



Town of Acton
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

30 Sudbury Road
Acton, Massachusetts 01720
(978) 929-6651
www.actonma.gov

1. Mission Statement

Objective: The mission of the Community Services office is to provide resources, referrals, advocacy, and comprehensive case management to residents in need of social service support, with a focus on those under 60 years of age.

Functions:

- Advocate and promote human service issues within the community.
- Support diversity, racial equity, and inclusion efforts.
- Collaborate with groups to address community needs and concerns.
- Coordinate human service needs with other town departments.
- Provide information and referrals for various needs, including disabilities, low-income support, mental health, and more.
- Assist with applications for services such as SNAP, social security disability, affordable housing, fuel assistance, and MassHealth.
- Review applications for grant-funded emergency and financial assistance programs.
- Connect residents to in-kind donations such as school supplies, furniture, clothing, and holiday needs.

2. Overview of Services

The Town of Acton is committed to the well-being of the community at large. Local nonprofits work in collaboration with the Town to raise funds and distribute resources to address community needs. These funds are often set up to support various causes, such as health, housing, food security, utilities and other social services, to improve the quality of life for Acton residents.

All emergency assistance programs rely on donations and grant funding to provide available resources to residents. These programs are designed to help residents with emergency needs such as rent, mortgage, and utilities. All programs aim to provide short term support and are not a replacement for monthly financial obligations. An initial meeting with the Community Services Office or its designee is required.

All inquiries will be kept confidential and screened for existing public benefits before local resources are utilized. Public benefits are types of assistance from the government that help people with basic needs like food, housing, health care, or cash benefits. They are usually intended for low to moderate income individuals and families, and can come from the federal, state, or local government. Staff will inquire and screen about public benefits before local assistance is provided.

3. Manual Description and Explanation

- **Purpose:** To provide information to the community about local resources.
- **Scope:** Programs and resources identified are intended to provide short-term limited assistance.
- **Support:** The Town of Acton receives support from a variety of community partners, essential for the availability of many programs.

4. Eligibility and Documentation

A. Proof of Residency

- **Requirements:** All residents requesting assistance must provide proof of residency in Acton.
- **Acceptable Documents:**
 - A recent bank statement with the applicant's name and residential address.
 - A recent utility bill with the applicant's name and residential address.

B. Emergency Assistance Eligibility Criteria

- **Purpose:** Designed to help residents with emergency needs such as rent, mortgage, and utilities.
- **Initial Meeting:** Required with the Community Services Office or its designee.
- **Screening:** All inquiries will be screened for existing state and federal benefits before local resources are utilized.
- **Public Benefit Programs for Screening:**
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Section 8 and Public Housing Assistance
 - Women's Infant and Children program (WIC)
 - Health insurance (MassHealth, Medicare, and other subsidized programs)

- Money for disabled or retired individuals (Social Security, Supplemental Security Income)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Home Energy and Assistance Program (HEAP)
- Social Security Disability Income (SSI & SSDI)
- Cash Assistance such as TAFDC and EAEDC

5. Local Emergency Assistance

A. Description

- **Causes Supported:** Health, housing, food security, utilities, prescriptions and other social services.
- **Access:** All assistance programs are 1x in a twelve-month period. The Community Services office or its designee will determine the most appropriate funding source.

B. Community Partners

- Organizations that provide charitable funds include:
 - Salvation Army
 - A Friend in Need (AFIN)
 - Acton Boxborough Community Compass (ABCC)
 - St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP)
 - Doli Atamian Campership

C. Acton Boxborough Resource Center

Physical Address: 15 Charter Road

Hours: Monday-Thursday 10:00 am-3:00 pm

- Connect residents to local resources
- Seasonal Clothing for infants-adults
- Holiday support

6. Income Limits and Documentation

A. Unless otherwise specified, income guidelines for all programs is 65% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for Acton. This amount will increase slightly from year to year. *

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
Maximum Income Limit	\$92,560	\$105,850	\$119,100	\$132,300	\$142,900	\$153,500

B. Income Documentation for Local Programs

1. **For Employed Individuals:**
 - Two pay stubs from the last 60 days.
 - Letter from employer on company letterhead stating annual gross income.
2. **For Self-Employed Individuals:**
 - 2024 tax return (1040 or 1040 EZ).
3. **Child Support Documentation:**
 - Court order, DOR printout, or bank statement.
4. **For Individuals Receiving Benefits:**
 - Documentation of benefit amount for unemployment, social security, or disability.

