

The Board of Pensions administers the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), offering retirement, healthcare, death, and disability benefits to qualifying members. The Board also provides financial and vocational grants through the Assistance Program.

Summary

Ministers and employees of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and PC(USA)-affiliated employers, both active and retired, may be eligible for Emergency Assistance Grants. The grants are for a one-time need, and your mid council or employer must be financially unable to participate in a Shared Grant.

First, before you apply, make every effort to obtain help through public entitlement programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Supplemental Security Income. Each application is reviewed on its merits, as determined by applicant need and resources.

The Board of Pensions may also make an Emergency Assistance Grant to a group of employees affected by a natural disaster. The mid council or employer in the affected region should provide its Church Consultant with the number of ministers and employees involved. The Board will make emergency-assistance decisions after receiving information on the magnitude of the need.

Eligibility

To qualify, you must have an emergency or unexpected financial need and

- be employed by a congregation, mid council, agency, or PC(USA)-affiliated employer; or
- receive a retirement or survivor's pension from the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The need could result from extraordinary medical expenses, a family emergency, custodial care at home, or any number of special situations beyond Benefits Plan or other coverage.

Amount

Emergency Assistance Grants may not exceed \$5,000 each and a total of \$15,000 in a 12-month period.

How to apply

Ministers should contact their mid councils to discuss their need and assistance possibilities; other employees should contact their employer. Then, you should do the following:

- Obtain a Shared/Emergency Assistance Grant application from your mid council or employer, complete and sign it, and have your mid council or employer sign it. (If they do not have an application on hand, they can obtain a copy from the Board of Pensions.)

- Submit it to the Board at the address on the form, along with
 - documentation of the need for the total grant amount requested; and
 - a brief explanation from your mid council or employer on why emergency or benevolence funds are not available for a Shared Grant.

The Assistance Program will consult with the mid council or employer to confirm the need for assistance and ensure that resources for a Shared Grant have been exhausted and no community resources are available.

About the Assistance Program

The Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions comprises a range of programs designed to meet specific assistance needs of Presbyterian ministers and other Benefits Plan members at various points in their lives. These programs complement the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in their aim to promote and sustain the wholeness of Benefits Plan members in their ministries; they also provide an important safety net to plan members and their families who have specific needs that exceed personal resources and other means of support.

Through the Assistance Program, the church community provides for

- retired church workers' *financial and housing needs* through Income and Housing Supplements;
- church workers' *financial and vocational needs* through Shared, Emergency Assistance, Adoption Assistance, Transition-to-College Assistance, Minister Educational Debt Assistance, and Sabbath Sabbatical Support Grants.

The Assistance Program is funded by gifts, legacies, income from endowments, and half the Christmas Joy Offering; no dues support the program. Fully 100 percent of each gift is passed on to those in need. The Board of Pensions covers the administrative costs of the Assistance Program through endowed funds accumulated over generations.

For information about the Assistance Program or to apply for assistance, call 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN) or visit pensions.org.