

Diversions Cash Assistance (DCA): Emergency Cash Help

-
- ❖ Read this only if you live in the state of Washington.
 - ❖ You can find all the fact sheets we link to here at WashingtonLawHelp.org.
-

What is it?

It is an emergency payment. You can use DCA during a temporary crisis.

What emergency needs does it cover?

DCA can cover many needs. Some examples:

- help with transportation, such as car repairs
- child care
- medical
- housing
- food expenses

How much DCA can I get?

You can get up to \$1,250 in any year.

Why would I need DCA?

If one of these is true:

- You have a one-time or emergency need.
- You will have regular income soon, such as pay from a job starting soon.

Can I get DCA?

Yes, if you can get Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or State Family Assistance (SFA). Your family must choose between TANF (or SFA) and DCA. You cannot get both at once.

You can get DCA if DSHS can reasonably expect the DCA will keep you from needing TANF.

I used to get TANF. I lost it because I broke TANF rules. Can I get DCA?

No. You cannot get DCA if your TANF stopped because of a Workfirst sanction or you did not give DSHS needed information to collect child support from the other parent.

How do I apply for DCA?

You can apply

- online at <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/home.go>
- by calling the Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233

Is there any reason I should not apply for DCA?

Yes. Do not apply if you think you may have to apply for TANF in the next year. You will have to pay back part of the DCA. **You will get much more TANF in a year than you would a one-time DCA payment.**

Example: Your family of 3 chose to get \$1,250 in DCA. Nine months later, you apply for TANF. You must repay \$312. If you had chosen to get TANF instead, you could have gotten \$569 a month for the entire year, for a total of \$6,828.

We got DCA. We applied for TANF less than a year later. What will happen?

DSHS will lower your TANF by 5%. DSHS **will not** collect the repayment if you go off TANF.

Can I get other emergency cash help?

Yes:

- **Additional Requirements (AR)** is extra emergency money for families who already get or can get TANF.
- **CEAP**—if you cannot get TANF or other ongoing cash help.
- **Disaster Cash Assistance Program (DCAP)**—if you suffered losses in a place the Governor has declared a disaster.

Read [Additional Requirements, CEAP](#), and/or [Questions and Answers about the Disaster Cash Assistance Program \(DCAP\) during COVID-19](#).

Can I get other benefits at the same time as DCA?

Maybe. When you apply for DCA, you can also ask for:

- food assistance
- medical assistance
- child care assistance

How do I apply for medical assistance?

Online: You can apply at wahealthplanfinder.org.

Phone or other ways: If you have no internet access or have trouble with the online application, call the hotline. The number is 1-855-923-4633 (1-855-WAFINDE).

DSHS turned me down for DCA.

You can appeal the denial. Ask DSHS to put it in writing. Write the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) at:

Office of Administrative Hearings
P.O. Box 42489
Olympia, WA 98504

Ask for an administrative hearing on the matter.

If it is an emergency, call OAH at (360) 664-8717 or 1-800-583-8271. Ask them to schedule the hearing as soon as possible. This is an “expedited” hearing.

You should also get legal help:

- Outside King County, call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am - 12:15 pm.
- In King County, call 2-1-1 weekdays between 8:00 am - 6:00 pm. They will refer you to a legal aid provider.
- Seniors (age 60 and over) can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111, statewide.
- You can also apply online with CLEAR*Online: nwjustice.org/get-legal-help.

This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice.

© 2019 Northwest Justice Project — 1-888-201-1014.

(Permission for copying and distribution granted to the Alliance for Equal Justice and to individuals for non-commercial purposes only.)