

# ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY GENERAL RELIEF REGULATIONS MANUAL

## SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES

EFFECTIVE: February 2022

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### **.1 GENERAL**

Pursuant to W&I Code Section 17000.5, the Board of Supervisors adopts a general assistance standard of aid, including the value of in-kind aid, that is 62 percent of a guideline that is equal to the 1991 federal official poverty line and may adjust that guideline in an amount equal to any adjustments provided under W&I Code Section 11453 for establishing a maximum aid level in the county.

### **.2 METHODS OF PAYMENT**

The County, at its discretion, may elect to make GR payments directly to the GR-EU or to a provider. GR payments shall be issued via Electronic Benefit Transfer/Electronic Funds Transfer (EBT/EFT), vendor payment or third party check. No benefits will be issued to a destination outside of the County except a mortuary may be paid at the Orange County rate when an eligible county resident dies out of county.

#### **.a ISSUANCE OF GR BENEFITS**

GR benefits shall be issued via EBT/EFT card for all GR payments with the exception of special needs payments. Issuance of GR benefits may be staggered to correspond with other cash assistance staggered issuance schedule.

GR benefits will be expunged from an EBT account after benefits have been available for 365 days with no debit activity. GR benefits will not be reinstated once expunged and the amount expunged is deducted from the total GR benefits to be repaid.

#### **.b VENDOR PAYMENTS**

Vendor payments are issued to merchants to deliver a specific service or goods in a specified amount. The GR-EU shall have the choice of vendor, however, the County, at its discretion, may refuse to authorize an order to any vendor known to be unsatisfactory.

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**ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY  
GENERAL RELIEF REGULATIONS MANUAL**

**SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

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**.2 METHODS OF PAYMENT (cont'd)**

**.c THIRD PARTY CHECKS**

Third party checks are made payable to a service provider or merchant on behalf of the GR client.

**.d FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY**

Financial eligibility to receive GR is determined by subtracting all current net income per Sections 70.2 and 70.3 from the GR MAP.

The MAP is based on the size of the GR-EU and the EU's housing arrangements.

The MAP shall not include:

- (1)** Any child.
- (2)** Persons who are excluded from the GR-EU for cause pursuant to these regulations.

Any individual who is not eligible for aid as a result of the CalWORKs time limits specified in the W&I Code Section 11454 until all of the children of the individual on whose behalf aid was received, whether or not currently living in the home, are eighteen (18) years of age or older.

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# ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY GENERAL RELIEF REGULATIONS MANUAL

**SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

**EFFECTIVE: February 2022**

## **.2 METHODS OF PAYMENT (cont'd)**

### **.e AID PAYMENTS**

#### **(1) GR Immediate Need (GR-IN)**

A one-time payment limited to seven (7) days assistance shall be offered to applicants who lack shelter, provided all other requirements for IN have been met. This payment will be a prorated share of the monthly GR benefit to which the GR-EU would be otherwise eligible. The duration of GR-IN may be extended to adjust for days when county offices are closed.

No aid shall be issued prior to providing verification of income and non-citizen status.

Issuance of a GR-IN aid payment does not constitute approval of GR on a continuing basis and termination of such assistance does not require advance notification.

An exception to the GR-IN aid payment requirement may be made when it can be shown that the applicant has a history of non-cooperation with the Agency. GR-IN shall be limited to one issuance every thirty (30) days.

#### **(2) Deleted effective 05-01-2020**

#### **(3) Continuing Payments**

Termination or reduction of continuing benefits requires ten (10) days advance notice except when aid terminates at the conclusion of a time limited eligibility period of thirty (30) days or less. See Section 110.1.

#### **(4) Other**

Other aid payments include aid to payday, transportation to other areas for non-residents, and other special need payments. Special needs payments will be issued as a third party check or vendor payment whenever possible.

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# ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY GENERAL RELIEF REGULATIONS MANUAL

## SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES

EFFECTIVE: November 2024

### **.3 BENEFIT DETERMINATIONS**

The GR benefit is calculated as follows:

**.a DETERMINE GR MAXIMUM AID PAYMENT (MAP) for the eligible members of the GR-EU**

- (1)** If some members receive CalWORKs or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), the GR MAP is the difference between the GR MAP for all members of the GR-EU less the GR MAP for those receiving CalWORKs or RCA.
- (2)** If some members are excluded due to receipt of SSI/SSP, non-citizen status, or other reason described in Section 20.4, the benefit will be based on the GR MAP for the number of eligible persons in the GR-EU.
- (3)** If an applicant/recipient shares housing with one or more unrelated persons or with one or more persons who are not legally responsible for the applicant/recipient, the MAP is reduced by 15% if shared with one (1) other person, 20% if shared with two (2) other persons, or 25% if shared with three (3) or more other persons.

