

**Leon County**  
**Office of Human Services and Community Partnerships**  
**Direct Emergency Assistance Program**  
**Guidelines**

The Direct Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) is funded by the Leon County Board of County Commissioners to provide financial assistance to citizens to assist with payments for basic necessity expenditures, including shelter and utility costs. DEAP is designed to help citizens who are in need of assistance during an emergency situation and have the ability to sustain payments for future expenditures. If the household income is less than the basic necessity expenditures, the applicant may be eligible for assistance. The applicant and his/her household must be "in need" of the assistance payment. Specifically, the applicant and his/her household is "in need" when the household's net income is less than the household's Basic Necessity Expenditures (as established below) for the most recent 30-day period. If the household's net income exceeds the household's Basic Necessity Expenditures, then the applicant and his/her household is ineligible. Applicant must have good likelihood of future independence. The applicant must demonstrate that the situation will be improved by next payment date.

**Maximum Payment Amounts**

Maximum payment amounts have been established to ensure that funds may be used to assist an optimal number of residents, while still providing payment levels that will adequately assist clients with their particular need. The maximum payments are as follows:

**Shelter (Rent/Mortgage)**      Up to \$400

*Not to exceed the total monthly rental or mortgage payment.*

**Utilities/Fuel**      Up to \$200.00

*Not to exceed the total utility/fuel costs for the 30-day period for which assistance is being provided.*

<b>Food Assistance</b>	<b><u>Household Size</u></b>	<b><u>Amount of Voucher</u></b>
	1	\$50.00
	2	\$75.00
	3	\$95.00
	4	\$115.00
	5	\$135.00
	6	\$155.00
	7	\$175.00
	8	\$195.00 (Maximum)

**Eligibility Criteria**

The following criteria are used to determine eligibility for DEAP. Applicants must meet all eligibility criteria in order to qualify for DEAP assistance.

- A. Residency:** The applicant must be a Leon County resident or intending to live in Leon County.
  
- B. Veteran:** For funding specifically allocated for Veterans, a Veteran is defined as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.
  
- C. Identification**  
Proper identification will be required for all applicants. Proper identification includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Driver's License
  - 2. Florida Identification
  - 3. Social Security Card
  - 4. Birth Certificate**Veterans:**
  - 1. Military Identification
  - 2. DD214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty)
  
- D. Basic Necessity Expenditures** are defined as follows. These expenditures are the only expenditures considered when determining eligibility:

**Shelter:** The household's actual shelter obligation (rent/mortgage) for the current month will be considered a Basic Necessity Expenditure. The amounts listed below are the maximum amounts to be included, based on household size:

Efficiency:	\$596.00
1 Bedroom:	\$662.00
2 Bedrooms:	\$817.00
3 Bedrooms:	\$1,090.00
4 Bedrooms:	\$1,122.00

*Limits are based on the HUD Fair Market Rent Documentation System for Leon County. Units larger than four bedrooms are calculated by adding 15% to the four bedroom fair market rate for each additional room.*

**Utility/Fuel:** The household's actual utility/fuel/heating costs for the month will be considered as a Basic Necessity Expenditure. Only the actual charges for the month, including wood payment, will be considered.

**Food:** The household's food cost for the current month will be considered a Basic Necessity Expenditure. The following is based on the number of family members in the household.

1-\$200.00	3-\$526.00	5-\$793.00
2-\$367.00	4-\$668.00	6-\$952.00

*Adapted from the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Guidelines. Add \$150.00 for each additional person in household.*

**Child Care:** The household's child care costs for the current month will be considered a Basic Necessity Expenditure only if the adult is working. No cost will be deducted if the household contains another non-working adult. Child care must be verified prior to being considered and only the amount that is actually paid will be considered. A current childcare contract or receipt for payment should be provided for consideration.

**Transportation to and from work:** Transportation costs for purposes of employment are considered a Basic Necessity Expenditure. The household will receive a credit of \$50.00 per working household member.

**Telephone:** The household will receive a credit of \$30.00 for telephone services, which is considered a Basic Necessity Expenditure.

