



NEWS RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNOUNCES CARES ACT FUND PROGRAM

Orange County, VA – The Orange County Department of Social Services (OCDSS) announces the launch of the CARES Act Fund Program, that uses funds provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The program is designed a last resort for those who have suffered financial hardship due to COVID-19 and are unable to meet their needs through existing financial resources and benefit programs. The CARES Act Fund Program can assist Orange County households with electric, water, sewer, rent, or mortgage bills if cutoff, foreclosure, or eviction are imminent.

Applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility and may require proof of COVID-19 hardship, verification of income, and delinquent notices. The program provides a one-time assistance and will not assist with final utility bills of those moving out of the county. A co-payment may be required to ensure cut-off, eviction, or foreclosure are avoided. Failure to ensure cut-off, eviction, or foreclosure are avoided may negate utilization of the CARES Act Fund Program. The program will provide assistance on a first come, first served basis, with a maximum benefit of \$1,200 per household until the program ends. Applications will be accepted until funds are exhausted and/or OCDSS announces the program has ended. Applications may be submitted in person, by mail, or by fax to OCDSS.

General Eligibility Guidelines (per household)

1. Be a current resident of Orange County, Virginia (including the Towns of Orange and Gordonsville)
2. Demonstrate a qualifying crisis due to COVID-19, such as:
 - The need for payment of residential electricity, water, sewer, rent or mortgage bill(s). Verification is required through the presentation of a valid lease or mortgage statement in the applicant's name, or other documentation confirming the landlord-tenant relationship with past due expenses beginning April 1, 2020 and onward.
3. Prove a loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including but not limited to:
 - Being laid off
 - Place of employment closure
 - Experiencing a reduction in work hours
 - Need to stay home to care for children due to the closure of day care and/or school
 - Change in ability to work, or ability to work normal hours, due to contracting COVID-19
4. Demonstrate an exhaustion of all other resources and benefit programs

Applications may be obtained by visiting <http://orangecountyva.gov/391/Social-Services>. Questions may be directed to the Orange County Department of Social Services by calling (540) 672-1155 or emailing orangecountydss@dss.virginia.gov (applications will not be accepted via email).

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