

## District Application for Shelter Allowance Supplement

**Local District:** Jefferson

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**Implementation Date:** 9/01/09 **Amendment Date** 02/19/16

**Amount of Supplement (for example: Case Size, Shelter Maximum, and Supplement Amount):**

The proposed Shelter Supplement will be an amount up to the actual rent obligation, but not to exceed the shelter maximum for that household size. The Shelter Allowance Supplement would result in a total increase of \$3,900 (\$325 supplement x 12 months) annually per person in Safety Net expenditures but this cost would be offset by savings.

TA Household Size	Shelter Allowance Effective 11/03	New Shelter Maximum Amount Including Proposed Supplement	Jefferson County Fair Market Rental Rates Source- HUD	
			Bedrooms	Amount
1	\$200	\$525	1	\$627
2	\$232	\$525	2	\$754
3	\$276	NA	3	\$972
4	\$311	NA	4	\$1021

**Type of Cases Covered by Supplement/Targeted Population:**

This proposed Shelter Supplement would be available to single or Childless couples Safety Net consumers with a legitimate verifiable threat of eviction and/or who are homeless or living in temporary or emergency housing.

**Terms:**

- Recipients must be Safety Net eligible based on the New York State standard of need without the Supplement and in compliance with all eligibility requirements.
- No member of the family unit can be on sanction.
- Shelter supplementation will not be approved for persons residing in Section 8 supported housing (except for Section 236 housing for enhanced voucher housing), public housing, or used in addition to other government provided shelter supplementation.
- Shelter supplementation will not be approved when any member of the TA household has lost Section 8 supported or public housing within the last two years without good cause.
- For the Shelter Supplement, to retain housing, the single must have resided in the residence for three months in order to be considered for eligibility for the Supplement

- The recipient must be tenant or co-tenant of record. Leases and/or written agreements with landlords will not be a requirement.
- Any arrears paid to prevent eviction will follow 18NYCRR 352.7(g) (3) and (4).
- The client's full actual share of rent must be restricted and paid directly to the landlord.
- The supplement may be used to establish housing for a single or childless couple who has been determined homeless by the District.

**List eligibility criteria and how determined and documented including the following:**

1. How much will non-legally responsible Non-Temporary Assistance (NTA) persons residing in the same dwelling be required to contribute towards the excess shelter costs (e.g., a prorata share of rent costs, 30 percent of income, the lesser of these two variables, etc.)? All non-SNA household members, including SSI recipients or ineligible aliens, must contribute either their pro-rated share of the rent or 30 percent of their gross income, whichever is less

**Will SSI recipients or ineligible aliens residing in the household be expected to contribute towards rent cost?** yes

**If so, how will this amount be determined? Income of all adults living in the dwelling will be required to be verified.** The total excess shelter expenses will be divided by the total number of individuals living in the dwelling.

2. **How will contributions towards rent from individuals outside the household be verified and what standards will be applied in determining whether such contributions can be sustained in the future?** Any contribution towards rent made by individuals outside the household will be verified by statements, rent receipts and/or landlord verification. Standards used in determining whether such contributions can be sustained in the future will be evaluated in the same manor used for Temporary Assistance recipients, the source of income and the amount.

**How will the district assure that third party contributors are not legally responsible relatives?** The single individual or childless couple is required to be TA eligible prior to receiving a rent supplement. All legal representation relations are explored for the TA program as a matter of business.

3. **Will the district require that there be a court proceeding concerning the nonpayment of shelter costs prior to the individual being determined eligible for supplemental shelter payments?** No

**If not, how will the district determine that the shelter arrears are legitimate and the responsibility of the TA recipient?** The local district has a Social Welfare Examiner dedicated to housing/homeless who is the liaison with landlords and who would make contact with him/her. Some individuals also are case managed who would be involved in making the determination.

4. **How will co-tenant of record lease arrangements be handled?** The lease will be reviewed for any requirements for responsibility it may site. If the apartment is affordable the individual/childless couple would be considered for rent supplement in his/her own right. The recipient must be tenant or co-tenant of record. Budgeting for households including both Safety Net and Family Assistance or SN MOE individuals will be consistent with Temporary Assistance regulations for co-op budgeting. Leases and/or written agreements with landlords will not be a requirement.

Will leases be required of all tenants of record? No

5. **Will shelter arrears for shelter supplementation cases be limited in monetary amount (e.g., \$3,000) or to a specific time period (e.g., six months of arrears)?** Yes

**If yes, please detail:** Shelter arrears for shelter supplement cases will be limited to \$5,000 or 11 months arrears and require a higher level approval than the Supervisor who normally makes an approval. The shelter supplement will NOT include any amount for court costs, legal fees or late charges.

**6. How will the district handle modifications (e.g., moves, rent increases, etc)?** If a recipient relocates, if there is a change in household composition, income, or a rent increase the Supplement will be re-evaluated and adjusted accordingly. The district will reassess the eligibility cost effectiveness.

**What standards will be followed in determining whether supplementation will continue following a move?** Standards for continued rent supplement will be determined based on affordability, compliance with program requirements, and any other supports such as case management.

**Will the district require the recipient of the supplemental shelter allowance to report changes related to the supplemental allowance timely, as a condition of eligibility for the allowance?** Yes, all changes must be reported timely.

**7. Will any local forms be used to facilitate the supplementation process?** Yes, see attached.

If so, copies must be provided with the plan.

**8. Will there be any health and safety standards regarding the housing that must be met prior to paying supplemental allowances or arrears?** The housing can not be condemned.

