

Application for Shelter Allowance Supplement

Local District: Lewis County

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Implementation Date: June 10th, 2019

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.

TA Household Size	Shelter Allowance Effective 11/03	Shelter Supplement	New Shelter Maximum Allowance	Bedrooms	* Lewis County Fair Market Rental
1	\$152.00	\$301.00	\$453.00	0	\$564.00
1	\$152.00	\$301.00	\$453.00	1	\$625.00
2	\$177.00	\$301.00	\$478.00	2	\$718.00

*HUD-established Fair Market Rents for Lewis County

Type of Cases Covered by Supplement/Targeted Population:

This proposed Shelter supplement would be available to single Safety Net consumers or childless couples who are pending eviction, homeless, living in motels, domestic violence shelter, temporary housing, or not receiving Section 8 Housing assistance.

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.
- The recipient must be tenant or co-tenant of record. Leases and/or written agreements with the landlord will not be a requirement.
- The recipient's full actual share of rent must be restricted and paid directly to the landlord.
- An eviction notice from the landlord is sufficient to show that an eviction proceeding has been started. Verification will be required to show that both the tenant and landlord have attempted to resolve the eviction.

- Must apply for Section 8 housing if not currently receiving Section 8 housing or any other government funded housing, or has not lost Section 8 housing or any other government funded housing in the last 24 months without good cause.
- No court costs, legal fees or late charges will be paid as part of the Supplement

Purpose/Justification

The lack of affordable housing in Lewis County has continued to make it difficult to meet the housing needs of our Safety Net clients. Our average homeless population has increased by 40% since 2016.

In Lewis County in 2017, the total room nights that clients were housed was 692. Our average homeless population has increased by 40% since 2016. While the number of homeless singles traditionally drops significantly in the summer months, this did not occur during the past year with the months of July and August 2017, DSS housing 16 individuals. In July and August 2016, 10 individuals were housed.

Lewis County has a homeless apartment that is used for emergency housing. When this apartment is full, the homeless clientele are placed in the local motels which are not desirable solutions. Utilizing motels for emergency housing creates a variety of challenges such as:

1. Extensive financial cost
2. Motels are not conducive for long term housing
3. Motels are mostly in rural areas making it difficult to look for employment and housing, and to access grocery shopping.

The approval of this Shelter Allowance supplement will allow Lewis County to avoid the costly homeless apartment/motel placements. There is a housing deficiency in Lewis County. There are not many affordable apartments in the area for our single/childless couples. The average private rental in the area ranges from \$500 to \$700 for the with utilities and/or fuel as a separate expense. Currently a SNA applicant in Lewis county would be eligible for \$406/m if they were to pay for a fuel, kerosene or propane expense separate from their rent. Some of our SNA cases who end up in our shelter are unable to find affordable housing and give up on a new beginning and end up back in their old habits to make ends meet and at time results in jail time. We hope to end this cycle if we are able to get our clients stably housed. For an example of our housing crisis, we had an individual on Safety Net Assistance who had lost their housing that they had for most of their adult life. This individual was able to find a trailer for \$400/month with everything included. This individual could not afford this apartment because her SNA grant was only \$335/month. This placed the individual in a perilous situation as there was no other housing opportunities at that time. She was able to utilize another local agency who made it clear to DSS that they were helping outside of their regulations so that she would not be homeless. Our local public housing agencies are usually full and have waiting lists. The Section 8 wait list in Lewis County is usually 2 years. Our local Continuum of Care (COC) agency runs out of funds around May of each year, leaving no funding for the placement of individuals thereafter. Our agency currently participates in the monthly COC meetings to discuss the current list of clients in need

of housing; being sure to house those clients with the highest need first. This COC agency's long-term apartment slots quickly fill up each year so clients go on a waiting list. We currently have 37 SNA cases and plan on utilizing the shelter allowance supplement for those who are otherwise eligible. Based on potential fluctuations in SNA caseloads going forward, we plan to establish a cap of 40 supplements being provided at any given time.

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 prorated share of rent costs, 30% of income, the lesser of these two variables, etc.)?**

All non-SNA household members must contribute either their pro-rated share of rent or 30% of their gross income, whichever is less.

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

Yes, SSI recipients and ineligible aliens will be expected to contribute towards rent.

If so, how will this amount be determined?

SSI recipients and ineligible aliens will be expected to contribute either their prorated share of the rent or 30% of their income, whichever is less. All adults living in the dwelling will be required to verify their income. Failure of a non-SNA household member to verify their income will result in possible denial or loss of eligibility for a shelter supplement.

- 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?**

Contributions towards rent from members outside the household will be verified by a statement from the recipient and from the individual making the contribution. The statement must include whether it is a one-time payment or the anticipated frequency.

How will the district assure that third party contributors are not legally responsible relatives?

The recipient must be eligible for Safety Net Assistance in order to receive a rent supplement. Therefore, legal lines of responsibility will be reviewed during the initial eligibility.

3. Will the district require that there be a court proceeding concerning the nonpayment of shelter costs prior to the eligibility determination for supplemental shelter payments?

Not applicable. Lewis County is not utilizing rent supplements to address arrears. Therefore, we will not require any form of court proceeding. In those unusual circumstances where a client applying initially has arrears, existing public assistance rules governing arrears will be followed.

4. How will co-tenant of record lease arrangements be handled?

The recipient must be tenant or co-tenant of record designated by the landlord in order to be considered for the rent supplement program. Households that include both Safety Net and Family Assistance or SN MOE individuals will be budgeted as appropriate in regard to TA regulations for co-op budgeting.

Will leases be required of tenants of record?

No. Leases will not be required.

