

Butler County General Assistance Program Policy

Legal Reference

This policy is enacted to implement Butler county's obligation under Iowa code Chapter 252, Support of Poor and Butler County Ordinance, Title 7 Ordinance #1.

Purpose

The purpose of the Butler County General Assistance Program is to provide assistance to a needy or poor person who is in need of immediate assistance not obtainable from any other source, who has income or benefits delated from a state program or not actually received because of reason not attributable to the person, and who does not have liquid assets of the family unit from which to pay for the items of assistance that can be provided. However, if a benefit check is still to be received for the month, this office reserves the right to decide whether or not to assist, depending on the emergency of the situation.

There are three categories of assistance in Butler County, Iowa, they are:

1. Emergency assistance for needy persons
 2. Assistance for poor persons
 3. Assistance for an extended nature
- A. **Needy Person:** is a person or family unit of that person that is domiciled in Butler County, Iowa or who is a transient of the county for less than three days or who, because of circumstances which are not attributable to that person, needs immediate assistance.
- B. **Poor Person:** is a person or the family unit of that person and is domiciled in Butler County, Iowa, and who, because of physical or mental disability is unable to engage in gainful employment and otherwise cannot make a living. This will be established by a statement from a physician or psychiatric counselor, every three months. The person will have to also bring in verification that they have applied for SSI.
- C. **Assistance:** In the Butler County General Assistance program is means for food, rent, shelter and utilities. Assistance shall also include the burial of a person who is a resident of Butler County, in an amount established by the Board of Supervisors.

How to apply

If one wishes to apply for assistance, one needs to make a scheduled appointment. This can be done by calling 319-346-6575 and scheduling an appointment for whatever assistance is requested. If one is in an emergency, you should make that clear when calling.

The Butler County Board of Supervisors may assign any or all functions of this policy to a non-profit agency that does not conflict with any obligations placed on the county by Federal or State statute.

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Emergency Situation

An emergency situation to our office is one in which a person's utilities have been or are going to be disconnected, a person is being evicted from their home, food is needed or an application for a county burial is needed.

The Butler County General Assistance Program is designed to provide short-term emergency type assistance to people lacking the resources to meet their basic needs for utilities and shelter. It is not intended to provide ongoing, long-term aid to any individual and/or family.

Eligibility

To be eligible for assistance the applicant must be a resident of Butler County and a Citizen of the United States. When non-residents request assistance, the County of their residency will be contacted regarding the assistance.

Each application shall be considered based on need, reason for need, and inability to provide or secure basic necessities of life without assistance. An eligible resident may receive one assistance from one of the categories listed in benefit schedule one time a month. A maximum of two assistants will be granted for applicants each fiscal year.

Residents who apply for assistance and are receiving subsidized housing are ineligible for County assistance, unless monthly housing and utility expense exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the household monthly income.

All applications for assistance who state they have zero income must be receiving or applying for food stamps. They will also be referred to vocational services for support in obtaining employment. All applicants who have been denied assistance by Health and Human Services (Department of Human Services), for non-compliance of their programs, will also be ineligible for county assistance.

Veterans

Any honorably discharged Veteran, with at least six months one day of service, and their eligible family members will be ineligible for Butler County General Assistant funds and will need to receive assistance through the Veteran Affairs Office located at 428 6th St Allison, IA 50602. The phone number is 319-346-6628. A DD214 to verify dates and discharge eligibility is required. If an honorably discharged Veteran is suspended from receiving their services because of non-compliance, they will be denied assistance of Butler County General Assistance Funds.

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Butler County Employees

The Butler County General Assistance Program will assist Butler County employees if they are found eligible according to the guidelines presently being used with families and individual people applying for assistance.

Income Guidelines

Income shall not exceed 150% of the Federal Poverty Level, see Attached.

All income within in the household will be considered unless individuals in the household, applying separately, can verify a rental agreement or separate living conditions from the household. A household includes cohabitation, living together, and friends sharing expenses. Income shall be construed to mean wages, FIP Grant, Worker's Compensation, unemployment benefits, insurance payments, pensions, Social Security, sick pay, income tax refunds, and/or any other types of monies received. We also consider assets which are: CD's, IRA's, savings accounts, mutual funds, cash value on insurance policies, home equity, and property.

Applications found to have income less than the established guidelines, shall generally be considered for temporary emergency assistance with adequate documentation of crisis. If the money was stolen or lost, a police report must have been filed in a timely manner prior to the application for County assistance being filed.

The income Scale is to be used as a benchmark only and is not binding upon the Butler County General Assistant Program. Regarding applications whose income is within or exceeds the scale, further consideration will be given to their individual circumstances.

