



## Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights

701 Franklin Street SE

Olympia, Washington 98501

360.352.9716 toll-free 866-343-9716

[welfarerights@riseup.net](mailto:welfarerights@riseup.net)

<http://www.myspace.com/parentsorganizing>

## Emergency Assistance

Dear Self Advocate,

There are three types of emergency assistance, AREN (pages 1 – 5) for TANF recipients, CEAP (pages 6 – 9), Diversion (pages 9 – 11). If you fit within the guidelines outlined here, you shouldn't have a problem getting approved. If you are denied emergency assistance and you feel you are eligible, ask for a fair hearing. Contact POWER with any questions.

**If my family has an emergency, can I get help from DSHS to get or keep our housing or utilities? WAC 388-436-0002**

DSHS has a program called additional requirements for emergent needs (AREN). If your family has an emergency and you need assistance to get or keep safe housing or utilities, you may be eligible. The special AREN payment is in addition to the regular monthly cash grant your family may already get.

(1) To get AREN, you must:

(a) Be eligible for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), state family assistance (SFA), or refugee cash assistance (RCA);

(b) Have an emergency housing or utility need; and

(c) Have a good reason that you do not have enough money to pay your housing or utility costs.

(2) To get AREN, you must be eligible for TANF, SFA, or RCA. This means you must:

(a) Get benefits through TANF, SFA, or RCA. For RCA you must also be pregnant or have an eligible child; or

(b) Apply for TANF, SFA, and RCA, and meet all eligibility criteria including:

(i) The maximum earned income limit under WAC [388-478-0035](#);

(ii) The requirement that your unearned income not exceed the grant payment standard;

(iii) The requirement that your countable income as defined under WAC [388-450-0162](#) must be below the payment standard in WAC [388-478-0020](#) when you have both earned income and unearned income;

(iv) The resource limits under chapter [388-470](#) WAC;

(v) The program summary rules for either TANF (WAC [388-400-0005](#)); SFA (WAC [388-400-0010](#)); or RCA (WAC [388-400-0030](#)); and

(vi) The requirement that you must be pregnant or have an eligible child.

(3) If you do not get or do not want to get TANF, SFA or RCA, you cannot get AREN to help with housing or utility costs. We will look to see if you are eligible for diversion cash assistance (DCA) under WAC [388-432-0005](#).

(4) To get AREN, you must have an emergency housing or utility need. You may get AREN to help pay to:

(a) Prevent eviction or foreclosure;

(b) Get housing if you are homeless or need to leave your home because of domestic violence;

(c) Hook up or prevent a shut off of utilities related to your health and safety. We consider the following utilities to be needed for health and safety:

(i) Electricity or fuel for heating, lighting, or cooking;

(ii) Water;

(iii) Sewer; and

(iv) Basic local telephone service if it is necessary for your basic health and safety. If you receive TANF or SFA, the Washington telephone assistance program (WTAP) may be used to help you pay for basic local telephone service.

(d) Repair damage or defect to your home when it causes a risk to your health or safety:

(i) If you own the home, we may approve AREN for the least expensive method of ending the risk to your health or safety;

(ii) If you do not own the home, you must ask the landlord in writing to fix the damage according to the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act at chapter [59.18](#) RCW. If the landlord refuses to fix the damage or defect, we may pay for the repair or pay to move you to a different place whichever cost is lower.

(e) If you receive TANF or SFA, WorkFirst support services under WAC [388-310-0800](#) may be used to help you relocate to new housing to get a job, keep a job, or participate in WorkFirst activities. Nonhousing expenses that are not covered under AREN may be paid under WorkFirst support services. This includes expenses such as car repair, diapers, or clothing.

(5) To get AREN, you must have a good reason for not having enough money to pay for your housing or utility costs. You must prove that you:

(a) Did not have money available that you normally use to pay your rent and utilities due to an emergency situation that reduced your income (such as a long-term illness or injury);

(b) Had to use your money to pay for necessary or emergency expenses. Examples of necessary or emergency expenses include:

(i) Basic health and safety needs for shelter, food and clothing;

(ii) Medical care;

(iii) Dental care needed to get a job or because of pain;

(iv) Emergency child care;

(v) Emergency expenses due to a natural disaster, accident, or injury; and

(vi) Other reasonable and necessary expenses.

(c) Are currently homeless; or

(d) Had your family's cash grant reduced or suspended when we budgeted your expected income for the month, but the income will not be available to pay for the need when the payment is due. You must make attempts to negotiate later payments with your landlord or utility company before you can get AREN.