Shared housing provisions do not apply to individuals placed in Housing Support Programs and may be receiving a shelter subsidy.

**.b DETERMINE COMPONENT VALUES (CVs)**

The CVs consist of the following categories: Housing/Utilities, Food, Transportation, and Clothing. GR components met in full will be excluded from the GR grant determination.

**(1) EXCESS HOUSING/UTILITY COMPONENT VALUE**

The excess housing/utility component value is the difference between the actual verified cost to the GR-EU and the maximum allowable GR housing/utility component for the aided GR-EU size.

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**ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY  
GENERAL RELIEF REGULATIONS MANUAL**

**SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

**EFFECTIVE: May 2020**

**.3 BENEFIT DETERMINATIONS (cont'd)**

If the GR-EU has housing and/or utilities expenses, the actual amount will be allowed up to the maximum Housing/Utilities CV.

Homeless individuals are entitled to the Housing/Utilities CV. Individuals living in county/city shelters or armories are considered homeless.

The food, transportation and clothing CVs will be deducted from the MAP only when the entire component is provided at no cost to the individual. For GR purposes, if the individual receives CalFresh benefits the individual is eligible for the entire food CV.

- .c DEDUCT NET EARNED INCOME** per Section 70.2.o.
- .d DEDUCT NET UNEARNED INCOME** per Section 70.2.p.
- .e DEDUCT DEEMED INCOME** per Section 70.3.
- .f Deleted effective 01-01-2014.**
- .g** Current month underpayments will be adjusted promptly in accordance with Section 110.6.
- .h** When the GR benefit period is less than one month or when it overlaps two (2) calendar months, the benefit will be prorated.

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## SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES

EFFECTIVE: November 2024

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### .4 SPECIAL NEEDS

Special needs are defined as a payment for an item that has been requested by or on behalf of the GR-EU, including aid to payday, cremation/burial and transportation for non-residents. Special needs may be paid to a GR applicant/recipient in addition to the GR benefit and may be paid to GR-EUs who request a special need only payment.

A GR-EU does not have the same right to a special need payment as it has for basic GR assistance. The granting of a special need payment is fully at the discretion of the Agency Director or persons designated by the Director. There is no appeal right to the denial of a request for a special need payment.

Prior to authorization of a special need payment, the GR-EU must explore the possibility of having such need met by relatives or by community charitable organizations.

- .a **AID TO PAYDAY** - A GR recipient who becomes employed may receive a special need payment pending receipt of their first paycheck. Aid shall not exceed the maximum monthly GR payment for the GR-EU size.
- .b **TRANSPORTATION COSTS FOR NON-RESIDENTS** - Applicants who state that they do not plan to make Orange County their residence may be eligible to assistance in returning to their prior residence or to their destination providing they are otherwise eligible to GR. The applicant must also determine whether any community agency can provide travel assistance.

A person or family shall not be eligible to receive assistance with transportation to another area more than once in any twelve (12) month period.

Foreign visitors who are stranded in Orange County should be referred to the closest consular representative of their country.

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**ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY  
GENERAL RELIEF REGULATIONS MANUAL**

**SECTION 80: BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

**EFFECTIVE: February 2025**

**.4 SPECIAL NEEDS (cont'd)**

- .c BURIALS/CREMATIONS** - GR funds may be used for disposal of the remains of deceased indigents who were U.S. citizens or legal non-citizens when other resources are not available.

Cremation is the usual means of disposition of indigent dead, except that when the decedent owned a burial plot or when burial costs, including burial sites, do not exceed the rate currently set for cremation, funds for burial may be allowed. The rate paid for cremation shall be set by the County Board of Supervisors. Additional fees incurred by the mortuary to render services (e.g., overweight fees, etc.) may be evaluated and approved for payment by the Agency.

**CREMATION/BURIAL RATES**

AGE	RATE
13 YEARS AND OLDER	\$ 769.99
Ø TO 12 YEARS	\$ 361.75

Applications for county burial or cremation must be made by a relative of the deceased or other authorized County Agency. Any available death benefits are to be paid to the County to offset expenses paid by the County.

**.5 CALFRESH**

GR cases are considered non-assistance households and may be certified for CalFresh if eligible.

**.6 Deleted effective 01-01-2014.**

**.7 Deleted effective 01-01-2014.**

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