Assistance

Utilities: (gas, LP, water, electric)

The county assistance program may assist with energy bills for individuals who meet the income and eligibility guidelines established within this policy. County funding may assist with current utility bills only not to exceed the maximum utility assistance amount established in Butler County General Assistance Benefit Schedule-see attached A. The county funding will assist with a minimum fill for households that use LP gas or fuel oil if application is found eligible. County funding will not pay reconnect charges, late fees, or deposits.

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Shelter

Butler County General Assistance Program will assist applicants who are in an eviction situation to prevent eviction. If applicant is moving into a new place, they must have eviction notice from old place and all deposits paid at the new place before consideration of assistance is given. In case of rent payment, payment will be authorized as stated in Butler County General Assistance Benefit Schedule-see attached A.

Shelter assistance shall be pro-rated for a client who moves into a new dwelling after the first of the month Shelter assistance will be paid only to the deed holder of the property who has provided his/her tax ID number or Social Security number to the county. The landlord must agree to allow the applicant to remain in the property for the period covering the county assistance. Assistance will not be paid to a deedholder who is a relative of any person living in the household where the assistance is being applied for.

Medical Assistance/Medications/Dental

The Butler County General Assistance Program will refer individuals in need of assistance paying for medical treatment, medications, or dental care to a community clinic. The office will also refer to the State of Iowa Health Coverage Program (Medicaid). The office will assist with completing these applications as needed.

Nursing Home Care/Residential

Any applicant and/or spouse in a Nursing Care Center will not be allowed assistance through the Butler County General Assistant Program for their per diem cost at the Nursing Care Center.

Clients Eligible for Medicaid

Any applicant who is eligible for and has received current Medicaid card will not be eligible for assistance with medications not covered by Title XIX, nor assistance with co-charges required through the Title XIX Program.

Food

The Butler County General Assistance Program relies on the usage of the Food stamp program and local food banks for individuals with food insecurities.

Clothing

The Butler County General Assistance Program relies on local agencies and organizations to meet the basic need for clothing. A referral may be made to these organizations when it is determined that an individual meets our eligibility criteria.

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Reimbursement

In all cases, applicants shall be informed of their liability to reimburse Butler County of assistance granted to them when and if it becomes possible for them to do so.

Director's Exception

The Butler County General Assistance Program Director may issue an exception to policy to exceed the established award allowances or eligibility criteria if upon review it is consistent with Butler County's mission to protect the health and safety of Butler County residents.

Appeal Process

Any applicant who is denied assistance shall be informed of that decision in person, by telephone, and/or by mail. They may appeal the decision within 5 working days. The Director shall conduct an appeal interview within 10 working days of the appeal request. The Director will issue a decision within 5 working days of the appeal interview. Applicants not satisfied with the Director's decision may proceed with the appeal process outlined in County Ordinance, Title 7 Ordinance #1 Section XI Appeal. Assistance in filling the appeal shall be provided to an applicant who has difficulty because of inability to read, write, or understand the appeal process.

Butler County General Assistance Program Policy

Burial Policy

Purpose

Butler County General Assistance Program will provide funeral or burial assistance to people with legal settlement in Butler County who are eligible for services.

Eligibility

Applicants will be determined eligible if their representative affirms that they meet the conditions outlined in the Butler County Affidavit.

Assistance

Butler County General Assistance will pay for the following services to be rendered:

- Maximum amount for one item below is \$1800
 - Funeral Services
 - Burial
 - Cremation
- Transportation of the deceased to be returned to Butler County \$150
- Burial Opening and Closing \$300

Reimbursement

Death Benefits or monies from private sources including savings, life insurance, sale of property, bonds, general income, etc., shall be deducted from the assistance allowance provided by the General Assistance Program unless said reimbursement falls under the Exception rule as stated below. The county will be responsible for collecting all reimbursements.

Exception to Policy

When special and/or unusual circumstances occur, the Director shall obtain approval of the Board of Supervisors by majority, for approval of extra funds needed.

Appeal Process

Any applicant who is not satisfied with the Director's decision may proceed to the appeal process. Right to appeal is within ten days of decision. The Director shall conduct an appeal interview within 10 working days of the appeal request. The Director will issue a decision within 5 working days of the appeal interview. Applicants not satisfied with the Director's decision may proceed with the appeal process outlined in County Ordinance, Title 7, Ordinance #1, Section XI Appeal. Assistance in filling the appeal shall be provided to an applicant who has difficulty because of inability to read, write, or understand the appeal process.