

# Consolidated Emergency Assistance (CEAP): Extra Money for Needy Families

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❖ You can find the fact sheets we link to here at [WashingtonLawHelp.org](https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org).

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## What is CEAP?

This state (DSHS) program gives money to needy families, children, and pregnant women living in Washington State who are facing an emergency. You can get this help **only** if you are not eligible to get other types of assistance from DSHS.

## Am I eligible to get CEAP?

Maybe. You are if one of these describes you:

- You are the head of a family with needy children 17 years old or younger
- You are age 17 or under. You are not living with a parent or relative now, but you did within the past 6 months
- You are age 17 or younger and at risk of foster care placement
- You are pregnant

## How else do I qualify?

- You have a very low income and meet the financial requirements for TANF. Read [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF: The Basics\)](#) to learn more.
- For reasons unrelated to financial eligibility, no one in your household is eligible to get TANF or other monthly cash assistance. **Example 1:** you might not have the required immigration status to get TANF. **Example 2:** you might have lost TANF because you didn't meet WorkFirst rules.

## How does CEAP work?

Once DSHS finds you are eligible, DSHS can help you once every 12 months for a 30-day period. For example, if DSHS determines you are eligible for CEAP assistance on March 2, you can get help paying the rent the next day. When your utility bill comes in on March 14, they can help with that too.

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- ❖ You can be eligible to get CEAP more than once in 12 months if the Governor has declared an emergency.
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## What emergency needs does CEAP cover?

CEAP can help with your food, shelter, clothing, minor medical needs, utilities, household maintenance, transportation to get your child to childcare, and your job-related transportation or clothing.

## How much in CEAP can I get?

It depends on your household size and emergency needs. You can read the state rule about this at [WAC 388-436-0050](#).

## Does DSHS look at my income to decide how much CEAP I can get?

Yes. If you think DSHS counted your income wrong, you can ask for a hearing. See “How do I ask for a hearing,” below.

## How do I apply for CEAP?

You can call the Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233 **or** apply at [WashingtonConnection.org](#).

## What if DSHS turned me down for CEAP?

You can appeal by asking for an administrative hearing. You have up to 90 days from the date of DSHS’ denial notice to do this. **Starting July 1, 2023**, if circumstances beyond your control, such as medical issues, housing instability, language barriers, or domestic violence, keep you from meeting that deadline, you should still ask for a hearing as soon as you can.

## How do I ask for a hearing?

There are different ways you can do this.

**In writing:** Write the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), P.O. Box 42488, Olympia, WA 98504.

**Verbally:** You can call OAH at (360) 407-2700 or 1-800-583-8271 or tell DSHS that you want a hearing. DSHS may have you follow up with a written request.

## When will the hearing take place?

If it is an emergency, you should call OAH to ask them to hold the hearing as soon as possible. This is called an *expedited* hearing. Otherwise, your hearing will likely be 20 days or more after you ask for it.

## Do I have to represent myself at the hearing?

Maybe not. Contact CLEAR. See contact info below. Read [Representing Yourself at an Administrative Hearing](#) to learn more.

## Could I get DSHS to change its decision without having to go to a hearing?

Maybe. Talk to a supervisor or the administrator of the DSHS office. They might change the decision. Do not cancel (do not *withdraw*) your hearing request until you get written notice of the award.

## Can I get help with the hearing?

Maybe. Your local legal aid office or welfare rights organization might be able to help. See contact information below.

## Could any other emergency programs help me?

Yes. There are 2 other programs:

- 1. Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AR)** - extra emergency money if you get TANF, or you are eligible to get TANF and have applied. Read [Additional Requirements \(AR\): Emergency Cash Help](#) to learn more.
- 2. Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA)** - emergency money if you are eligible for TANF but do not apply for it. Read [Diversion Cash Assistance \(DCA\)](#):

[Emergency Cash Help](#) to learn more.

## Get Legal Help

- **Apply online:** [nwjustice.org/apply-online](https://nwjustice.org/apply-online)
- **Facing Eviction?** Call 1-855-657-8387
- **Facing Foreclosure?** Call 1-800-606-4819
- **Facing a legal issue in King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call 211 (or toll-free 1-877-211-9274) weekdays 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. They will refer you to a legal aid provider.
- **Facing a legal issue outside of King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am and 12:15 pm or apply online at [nwjustice.org/apply-online](https://nwjustice.org/apply-online).
- **Seniors (age 60 and over)** with a legal issue outside of King County can also call CLEAR\*Sr at 1-888-387-7111

**Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers** can call any of these numbers using the relay service of your choice.

Interpreters provided.

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