(6) In addition to having a good reason for not having enough money to pay for your costs, you must also explain how you will afford to pay for the on-going need in the future. We may deny AREN if your expenses exceed your income (if you are living beyond your means). We may approve AREN to help you get into housing you can afford.

(7) If you meet the above requirements, we decide the amount we will pay based on the following criteria.

(a) AREN payments may be made up to a maximum of seven hundred fifty dollars in a consecutive twelve-month period.

(b) The number of AREN payments you can receive in a twelve-month period is not limited, as long as the total amount does not exceed seven hundred fifty dollars.

(c) The department may approve an AREN payment above the seven hundred fifty dollar maximum for health and safety reasons.

(d) The amount of AREN is in addition to the amount of your monthly TANF, SFA, or RCA cash grant.

(e) We will decide the lowest amount we must pay to end your housing or utility emergency. We will contact your landlord, utility company, or other vendor for information to make this decision. We may take any of the following steps when deciding the lowest amount to pay:

(i) We may ask you to arrange a payment plan with your landlord or utility company. This could include us making a partial payment, and you setting up a plan for you to repay the remaining amount you owe over a period of time.

(ii) We may have you use some of the money you have available in cash, checking, or savings to help pay for the expense. We will look at the money you have available as well as your bills when we decide how much we will pay.

(iii) We may consider income that is excluded or disregarded for cash assistance benefit calculations, such as SSI, as available to meet your emergency housing need.

(iv) We may consider money other individuals such as family or friends voluntarily give you. We will not count loans of money that you must repay to friends or family members.

(v) We may consider money from a nonneedy caretaker relative that lives in the home.

(vi) We may look at what other community resources you currently have to help you with your need.

(f) The seven hundred fifty dollar limit every twelve months applies to the following people even if they leave the assistance unit:

(i) Adults; and

(ii) Minor parents that get AREN when no adults are in the assistance unit.

(8) We pay AREN:

(a) Directly to the landlord, mortgage company, utility, or other vendor whenever we can.

(b) If we cannot pay AREN directly to the landlord or other vendor, we will issue the AREN as a part of your TANF, SFA, or RCA cash grant. If we issue the AREN as a part of your grant, you must use it for your emergency need.

(9) We may assign you a protective payee for your monthly grant under WAC [388-460-0020](#).

**Consolidated emergency assistance program (CEAP). WAC 388-436-0015**

(1) CEAP is available to the following persons:

(a) A pregnant woman in any stage of pregnancy; or

(b) Families with dependent children, including, within available funds, families who have stopped receiving their TANF grant within the last six months under WAC [388-310-1600](#).

(2) Applicants must be residents of Washington state as defined in WAC [388-468-0005](#).

(3) Applicants must demonstrate a financial need for emergency funds for one or more of the following basic requirements:

(a) Food;

(b) Shelter;

(c) Clothing;

(d) Minor medical care;

(e) Utilities;

(f) Household maintenance supplies;

(g) Necessary clothing or transportation costs to accept or retain a job; or

(h) Transportation for a minor, not in foster care, to a home where care will be provided by family members or approved caretakers.

(4) Payment under this program is limited to not more than thirty consecutive days within a period of twelve consecutive months.

### **Income and resources for CEAP. WAC 388-436-0035**

(1) Estimated income, resources and circumstances of the following persons are used in determining need and payment for CEAP:

(a) All persons included as members of the CEAP assistance unit;

(b) If living in the home, the spouses and minor brothers and sisters of persons included as members of the CEAP assistance unit.

(2) Public assistance payments plus authorized additional requirements received in the calendar month of CEAP application are considered as income.

(3) The value of resources not listed as excluded in WAC [388-436-0040](#) is considered available to meet the emergent needs of the CEAP assistance unit.

## **CEAP ASSISTANCE UNIT COMPOSITION. WAC 388-436-0020**

(1) To be eligible for CEAP, a child must be living with:

(a) A parent or a relative of specified degree as defined under WAC [388-454-0010](#);  
or

(b) Has lived with such a relative within six months of the request for assistance.

(2) The following persons living in the household must be included as members of the CEAP assistance unit:

(a) All full, half, or adopted siblings under eighteen years of age, including a minor parent; and

(b) The parent, adoptive parent, or stepparent living with the child or children.

(3) The following persons living in the household do not have to be included but may be included as members at the option of the applicant:

(a) One caretaker relative of specified degree when the child's parent does not live in the home;

(b) Stepbrothers or stepsisters to all children in the assistance unit.

