

# Personal Hardship Assistance Program: Emergency Relief Assistance

Emergency Relief Assistance is available to alleviate personal hardship arising from an emergency by helping to meet the immediate essential health, safety and wellbeing needs of affected Victorians.

## Eligibility

Individuals and households may be eligible for Emergency Relief Assistance if they have suffered (or are likely to suffer) hardship in providing for their shelter, food, clothing, personal items or specific transport needs – all as a result of an emergency.

The provision of Emergency Relief Assistance is based on a needs assessment, and is available to assist a household after a single house fire, and after the following natural emergency events:

- bushfires
- floods
- severe storms
- and earthquakes.

## Applying for assistance

Applicants must undertake an assessment interview with an officer from the Department of Human Services. Applicants will need to provide personal identification and documents identifying their place of residence. Any of the following (current) documents are acceptable:

- a driver's licence
- a Medicare card
- a passport
- a recent property rates notice
- bank account statements.

## Assistance amounts

Once the Department of Human Services has confirmed an applicant's eligibility, the amount of Emergency Relief Assistance paid is based on fixed amounts for each household member (adults and children), up to a maximum household amount.

## Conditions of Emergency Relief Assistance assessments

Applications may be accepted up to seven days after the impact of the emergency, or longer at the discretion of the Director, Health & Human Services Emergency Management Branch.

In most circumstances, only one grant per household can be provided.

Any applicant who provides false information will have to repay any assistance provided, and may be liable to prosecution.

## Other forms of assistance

In some circumstances, the Victorian Government may offer other personal hardship assistance.

Applicants may be asked if their contact details can be forwarded to other organisations that may also provide assistance.

## Further information

For more information about the Personal Hardship Assistance Program, please contact your local council who will refer your case to a Department of Human Services officer for an assessment interview.