

Additional Statewide and Federal Resources for Florida Families



OVERVIEW:

If an individual is not eligible to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits, there are additional resources readily available to Floridians and their families. The programs listed below provide Floridians the access to food assistance for low-income households, medical assistance, disability assistance, housing assistance, and temporary financial assistance to families who qualify. Read below to learn more about these programs.

TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) program provides cash assistance to families with children under age 18 (or under age 19 if they are full time students in a secondary school or its equivalent) that meet the program's technical, income, and asset requirements. TCA helps families become self-sufficient so the children may remain in their own homes or the homes of relatives.

Pregnant women, with no other dependent children, in their third trimester of pregnancy may also be eligible to receive TCA; if their physician restricts them from work. Otherwise, TCA eligibility is available in the ninth month of pregnancy.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Florida families must meet the following requirements:

- Be U.S. citizens or qualified noncitizens,
- Be legal residents of the state,
- Be a family with a minor child living with a custodial parent or caretaker relative or a pregnant woman, and
- Must earn less than 185% of the federal poverty level.

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Food Assistance Program helps people with low-income buy healthy food. A food assistance household is normally a group of people who live together and buy food and cook meals together. If your household passes the Food Assistance Program's eligibility rules, the amount of food assistance benefits you get depends on the number of people in your household and how much money is left after certain expenses are subtracted.

Eligibility Requirements

Individuals must pass all eligibility rules to get food assistance benefits. Some of the eligibility rules are:

- **Identity** - Individuals must show proof they are the person they claim to be. Applicants must provide proof of their identity.
- **Work Rules** - Healthy adults, 18 to 50 years of age, who do not have dependent children or are not pregnant, can only get food assistance benefits for 3 months in a 3-year period if they are not working or participating in a work or workfare program.

- **Income and Deductions** – Most households must pass a gross income limit less than or equal to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Households with a member disqualified for breaking Food Assistance Program rules, felony drug trafficking, running away from a felony warrant, or not participating in a work program must have gross income less than or equal to 130% of the FPL. Households with a disqualified member must have net income less than 100% of the FPL. Households with people who are age 60 or older, or disabled, must only meet the net monthly income limit. Some household expenses may be subtracted from the total monthly income in the food assistance budget. The budget may subtract for shelter expenses, dependent care, medical expenses, child support paid, utility deductions, and earned income deduction.
- **Residency** - Individuals must live in the state of Florida.
- **Citizenship** - Individuals must be a U.S. citizen or have a qualified noncitizen status.
- **SSN** - Individuals must provide a Social Security Number or proof they have applied for one.
- **Child Support Cooperation** - Certain individuals must cooperate with the state's child support enforcement agency to prove a child's legal relationship to their parent and to get the court to order child support payments.
- **Assets** - Most food assistance households may have assets such as vehicles, bank accounts, or property and still get help. Households with a disqualified member must meet an asset limit of \$2,250 or \$3,250 effective October 1, 2014 (if the household contains an elderly or disabled member).
- **Change Reporting** - Households must report when the total monthly gross income exceeds 130% of the Federal Poverty Level for the household size and when work hours of able-bodied adults fall below 20 hours per week when averaged monthly. The household must report these changes within 10 days after the end of the month of the change.

HEALTHCARE NEEDS

The Florida Department of Health may be able to assist individuals with information about services rendered by County Health Departments and has an assortment of health-related programs, such as the Office of Volunteer Programs, that may prove helpful to you. If you want to contact that department directly, please use the information provided below:

Department of Health

2585 Merchants Row Boulevard

Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Telephone: (850) 245-4321 E-mail: health@doh.state.fl.us

The Florida Department of Children and Families provides social services for Floridians in need and determines eligibility for Medicaid, Healthy Kids and other social and economic assistance programs which might be beneficial. If you want to contact that department directly, please use the information provided below:

Florida Department of Children and Families

Building One, Room 202

1317 Winewood Boulevard

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Telephone: (850) 488-4306

Additional Tips for Healthcare Assistance

- A helpful resource to search for health care facilities and programs in your local area is Florida's e-portal, www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov.
- Information regarding Federal Health Care Reform and the High Risk Pool can be found on Internet at www.healthcare.gov, by e-mail at healthreform@hhs.gov, or by writing the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, High Risk Pool, 200 Independence Avenue, Southwest, Washington, D.C. 20201. 1-866-717-5826 (TTY: 1-866-561-1604).
- Individuals may want to see if they are eligible for Social Security Disability benefits from the Federal Government. The Florida Department of Health Division of Disability Determinations is the appropriate authority to review any concerns regarding medical eligibility for Social Security Disability. The Division of Disability Determinations is the state office that makes the determination of an applicant's medical eligibility based on Social Security criteria. In some instances, they can assist persons who experience trouble navigating the Social Security Disability system. For more information, or to contact them, please either visit www.doh.state.fl.us, or call (850) 488-4222.
- Another place to contact for medical assistance is the Hill-Burton Foundation at (800) 638-0742. The Hill-Burton Foundation is a Government program that helps with services for individuals who are under-insured, un-insured, unable to afford services needed.
- Individuals may benefit from the assistance of a social service organization. The main purpose of this type of organization is to provide temporary relief and assistance to individuals in need. There are many organizations in the State of Florida designed to assist with both problems facing Florida citizens and non-citizens. Information about these agencies can be found at your local health department, church, shelter, police department, library, or via the internet. 211, an information and referral service sponsored by the United Way, is available in many areas throughout Florida and can share information on services available in your community. They may be contacted by dialing 211 or online at www.211.org.