(4) The following persons may make up a CEAP assistance unit without including others living in the home:

(a) The child of a parent who is a minor when the minor parent is not eligible due to the income and resources of his/her parents; or

(b) A pregnant woman when no other child is in the home.

(5) The following persons living in the household are not included as members of the CEAP assistance unit:

(a) A household member receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI);

(b) A household member ineligible due to reasons stated in WAC [388-436-0025](#) and [388-436-0030](#).

**Eligibility for CEAP depends on other possible cash benefits.**

**WAC 388-436-0030**

(1) Before the department approves CEAP benefits, we must determine that all household members are ineligible for benefits from any of the following programs:

(a) Temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) or state family assistance (SFA), unless the family has had its cash grant terminated under WAC [388-310-1600](#) within the last six months;

(b) Refugee cash assistance (RCA);

(c) Diversion cash assistance (DCA).

(2) To receive CEAP, the applicant must take any required action to receive benefits from the following programs:

(a) TANF or SFA, unless the family has had its case grant terminated under WAC [388-310-1600](#) within the last six months;

(b) RCA;

(c) Supplemental security income (SSI);

(d) Medical assistance for those applicants requesting help for a medical need;

(e) Food assistance for those applicants requesting help for a food need;

(f) Housing assistance from any available source for those applicants requesting

help for a housing need;

(g) Unemployment compensation, veteran's benefits, industrial insurance benefits, Social Security benefits, pension benefits, or any other source of financial benefits the applicant is potentially eligible to receive.

(3) The department may not authorize CEAP benefits to any household containing a member who is receiving reduced cash benefits for failure to comply with program requirements of TANF/SFA or RCA. This restriction does not apply to families who have stopped receiving TANF cash benefits under WAC [388-310-1600](#) within the last six months.

### **Income and resources for CEAP. WAC 388-436-0035**

(1) Estimated income, resources and circumstances of the following persons are used in determining need and payment for CEAP:

(a) All persons included as members of the CEAP assistance unit;

(b) If living in the home, the spouses and minor brothers and sisters of persons included as members of the CEAP assistance unit.

(2) Public assistance payments plus authorized additional requirements received in the calendar month of CEAP application are considered as income.

(3) The value of resources not listed as excluded in WAC [388-436-0040](#) is considered available to meet the emergent needs of the CEAP assistance unit.

### **Excluded income and resources for CEAP. WAC 388-436-0040**

Resources and income listed below will not be considered in determining need or payment for CEAP:

(1) A home as defined under WAC [388-470-0045](#);

(2) One vehicle, running and used regularly by the assistance unit, with an equity value not to exceed one thousand five hundred dollars);

(3) Household furnishings being used by the assistance unit;

(4) Personal items being used by members of the assistance unit;

(5) Tools and equipment being used in the applicant's occupation;

(6) The value of the coupon allotment under the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended;

(7) Benefits received under the women, infants and children program (WIC) of the child nutrition Act of 1966, as amended, and the special food service program for children under the National School Lunch Act, as amended;

(8) Energy assistance payments;

(9) Grants, loans, or work study to a student under Title IV of the Higher Education Amendments or Bureau of Indian Affairs for attendance costs as identified by the institution;

(10) Income and resources of an SSI recipient;

(11) Livestock when the products are consumed by members of the assistance unit;

(12) All resources and income excluded for the TANF program under WAC [388-470-0045](#) and by federal law.

### **Income deductions for CEAP. WAC 388-436-0045**

The following deductions are allowed when determining the CEAP assistance unit's net income:

(1) A ninety dollar work expense from each member's earned income;

(2) Actual payments made by a member with earned income for care of a member child up to the following maximums:

Hours Worked	Per Month	Each Child Under Two Years	Each Child Two Years Or Older
0 - 40		\$ 50.00	\$ 43.75
41 - 80		100.00	87.50
81 - 120		150.00	131.25
121 or More		200.00	175.00

(3) Verified expenses for members of the assistance unit during the current month as follows:

(a) Medical bills;

(b) Child care paid in an emergency in order to avoid abuse;

(c) Dental care to relieve pain; or

(d) Costs incurred in obtaining employment.