**9. Will the supplemental allowance be time limited in any way?** There is a time limit of five years on receipt of Jefferson County shelter supplements provided under Office 352.3(a). However, exceptions to this limit may be made on a case by case basis when it is determined that applicant or recipient has been unable to locate adequate affordable housing due to any of the following variables:

(1) a physical or mental condition which limits the ability of the individual to relocate or afford permanent housing;

(2) social services district error; or

(3) other extenuating circumstances, beyond the control of the applicant or recipient, exist which prevent the individual from relocating or affording permanent housing and application of the shelter supplement time limit can reasonably be considered to result in homelessness

\* Only the Director of Income Maintenance or the two Income Maintenance Supervisors could grant this exception. . As is standard practice, case comments would be entered into IEDR by the Director, or the two Income Maintenance Supervisor's regarding the reason for the exception.

**10. Will the supplementation process include a onetime incentive payment to the landlord?** A one time incentive would be on a case by case basis subject to a limit of one month's rent with approval by the Commissioner, Director of Financial Programs or Director of Services.

**11. How will the district ensure that the existence of the supplement does not adversely affect the ability of non-TA recipient individuals or childless couples (i.e. low income working individuals or childless couples) to find and retain affordable housing?** The district will be using a lower market rate than HUD standards for the area.

**Length of Time Supplement Offered to Individual Cases:** (e.g. 3 months, 6 months, indefinitely etc.)

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The following historical data will show the growing trend the county has been facing.

**Estimate of Cost Savings/Neutrality (Show all calculations):**

## HOMELESS ACTIVITY – JEFFERSON COUNTY DSS

	2003	2004	2005	2008
<b>Cost</b>	\$96,869	\$152,507	\$544,294	\$1,560,842
<b>Number of Placements</b>	282	303	399	611
<b>Total Bed Nights</b>	2,895	3,396	11,318	22,207
<b>Average Length of Stay (Bed Nights)</b>	10	11	28	30

## HOUSEHOLDS PLACED

	A. Families	Singles	Total
<b>2003</b>	37	245	282
<b>2004</b>	64	239	303
<b>2005</b>	69	330	399
<b>2008</b>	114	497	611

48 individuals x \$62.50 average per night at a motel = \$3,000  
13 individuals x \$91.88 average per night at VAC = \$1,194  
Total = \$4,194 per night  
x 30 nights = \$125,820 per  
month/emergency costs

61 individuals x \$525 monthly rental allowance with a supplement =  
\$32,025 per month  
\$125,820 – \$32,025 = \$93,795 monthly savings

**Purpose/Justification (Provide relevant statistics):** The rising cost of housing in Jefferson County due to Fort Drum troops being in competition for housing with a higher income coupled with the recent downturn in the economy has made it increasingly difficult to meet the housing needs of a significant segment of the Safety Net caseload. Our Safety Net homeless expenditures and the number served have increased over the last several years. Currently, in Jefferson County, the maximum total grant a single childless Safety Net recipient can receive is \$337 per month with heat included.

For several years, the main emergency housing resource for this population in Jefferson County has been hotels for males or the Victims Assistance Center (VAC) for single women. VAC does not accept adult males which is the districts largest category of homeless. Not all hotels are located near employment, treatment providers, training providers and public transportation. There were 61 Safety Net recipients in temporary housing on December 31, 2008, at an average cost of \$55 to \$70 per night in hotels/motels and \$91.88 per night at the Victims Assistance Center. Jefferson County DSS placed 497 homeless Safety Net individuals and Childless Couples in the calendar year 2008, 55 of those being at the Victims Assistance Center. In 2008 homeless expenditures were approximately \$1,216,914 (\$970,057 for motels and \$246,857 at VAC). In addition, approximately \$22,680 was issued for Domestic Violence costs. The average monthly cost for the local district and New York State per emergency homeless placement is approximately \$125,820.00.

There are no emergency homeless shelters within Jefferson County and according to a 2005-2007 American Community Survey, put out by the Census Bureau; the average rent in Jefferson County for that period was \$618 per month with a rental vacancy rate of 5.1 percent. According to HUD for fiscal year 2009 a one bedroom apartment is \$627 per month. The shelter allowance for a household of one is \$200, the maximum monthly grant including basic needs is currently \$337 per month. This serves to illustrate how few options there are currently for single Safety Net recipients.

The approval of this Shelter Allowance Supplement would allow Jefferson County to avoid these costly hotel/motel placements and would result in a potential gross cost savings of approximately \$1,125,540 annually (\$125,820 – \$32,025 x 12) which would be divided equally by Jefferson County and New York State (\$562,770 each State and Local).

In addition to the potential cost savings, the Supplement will also allow single recipients to access permanent housing within a reasonable timeframe, decreasing the length of stay in emergency housing situations such as hotels/motels. Recipients who reside in temporary housing placements struggle to achieve the stability required in order to progress towards self-sufficiency. Employment, education and vocational training are difficult to achieve when recipients are faced with the difficult burden of identifying permanent housing. The approval of a Safety Net Shelter Allowance Supplement will not only result in cost savings, but permit the recipient to achieve independence within a shorter period of time.

**Additional Information:** Recipients will be tracked and district activities will continue to help move them toward self-sufficiency through employment opportunities or disability determinations. The district will assist recipients to find alternative resources for permanent affordable housing. Data collected will include: 1. Case size, 2.Number of placements, 3.Number who lose TA, and 4.Number who become employed

5/29/09

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