with developing a household budget. If the qualified social worker determines there is a legitimate need, then at least 2 out of 3 members of the screening committee also need to approve the assistance. If any member feels the need to, the matter can be brought before the full AEF board to decide. On the occasions this happens, personal information about the applicant is not shared.

What type of assistance is provided?

While the exact needs and situation of each person and family we assist are different, by far the most common need for assistance is with rent, childcare, and utilities.

How are payments from the AEF made?

After approval by the qualified social worker and by the majority of the AEF Screening Committee, a payment request is made to a member of the distribution committee to actually make the payment to the third party (i.e. landlord, utility company, etc.) on behalf of the applicant. Disbursements cannot be made without the Screening Committee approval and can only be made by a Disbursement Committee member. No person is allowed to sit on both committees.

Is the Food Pantry part of the AEF?

No. Officially, the Food Pantry is part of the Town of Ashland. However, the Food Pantry does not receive a budget to stock the shelves of the pantry. In addition to many generous groups and individuals around town that offer items, the AEF runs several food drives and spends thousands of dollars each year purchasing food for the food pantry.

Are AEF board members or officers paid?

AEF board members and officers are 100% volunteers. No member receives any financial benefit from the AEF.

What percentage of donations to the AEF goes towards assisting those in need?

100%. It is mandated in our charter that all donations must be used for assisting those in need. The small administrative costs we have are covered by our board members or underwritten by generous individuals or businesses.

How can I find out more information about the Ashland Emergency Fund?

The easiest way is to ask one of our board members or visit our website at www.AshlandEmergencyFund.Org.

How can I help the Ashland Emergency Fund?

We are always accepting donations, but we often need assistance with food drives, our annual auction, and other events as well. If you are unable to donate or offer your time, you can always tell your friends, your neighbors, or your employer about the work that we do. Perhaps they could donate. Or perhaps they could use our assistance and don't know we are there to help.