**Determining financial need and benefit amount for CEAP.  
WAC 388-436-0050**

(1) To be eligible for CEAP assistance, the assistance unit's nonexcluded income, minus allowable deductions, must be less than ninety percent of the TANF payment standard for households with shelter costs. The net income limit for CEAP assistance units is:

Assistance Unit Members	Net Income Limit
1	\$ 314
2	396
3	491
4	577
5	666
6	756
7	873
8 or more	967

(2) The assistance unit's allowable amount of need is the lesser of:

(a) The TANF payment standard, based on assistance unit size, for households with shelter costs as specified under WAC [388-478-0020](#); or

(b) The assistance unit's actual emergent need, not to exceed maximum allowable amounts, for the following items:

Need Item:	Maximum allowable amount by assistance unit size:							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 plus
Food	\$211	\$268	\$332	\$391	\$450	\$511	\$583	\$645
Shelter	258	325	404	476	548	621	719	795
Clothing	30	38	47	56	64	73	83	94
Minor Med. Care	179	228	282	332	382	432	501	554
Utilities	87	110	136	160	184	210	243	268
Household maintenance	64	81	100	118	136	155	178	197
Job related transportation	349	440	546	642	740	841	971	1075

(3) The assistance unit's CEAP payment is determined by computing the difference

between the allowable amount of need, as determined under subsection (2) of this section, and the total of:

(a) The assistance unit's net income, as determined under subsection (1) of this section;

(b) Cash on hand, if not already counted as income; and

(c) The value of other non-excluded resources available to the assistance unit.

(4) The assistance unit is not eligible for CEAP if the amount of income and resources, as determined in subsection (3) of this section, is equal to or exceeds its allowable amount of need.

Can I get help from DSHS for a family emergency without receiving monthly cash assistance?  
WAC 388-432-0005

DSHS has a program called diversion cash assistance (DCA). If your family needs an emergency cash payment but does not need ongoing monthly cash assistance, you may be eligible for this program.

(1) To get DCA, you must:

(a) Meet all the eligibility rules for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF)/state family assistance (SFA) except:

(i) You do not have to participate in WorkFirst requirements as defined in chapter 388-310 WAC; and

(ii) You do not have to assign child support rights or cooperate with division of child support as defined in chapter 388-422 WAC.

(b) Have a current bona fide or approved need for living expenses;

(c) Provide proof that your need exists; and

(d) Have or expect to get enough income or resources to support yourselves for at least twelve months.

(2) You may get DCA to help pay for one or more of the following needs:

(a) Child care;

(b) Housing;

(c) Transportation;

(d) Expenses to get or keep a job;

(e) Food costs, but not if an adult member of your family has been disqualified for food stamps; or

(f) Medical costs, except when an adult member of your family is not eligible because of failure to provide third party liability (TPL) information as defined in WAC 388-505-0540.

(3) DCA payments are limited to:

(a) One thousand five hundred dollars once in a twelve-month period which starts with the month the DCA benefits begin; and

(b) The cost of your need.

(4) We do not budget your income or make you use your resources to lower the amount of DCA payments you can receive.

(5) DCA payments can be paid:

(a) All at once; or

(b) As separate payments over a thirty-day period. The thirty-day period starts with the date of your first DCA payment.

(6) When it is possible, we pay your DCA benefit directly to the service provider.

(7) You are not eligible for DCA if:

(a) Any adult member of your assistance unit got DCA within the last twelve months;

(b) Any adult member of your assistance unit gets TANF/SFA;

(c) Any adult member of your assistance unit is not eligible for cash assistance for any reason unless one parent in a two-parent-assistance unit is receiving SSI; or

(d) Your assistance unit does not have a needy adult (such as when you do not receive TANF/SFA payment for yourself but receive it for the children only).

(8) If you apply for DCA after your TANF/SFA grant has been terminated, we consider you an applicant for DCA.

(9) If you apply for TANF/SFA and you received DCA less than twelve months ago:

(a) We set up a DCA loan.

(i) The amount of the loan is one-twelfth of the total DCA benefit times the number of months that are left in the twelve-month period.

(ii) The first month begins with the month DCA benefits began.

(b) We collect the loan only by reducing your grant. We take five percent of your TANF/SFA grant each month.

(10) If you stop getting TANF/SFA before you have repaid the loan, we stop collecting the loan unless you get back on TANF/SFA.

**POWER members want you to know your rights. We copied these WACs (Washington Administrative Code) from the internet. You can find a complete list at the Washington State Legislative site at the laws and agency rules link. All WACs guiding DSHS (the Department of Social and Health Services) start with 388. You can also find other handy information there, like who are your elected officials and how you can contact them. Let them know if your caseworker is not following the rules or if there are changes you would like to see at DSHS.**