FAMILY-RELATED MEDICAID

A federal and state program that provides medical assistance to individuals based on eligibility requirements for technical and financial criteria as defined in the policy.

Who can be covered by Family-Related Medicaid?

Individuals potentially eligible for Family-Related Medicaid include:

- Pregnant Women
- Parents and other Caretaker Relatives
- Children under age 19
- Children age 19 up to 21
- Former Foster Care Children age 18 up to 26

A pregnant woman may qualify for Medicaid if her family's countable income does not exceed income limits. For pregnant women who do not meet the citizenship requirements for Medicaid, see the information below about Emergency Medical Assistance for Non-Citizens.

Presumptively Eligible Pregnant Women (PEPW) is temporary coverage for prenatal care only and eligibility is determined by Qualified Designated Providers (QDP) based on limited information from the pregnant woman. During the temporary coverage period, the pregnant woman will need to submit an application to have her ongoing Medicaid eligibility determined. Women with family income over the limit for Medicaid may qualify for the Medically Needy Program.

FLORIDA HEALTHY KIDS

The Florida Healthy Kids Corporation administers the Florida Healthy Kids program for children ages 5 through 18. The corporation also determines eligibility for the non-Medicaid parts of the program, collects monthly premiums, and manages the customer service call center. To contact Healthy Kids directly, please use the information provided below.

Florida Healthy Kids/Kid Care

661 East Jefferson Street, Second Floor
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
Telephone: (850) 224-5437

DISABILITY RIGHTS FLORIDA

Disability Rights Florida is the statewide designated protection and advocacy system for individuals with disabilities in the State of Florida. Disability Rights Florida is a not-for-profit corporation that has authority and responsibility under eight federal grants. Their services are free and confidential.

Any Floridian with a disability-related issue is eligible to receive Disability Rights Florida services. For information about Disability Rights Florida, please use the contact information provided below:

Disability Rights Florida

2272 Centerview Drive, Suite 102
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
Telephone: 800-342-0823
Online: www.disabilityrightsflorida.org

ELDER ASSISTANCE

Individuals age 60 and older, or who have disabilities, may wish to contact the Elder Helpline Information and Assistance service at 1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337). The Elder Helpline offers information regarding elder services and resources available within each Florida county. All Elder Helplines can also be accessed through the Florida Telecommunication Relay System at 1-800-955-8771 for TDD, or 1-800-955-8770 for voice calls.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers federal aid to local Public Housing Agencies that manage housing for low-income residents and provide a range of services, including shelter, food, counseling, and jobs skills programs. Individuals seeking information about home ownership, rental help, and homeless services can obtain information online at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Website at www.hud.gov or by calling (800) 225-5342.

Floridians should contact their local housing authority for assistance. Contact information for Florida's local housing authorities can be obtained online at www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/states/fl.cfm.

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation administers a number of rental housing and homeownership programs that help low income Floridians obtain safe, affordable housing that might otherwise be unavailable to them. For assistance, contact the Florida Housing Finance Corporation at 227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000, Tallahassee, Florida 32301, or by calling (850) 488-4197. The Web address is www.floridahousing.org.

Floridians can also contact the Florida Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness by writing to Office on Homelessness, Building 3, Room 202, 1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700 or by calling (850) 922-4691. Helpful information and resources are available online at <http://www.myflfamilies.com>.

Home Foreclosure

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds free or low-cost housing counseling. Housing counselors can help you understand the law and your options, organize your finances and represent you in negotiations with your lender. To find a HUD-approved housing counselor near you, call (800) 569-4287. Furthermore, the Hope for Homeowners program through HUD may refinance mortgages for borrowers who are having difficulty making their payments but can afford a new loan insured by HUD's Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Please call (800) 225-5342 for more information about this program.

For more information on how to avoid foreclosure, please view the website <http://www.hud.gov/foreclosure/index.cfm>.

Legal assistance may be found through the Florida Bar's Referral Service at (800) 342-8011. For individuals unable to afford a lawyer, Florida Legal services or your local legal aid office has information about the availability of pro bono counsel. The main telephone number for Florida Legal Services is (850) 385-7900.

You may also want to contact the Florida Office of Financial Regulation for additional tips on avoiding foreclosure. If you wish to contact the Office of Financial Regulation directly, please call (850) 487-9687.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) assists households that have incomes below 150% of the federal poverty income guidelines who need assistance in paying their utility bills. To qualify you must apply in the county in which you live. Please visit the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's website for answers to questions about the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program and contact information for the service provider in your county. This information may be found at www.floridajobs.org/community-planning-and-development/community-services/low-income-home-energy-assistance-program.