

Emergency Assistance Policy

1. PURPOSE

Mission and outreach has been, and will continue to be, a major focus of Southminster Presbyterian Church (SPC). As such, the following policy will serve as a consistent guideline for the execution of any requests for emergency assistance (EA) of Southminster. Emergency assistance will be funded by the Emergency Assistance Fund of the church.

We understand that people from all walks and stages of life have needs, and we have developed this policy to provide a clear and consistent response to requests for assistance from those within our faith community and from our community at large. SPC offers assistance to individuals for the following life needs: Rent/Mortgage, Utility, Transportation, and other emergency circumstances. Assistance is limited and may include referrals to other community assistance programs who may be better able to provide support for an individual request.

2. SCOPE

- a. This policy applies to all those making monetary or non-monetary requests from SPC and may include members or non-members.
- b. This policy describes the SPC's objectives and policies regarding the acceptance and execution of all EA requests.

3. POLICY GUIDELINES

a. All Situations

- All requests shall be held in full confidence by all participating parties. Exceptions to this guideline may be necessary if any of the following were to occur...
 - i. Any situation that threatens the health and safety of any person or child will be referred immediately to the local authorities.
 - ii. If at any time members or employees of SPC feel threatened or unsafe, all support and communication will be terminated and staff/ church leaders will be advised. This final decision will be made at the discretion of our personnel and members and is not subject to review or appeal.
- Funds are not intended to address chronic or routine needs. Reasons for emergency assistance may include: medical emergency, job loss, severe family crisis, disaster, or falling victim to a crime or fraud.
- This policy is considered a living document. It will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be updated and modified as needed to best support the church and at-large communities that we serve.

- We may establish an opportunity to pray with a Pastor or be added to our internal prayer network.
- Invitation to worship to find support and fellowship in our community will be offered; all are welcomed and accepted at SPC.

4. DEFINITIONS

SPC Community Members: A person(s) who, for at least 3 months, has regularly attended or has been an active participant in SPC worship and activities (Sunday Service, classes, etc.) or is registered as an official member of SPC.

At-Large Community Members: Considered, for this policy, as those who are part of the local community at large and do not meet the description of “SPC Community Members.” These are beloved children of God about whom we care and wish to support per the boundaries of this policy.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Pastor(s)/Session/Mission Team
 - 1) Establish and approve initial program policy (Mission Team/Session)
 - 2) Approve policy, amendments or changes as necessary (Mission Team/Session)
 - 3) Execute policy (Head-of Staff/Staff Pastor and designated Elder)

6. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- a. “Southminster Presbyterian Emergency Fund Request” (Ver1.0)... January 2017

Emergency Assistance Procedures (formerly Pay it Forward)

- 1. If a person walks in and asks for help:**
 - a. Invite him/her to take an Emergency Assistance Form and Human Services pamphlet located on the cabinet in the vestibule, complete and contact the office to make an appointment to meet with a Pastor on the nearest Monday/Wednesday at noon. Ask the person's name if not given.**
 - b. Notify both Pastors.**
 - c. Give the person the 211 number for the coordinated services in Montgomery County. If the person wishes to contact 211 immediately, please allow him/her into the entryway to use the telephone outside the office. Supervise the call, please.**
 - d. If YOU perceive the need to give immediate assistance, a bottle of water and a package of snacks can be offered, also on the cabinet.**
 - e. If there are bus tokens available, you may also offer a bus token.**
- 2. Under most circumstances, this is the extent of immediate help available.**
- 3. Become familiar with our Emergency Assistance Plan.**