

Last year in Georgia alone, more than 1,282,000 families experienced financial hardship, many having their utilities interrupted — putting them at risk for losing their housing. In many critical situations like these, a little financial assistance could make a big difference. More importantly, it could mean a fresh start for a family in need.

## GEORGIA FRESH START PROGRAM:

- is led by The Department of Human Services (DHS) and United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta (UWMA), and is federally funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)
- provides one-time financial crisis assistance up to \$3,000
- grants funding for overdue housing or utility expense balances
- meets a critical need in Georgia by strengthening families and communities

## REQUIREMENTS

The applicant:

- must list everyone living at the address, including non-relatives
- may only submit one application per address (maximum of \$3,000)
- can request assistance for both housing and utilities
- may not be a commercial entity

To apply for housing assistance, the applicant must have at least one of the following:

- foreclosure notice
- demand for possession
- dispossessory
- eviction notice

To apply for utility assistance, the applicant must have at least one of the following:

- shut-off **OR** past due notice for utilities
- already turned off utilities

## HOW DO YOU DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY?

The applicant must:

- be a U.S. citizen **OR** legal immigrant allowed to work in U.S.
- be a resident of the state of Georgia
- be a caretaker of a minor dependent child living in the home **OR** be the non-custodial parent participating in the Georgia Fatherhood Program whose child is receiving TANF
- have an income at **OR** below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- live at the address provided on the Application for Benefits

# Fresh Start PROCESS FLOW

## 2-1-1 CALL CENTER

- Call 2-1-1 or local participating agencies
- Refer applicant to Fresh Start agency partner

## AGENCY IN-TAKE

- Agency enters client information in Pathways
- Clients not in Pathways receive confidentiality release form
- Request standard agency info

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY BASED ON:**
- U.S. citizen or **OR** legal immigrant allowed to work in U.S.
- Residency
- Dependent child
- Household income at **OR** below 300% FPL
- Verify client documents

## MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT

- **CLIENT/AGENCY PROVIDES 20%:**
- Negotiate with utility companies
- Negotiate with landlords and apartment managers

## APPROVAL PROCESS

- Agency submits client application with brief need summary
- 2-1-1 specialist accesses case file: confirms accurate documentation and 20% in place before submitting to UWWA finance for vendor payment
- UWWA finance performs final screen and makes vendor payment
- 2-1-1 specialists will notify agencies via email when case file status is determined

## ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

- UWWA issues check to vendor for outstanding balances (up to \$3,000) and a family is given a fresh start

## PATHWAYS

- UWWA updates client record in Pathways denoting assistance

## FOLLOW UP

- Agency follows up with clients within 90 days



United Way of  
Metropolitan Atlanta



Georgia Department  
of Human Services

[www.unitedwayatlanta.org](http://www.unitedwayatlanta.org)