**E. Emergency Expenditures**

Expenditures made as a result of the applicant experiencing an emergency, such as a fire, flood, theft, or a medical emergency will be considered as a Basic Necessity Expenditure. Verification is required in the form of receipts for service/goods rendered such as hospital bills or medication purchased. Determination of whether the expenditure will be considered a Basic Necessity Expenditure will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and only with documentation.

**F. Income Types Considered**

Income is any cash, check or payment received by or made on behalf of a household. Any income received or anticipated to be received in the current month will be considered.

**Earned income:** any income (cash, check, etc.) received in return for work done or service rendered by any member of the household, excluding employed children 16 years or older who are still students. Earned income includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Wages
- 2) Commissions
- 3) Farm Earnings
- 4) Self Employment
- 5) Retirement Income

**Non-earned income:** any other cash check or payment received. Non-earned income includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Food Stamps
- 2) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- 3) Social Security

- 4) Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- 5) Veteran's Administration Benefits
- 6) Unemployment Compensation
- 7) Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits

**Contributions:** Contributions are considered income if received on a regular basis. This includes regular contributions received from all sources.

- 1) Child Support or Alimony
- 2) Payment for rent and/or room and board
- 8) Non-governmental payments such as retirement pensions.

### **Income Calculation**

The household's income will be calculated by totaling all income received during the previous 30 days.

Income is defined as follows:

**Earned income:** The individual's gross earnings for the pay period minus the Social Security tax, Medicaid and Federal Income Tax actually deducted from the earnings. These are allowable deductions.

**Self Employment:** The business' gross income minus actual business expenditures. Only valid business expenditures will be deducted. No personal expenditures will be considered.

**Other Income:** The full amount of the cash, check, or payment received will be considered the net income.

**Income Calculation Exceptions:** Income received less often than monthly will be considered for the period of time it is intended to cover.

*Example: School grants received once a semester will be divided by the number of months in the semester.*

**Students:** Applicants and spouses who are attending an institution of higher education are ineligible. Institutions include, but are not limited to, Florida A&M University, Florida State University, Tallahassee Community College, Lively Vocational Technical School.

**Exception:** *If either the applicant or spouse is working at least 30 hours a week, the household may be eligible. Student status is also extended to those who are in-between terms.*

**G. Employability:**

- An applicant will be ineligible if either the applicant or any adult member of the household, who is physically able to work, is voluntarily unemployed or underemployed and does not meet one of the following criteria. Underemployed is defined as working less than 25 hours a week at minimum wage.

**Note: A teenager not enrolled in high school is considered an adult.**

- Unemployed or underemployed individuals must provide verification that they are actively seeking employment. The household member must identify places where he or she has sought employment within the last 30 days. Exceptions:
  1. An individual who is 62 years old or older.
  2. An individual who is physically unable to work.
  3. An individual who is needed in the home to care for an invalid adult or child (*verification from a physician required.*)
  4. An individual who is employed but is currently not working or working fewer hours due to inclement weather.
  5. An individual who has applied for or is receiving unemployment compensation.
  6. An individual (*one adult per household*) who is needed in the home to care for an infant under 90 days old.

**H. Verification**

The applicant must provide documentation of any information required by the caseworker to determine eligibility. Verification of the information is the responsibility of the applicant, but some assistance may be provided by the agency. Failure of the applicant to provide the requested information will result in ineligibility for assistance.

**I. Sustainability**

The applicant must provide proof that the household will be able to sustain payments for the expenditure in subsequent months. If the caseworker determines that the applicant is unable to pay the following month's rent or utilities because of income limitations, assistance may not be provided.

**J. Other Reasons for Ineligibility**

- Caseworker is unable to determine the applicant's eligibility
- Applicant does not provide requested information or documentation.
- Information or documentation provided is inaccurate or incomplete.
- Caseworker is unable to verify information with third parties, as warranted.
- The applicant has received assistance through DEAP within the last 12 months.
- The assistance to be provided by DEAP for rent and/or utilities is not adequate to prevent the utilities from being disconnected or the household from being evicted.
- The applicant has received assistance 3 (three) times during the lifetime of the program.