7. Utility Assistance Documentation

- **Requirement:** Copy of shut-off notice from the utility company.

8. Rental Assistance Documentation

- **Requirements:** Provide one of the following:
 - Eviction notice or letter to quit.
 - Copy of payment ledger showing rental arrears.
 - Letter from landlord stating the amount of rental arrears.

9. Payment Timeline for Assistance Programs

A. Processing Time

- Payments will be processed within 30 days of application approval.

B. Payment Method

- Funds will be paid directly to the vendor (landlord, utility company, etc.) and not the applicant.

C. Application Process

- Assistance is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, though this may be adjusted for exigent circumstances by the Town and its Community Partners.

10. Not Covered*

- Medical & Ambulance bills
- Restorative dental work & orthodontist bills
- Car repairs (unless specified through the funding source)
- Car payments & insurance
- Full rent and mortgage payments
- Fees or penalties for late payments
- First and last month's rent and security deposits
- Moving costs within or outside of Acton
- Loan repayment obligations personal, business or credit cards
- Municipal taxes, fines, or fees (includes water and sewer bills)
- Motor vehicle excise tax (current or delinquent)
- Court fines, moving violations, and parking citations
- Childcare and afterschool care (unless specified through the funding source)
- Driver's education
- College expenses and student loans
- Home repairs
- Damage to property from natural disasters
- Vehicle towing and impound fees
- Funeral and burial costs
- Hotel and motel overnight stays (short and long term)
- Children's enrichment and sporting activities (unless specified by funding source)

- Homeowner's Association (HOA) fees or costs

- Clothing, school supplies and holiday support (available through Acton Boxborough Resource Center)

- Household Appliances (Washer, Dryer, A/C, Fridge) etc.

11. Required Documentation

- Rental payment ledger showing arrears
- Letter from landlord stating amount of rental arrears
- Notice to Quit for non-payment of rent
- Court summons for eviction
- Shut-off notice for gas or utilities
- Door tag disconnection notice (bright orange)
- Under 1/8th of a tank of oil for delivered fuel

12. FAQ**A. I applied for assistance. What happens next?**

- The Community Services Office will review your application and notify you of the outcome.

B. I was approved for assistance; how long does it take to show on my bill?

- Payments will be processed within 30 days of application approval and paid directly to the vendor (landlord, utility company) etc.

C. I was approved, but my landlord or utility company states that I owe money. What should I do?

- Contact the Community Services Office at (978) 929-6651 or lducharme@actonma.gov for verification of payment.

D. I need assistance with my application.

- The Community Services Office is available to answer questions and help complete applications.

E. I applied for assistance and received a letter that I was denied.

- Review the denial letter for reasons and contact the Community Services Office at (978) 929-6651 or lducharme@actonma.gov for further clarification or assistance.

13. Glossary of Terms

- **WIC:** Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infant and Children
- **SNAP:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- **HEAP:** Home Energy Assistance Program
- **AMI:** Area Median Income
- **SSI:** Supplemental Security Income
- **SSDI:** Social Security Disability Benefits
- **TAFDC:** Transitional Aid for Families with Dependent Children
- **EAEDC:** Emergency Assistance to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children
- **Medicaid:** MassHealth subsidized health insurance programs

*Based on the 2025 Area Median Income (AMI) as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing for Urban Development for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy HUD FMR Area.

***Funding and guidelines for the programs listed in this manual are subject to change or be discontinued by the Town or its Community Partners at any time.**

