

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

A Shared Grant is generally intended to assist with an emergency or unexpected need for which a minister or employee does not have, or cannot access, the necessary funds.

This one-time grant is *initiated* by a mid council, employer, or multiple bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) willing to share equally with the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions in the cost of providing the grant.

Each case is reviewed on its merits, as determined by applicant need and resources.

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

The amount of assistance varies with the need and resources available. In certain circumstances, grants may be made for periods of up to one year, with monthly disbursements.

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.

Excluded from consideration

The Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions does not approve Shared/Emergency Grant applications that seek to

- subsidize a presbytery's mission responsibility (e.g., ensure a pastor receives compensation if a church cannot pay it);
- substitute for or augment a presbytery or employer's support of a terminated employee (i.e., pay a severance package);
- provide moving expenses, except in certain extreme cases, such as those occasioned by serious, long-term illness, disability, or divorce;
- pay legal fees, fines, or penalties (includes all taxes, SECA, or FICA allowances); or
- pay Benefits Plan dues.

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.