

19.1 Emergency Family Stabilization Payments

Emergency Family stabilization payments are one-time payments designed to meet an emergency participants' needs at the beginning of a W-2 episode and qualify as a Non-Recurrent, Short-term Benefit (NRST) under the TANF definition of assistance.

These payments are an important piece of providing a whole family approach to meeting participants' needs.

W-2 agencies must determine eligibility for an emergency payment for a participant who has an emergency need and is awaiting a first W-2 payment.

Participants are not required to repay family stabilization payments.

There is no limit on the emergency family stabilization payment amount; each W-2 agency may choose to establish a range of payments (e.g., between \$25 and \$750). The W-2 agency may also choose to limit the payment to no more than once every 12 months. and the W-2 agency should support the full need amount when possible.

However, payments more than \$3,000 must have Contract Administration Section Manager approval.

Eligibility

To be eligible, participants must be:

- In a CSJ placement, CMC placement, or W-2 T placement; and
- In the period prior to their first scheduled W-2 payment; and
- Experiencing a need.

W-2 agencies must determine eligibility during the initial informal assessment. When possible, payments should be used in conjunction with other supports available to participants including the Emergency Assistance program, but it is not required.

Emergency Family stabilization payments qualify as nonrecurrent, short-term benefits under the TANF definition of assistance and do not use a month of TANF assistance or and do not count as an additional W-2 benefit.

Participants can receive no more than four family stabilization payments within 12 months. Participants can only receive one family stabilization payment per W-2 episode.

Uses

Emergency Family Stabilization payments may be used for needs including but not limited to:

- Shelter;
- Food;

- Work-related expenses; etc.
- Insurance;
- Toiletries/household items/diapers;
- Phone payments;
- School supplies;
- Short-term child care;
- Legal fees, etc.

Form and Documentation

W-2 agencies must use the *Family Stabilization Payment Request form (5751)* to track issuance of these payments; no other application form can be used. The *Family Stabilization Payment Request* form must be completed by the participant.

W-2 agencies must scan the completed form into ECF under the APP scan code following disbursement of the funding. Additionally, for payments requiring Contract Administration Section Manager approval, the approval must be scanned with the *Family Stabilization Payment Request* form.

Workers should **must** document in PIN comments when a participant **receives** **requests** an **emergency family stabilization** payment **and if the payment was approved or denied**. Emergency **Family stabilization** payments are not tracked through the CARES system.

The W-2 agency may issue the payment:

- To the participant, or
- To a third party by participant request.

Workers must offer the participant a choice in how this payment is issued, either to the participant or to a third party. Workers must document in PIN comments when a third-party payment is issued and the details of the participant's preferred method of payment.

EXAMPLE: Stan receives a family stabilization payment at placement before his first initial W-2 payment. Stan participates in the W-2 program for six months and exits. Stan applies and is approved to enter the W-2 program again. He is in need of a mobile phone and money for phone payments. He is approved for a family stabilization payment for this, as it is before his initial W-2 payment and is his second family stabilization payment within 12 months.