

**Nassau County Department of Social Services
Shelter Allowance Supplement Plan**

Nassau County received approval for a revised Supplemental Rent Allowance to meet the unique circumstances of families in our community that are homeless or facing legal evictions. The purpose of this supplement is to help families retain their current living arrangements or help those in emergency housing obtain permanent housing.

Nassau County was involved in litigation regarding shelter allowances. (Golding)

Target Population: Families with children, both Family Assistance and Safety Net Assistance eligible cases, with documented legal evictions, or families who are homeless. “Homeless” refers to any family that is living in a hotel/motel or shelter or due to an emergency situation is in an approved temporary housing situation. This would be an arrangement made for a homeless family that was evicted who came to us for placement in a shelter but an alternate temporary housing placement was made with a friend or relative.

Supplemental Shelter Allowance Amount:

Nassau County will base its Supplemental Shelter Allowance on the New York State rent schedule; the supplement amount will be an amount not to exceed 175% the regular shelter allowance maximum for that household size.

Amount of Supplement:

Temporary Assistance Household Size	Regular Shelter Allowance Schedule (eff. 11/03)	Supplemental Shelter Amount	Supplemental Shelter Amount (Includes Regular Shelter Allowance) with 75% Increase in Supplement
1	\$308	\$539	\$847
2	\$334	\$585	\$919
3	\$445	\$779	\$1,224
4	\$501	\$877	\$1,378
5	\$558	\$977	\$1,535
6	\$583	\$1,020	\$1,603
7	\$608	\$1,064	\$1,672
8	\$608	\$1,064	\$1,672

Conditions:

- Recipients of the Supplemental Rent Program must have their rent sent directly to the landlord.
- Applicants/recipients must establish eligibility and continue to meet all factors of eligibility to be eligible for and to remain eligible for the supplemental rent allowance.
- Eligibility for Public Assistance will be based on the New York State standard of need. The rent supplement is not part of the standard of need.
- The supplemental amount which is combined with the shelter allowance for a monthly amount, will not exceed the rental obligation of the applicant/recipient.
- Recipients must apply for Section 8 when available and accept the program if offered.

- Homeless families who are relocating must secure a written lease on the premises for a duration of at least one year.
- Income from other Non-Temporary Assistance household members must be applied. This population also includes but is not limited to SSI household members and earnings from ineligible aliens. The rent share will be calculated at 30% of their net income.
- Any rent in excess of the rent supplement will be restricted from the recipient's basic needs.
- Failure of any mandatory filing unit member to meet regulations, which causes a sanction, will result in a loss of supplemental rent.
- Contributions from individuals (can not be a legally responsible relative) will be verified to make sure there is a reasonable assumption that the future rent obligations will be met. This means that we will weigh such factors as relationship, stability and length of income source, the contributor's other obligations including family and is the percentage of net monthly income being contributed less than 10%.
Pay stubs or award letter must accompany a statement from the rent contributor with the amount being contributed, the relationship, address and phone number of where they can be reached.
- A Non-Temporary Assistance individual, co-tenant of record, will be expected to contribute a prorated amount toward a legal eviction for arrears unless he/she can prove he/she paid his/her allotted share of rent and the arrears are due strictly to the client's failure to pay his/her portion of the rent.
- The Agency will handle modifications to a client's supplemental rent plan based on the conditions laid out in NYS Reg. 352.6. Modification will also be made for income changes, a change to the TA grant or loss of supplementation. Changes in household composition and income must be reported in a timely fashion.
- All moves to new housing require an inspection before security will be issued.
- TANF families who are in receipt of the Shelter Supplement will continue to receive the supplement as long as all factors relating to eligibility still exist. When the case is closed the Shelter Supplement ends. If the family reapplies for assistance within the calendar month following the month the case was closed and they are found eligible for assistance, the Shelter Supplement may be reactivated.
- The Nassau County Supplemental Rent Program will continue as long as New York State is a financial partner providing the same supplement share rate as it does for the FA and SNA programs.
- Nassau County Department of Social Services reserves the right to discontinue participation in the Supplemental Shelter Program with thirty days written notice.
- Shelter Supplementation will not be approved when any member of the TA household has lost Section 8 or public housing within the last two years without good cause.

The housing market in Nassau is extremely tight. We feel the Supplemental Rent subsidy will not adversely affect low income working families as they are already competing for the same housing stock. The supplement amount that we propose is below the fair market rent amounts and Section 8 amounts.

- **General Comments**

Arrears Limits Exception

When permanent alternative housing is not available and it is more costly to house families in temporary shelters or motels, rent arrears may be paid more than once in a five-year period and may exceed a total of 6 (six) months. A court proceeding is not necessary for a rent arrears request. A legitimate verifiable threat of eviction is acceptable. If a court proceeding is not underway then a formal written letter from the landlord specifying that the client is being evicted for nonpayment of rent is required.

Clients will be granted an exception to the limit of 6 (six) months arrears once in five years, after a review of their past management, willingness to be referred for financial counseling, future management, alternative housing, excess payments, past excess rent paybacks, etc.