



Member Disaster Relief Fund

February 23, 2011

Purpose: To establish a policy and procedure whereby a Local 1549 member, experiencing a disastrous event, can apply for a once-in-a-lifetime monetary grant and, if meeting necessary criteria and conditions, receive monetary assistance from the Local 1549 Member Disaster Relief Fund.

For the purpose of this policy and procedure, the following definitions apply:

Disaster - An occurrence or event which results in exceptional hardship based on loss of life, physical illness/injury, extraordinary damage to personal property or devastating financial hardship. A disaster may include, but is not necessarily limited to, natural disaster, fire, terminal illness, death of the member or death in the member's family.

Natural Disaster - Natural event (e.g. - flood, storm, earthquake, etc.) caused by an act of nature that creates substantial injury to the member or substantial loss/damage to the member's current legal residence.

Fire - A fire not intentionally set by the member resulting in great loss to the member's personal, valuable, legally owned property.

Terminal Illness - Illness for which a state certified health practitioner verifies in writing that the member is unable to report to his/her City employment and that the illness is potentially fatal.

- Procedure:**
- (1) A Member Disaster Relief Fund Committee, consisting of no more than five (5) members shall be established. The President of Local 1549 shall appoint members to the Committee, with the approval of the Local 1549 Executive Board. The President will consider all recommendations from the Executive Board for members of the Committee. The Local 1549 Secretary-Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the committee and the **ONLY** member of the Executive Board to sit on the committee. The committee will consider all requests for Member Disaster Relief Assistance and make recommendations to the Local 1549 Executive Board for final judgment.
 - (2) Requests for member disaster assistance shall be made by completing the attached form. The form can be submitted either by or on behalf of the subject member. The form, with pertinent documentation attached, should be delivered to the Local 1549 Business Office via fax (212-815-7519), U.S. mail (125 Barclay Street, Room 415, NYC, NY 10007), or hand delivery, for referral to the Local 1549 Member Disaster Assistance Committee.

Eligibility Requirements:

- (a) The applicant must have become a Local 1549 Member or Agency Fee Payer at least one (1) year prior to the date of application.

- (b) The application must be submitted within one (1) year following the date of the qualifying occurrence along with all pertinent documentation.
- (c) The member must submit documentation satisfactory to the Committee demonstrating the qualifying event and the resulting impact.
- (d) The applicant must have applied for and received a grant from the Emergency Assistance Disaster Grant Fund of DC37's Personal Services Unit.

Limitations:

- (a) Members with unlimited sick leave shall not be eligible for a grant based on terminal illness.
 - (b) Members are not eligible if they have failed to pay dues for more than three (3) months, unless DC37 is appealing the member's termination from city employment.
 - (c) This grant is available to members on a "once-in-a-lifetime" basis.
 - (d) The Member Disaster Relief Fund is subject to Local 1549's annual budget.
 - (e) The maximum yearly expenditure under this fund is \$25,000, as authorized by the Local 1549 Executive Board, and is subject to modification or revocation at any time, without prior notice.
 - (f) The maximum grant available to a member, under the provisions of this fund, is \$1,000 in a lifetime.
- (3) In addition to the member's needs, factors in the Committee considering approval and/or amount of monetary assistance shall include: (a) extent to which the event was unforeseeable; (b) direct and lasting impact on member; (c) other sources of assistance available; (d) the potential for the event to be recurring or ongoing; (e) documentation submitted; (f) the member's tenure as a local 1549 member.

Grant Distribution:

Subject to evaluation of the member's needs and the determination of the Committee and the DC37 Personal Services Unit, the following rules apply:

- (1) A member experiencing two (2) or more qualifying events simultaneously shall be eligible for a grant of up to \$1,000, based on the Committee's evaluation of the member's needs.
- (2) A member experiencing a qualifying terminal illness shall be eligible for a grant of up to \$1,000 based on the committee's evaluation of the member's needs.
- (3) A member experiencing a qualifying natural disaster affecting only one (1) member shall be eligible for a grant of up to \$1,000, based on the committee's evaluation of the member's needs.
- (4) Members experiencing a qualifying natural disaster affecting more than one (1) Local 1549 member, shall be eligible for grants of up to \$1,000 each, with a maximum expenditure of \$5,000 per qualifying event, based on the Committee's evaluation of the members' needs.
- (5) A member who has exhausted his/her short-term disability and his/her annual leave and sick leave, and is able to return to work, shall be eligible for a grant of up to \$100 for a maximum of two (2) weeks, based on the Committee's evaluation of the member's needs.
- (6) A member's death shall make the deceased member's next of kin/estate/administrator eligible for a grant of up to \$500, based on the Committee's evaluation of the next of kin/estate/administrator's needs. This is a one-time grant in addition to benefits provided by District Council 37. The recipient of the grant

must provide written proof of being the lawful recipient of the grant.

(7) Death of a member, spouse, child or parent of the member who resides at the member's address of record, where the member or next of kin/estate/administrator (where member is the deceased) where the member or member's next of kin/estate/administrator is unable to pay any funeral expenses, shall result in a grant of up to \$250 to pay for funeral costs, based on the Committee's evaluation of the member's or survivor's needs.

Miscellaneous Provisions:

(1) All information obtained by the Local is completely confidential and only the DC37 Personal Services Unit Counselors, DC37 Personal Services Unit Social Workers, and necessary Officers/Staff of Local 1549 shall have access to the information. Any of the aforementioned personnel who discloses such information shall be subject to charges under the AFSCME Financial Standards Code and the Local 1549 and AFSCME Constitutions.

(2) In the case of a natural disaster, the Secretary Treasurer of Local 1549, upon verifying that a significant number of Local 1549 members are affected and the remainder of the fund is insufficient, with approval of the Committee, may request that the Local 1549 Executive Board allocate an additional \$25,000 to the fund. The Secretary Treasurer will make this request in writing, providing a specific and detailed explanation.

(3) The Local 1549 Executive Board shall have the power to resolve any relative matters which can not be resolved solely by the Committee.

(4) The member is responsible for completing the application for a Member Disaster Relief Fund Grant and submitting all required/requested documentation.

Note: The AFSCME constitution, Local 1549 constitution, AFSCME Financial Standards Code, and any applicable laws will prevail if determined to be in conflict with any provision contained in this policy/procedure.

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