5. Will shelter arrears for shelter supplementation cases be limited in monetary amount or to a specific time period?

Not applicable. Lewis County is not planning to utilize rent supplements for back rent.

6. How will the district handle modifications (e.g., moves, rent increases, etc.)?

Any modification will require a LDSS 3815 (Request for Additional Allowance) and reassessment. The shelter supplement will be adjusted accordingly.

What will determine whether supplementation will continue?

The supplementation will continue as long as compliance with the program requirements and continued TA eligibility. Individuals choosing to move for any reason other than health and safety issues outside of their control must move into a shelter unit which is affordable based on the Shelter Allowance Supplement.

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 in a timely manner.

7. Will any local forms be used to facilitate the supplementation process?

Yes, see attached.

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 must meet the appropriate village/town building codes. The district is not requiring a pre-inspection of the housing unit from our Investigations Unit.

9. Will the supplemental allowance be time limited in any way?

The supplemental allowance will be limited to three (3) years as long as the recipient meets all conditions of eligibility.

10. Will supplementation process include a one-time incentive payment to the landlord?

No.

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 does not anticipate the shelter supplement having an adverse effect on Non-TA recipient or low income working individuals or childless couples as the benefit provided will be lower than the HUD standards.

Length of time Supplement offered to Individual Cases: (e.g. 3 months, 6 months, indefinitely, etc.)

The shelter supplement will be limited for three (3) years as long as the recipient meets the eligibility requirements. Extension of the supplement will be handled on a case by case basis. Situations that would warrant an extension are when the following circumstances have occurred, and the client still cannot obtain affordable housing.

- The client has proven their on-going search for affordable housing
- The client has complied with all requirements of the Employment Unit
- The client, if required, has applied for and followed through on the application for Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income.

Lewis County 2016 and 2017 Homeless Statistics (Based on Actual Payments made)

Year	Actual Total # of Room Nights Clients were Housed	Actual Total Yearly Expense	Average Night Cost of Motel/ Shelter (Actual Total Yearly Expense / (divided by)Nights)	Cost of Monthly Stay Motel/ Shelter (Ave night cost *(times) 30)	Cost of Proposed Shelter Supplement per Month Single	Cost of Shelter Base Benefit per Month Singles	Cost of Proposed Shelter Supplement per Month Couple	Cost of Shelter Base Benefit per Month Couples	Shelter Benefit with Supplement per month (current benefit plus Proposed Supplement)	Shelter Supplement Average Night Stay Cost Proposed Monthly Benefit/ (divlded by) 30	Gross Monthly Savings (Average monthly Motel/Shelter Cost minus proposed Monthly Shelter Benefit)	Gross Actual Yearly Savings If Supplement had been In place. (Nightly Average Cost Savings *(times) Actual Nights Housed)
2016	300	\$ 23,698.00	\$ 78.99	\$ 2,369.80	\$ 301.00	\$ 152.00			\$ 453.00	\$ 15.10	\$ 1,916.80	\$ 19,168.00
2016	34	\$ 2,684.00	\$ 77.47	\$ 2,324.12			\$ 301.00	\$ 177.00	\$ 478.00	\$ 15.93	\$ 1,846.12	\$ 2,092.27
									2016 Total Actual Lost Savings			\$ 21,260.27
2017	623	\$ 36,848.00	\$ 59.15	\$ 1,774.38	\$ 301.00	\$ 152.00			\$ 453.00	\$ 15.10	\$ 1,321.38	\$ 27,440.70
2017	69	\$ 4,094.00	\$ 59.33	\$ 1,780.00			\$ 301.00	\$ 177.00	\$ 478.00	\$ 15.93	\$ 1,302.00	\$ 2,994.60
									2017 Total Actual Lost Savings			\$ 30,435.30

Lewis County began tracking our homeless people in 2016. The average length of stay in the homeless apartment is 14 days and the average length of stay in a motel is 4 days. The majority of these people are single Safety Net individuals.

Lewis County Department of Social Services
Safety Net Shelter Allowance Supplement Form

Applicant/Recipient must be Safety Net eligible based on the New York State Standard of Need without the Supplement and in compliance with all other eligibility requirements.

Name: _____

Case #: _____

1. Is it a one-person or single childless couple household? Yes No
2. Is the supplement being used to establish housing for a single or childless couple who has been determined homeless, or is determined to be in an eviction status by the Agency? Yes No
3. Has the Applicant/Recipient agreed and signed all forms to have the full, actual share of rent restricted and paid directly to the landlord? Yes No
4. Are all non-SNA household members, including SSI recipients or ineligible aliens, contributing either pro-rated share of rent or 30 percent of their gross income, whichever is less? Yes No
5. Will the Applicant/Recipient be the tenant or co-tenant of record? Yes No
6. Is the individual or childless couple in full compliance with the Safety Net eligibility requirements and sanction-free? Yes No

If all the answers above are “yes” and the applicant/recipient is determined eligible for Safety Net Assistance, and the client has not lost Section 8 housing in the last 24 months without good cause, a shelter supplement may be authorized. Shelter supplement may be authorized up to the actual rent obligation, but not to exceed the shelter maximum, whichever is less. The shelter supplement amounts are:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Rent Allowance</u>	<u>Rent Supplement</u>	<u>Total Shelter Maximum</u>
1	\$152.00	\$301.00	\$453.00
2	\$177.00	\$301.00	\$478.00

Shelter Supplements are entered in the budget under “Other PA Allowances.” The code is 49 – “Other PA Allowances.”

The shelter supplement will be limited to three (3) years as long as the recipient meets the eligibility requirements. TA Examiner utilizes AFA code to track 3-year period. Extension of the supplement will be handled on a case by case basis. Situations that would warrant an extension are when the following circumstances have occurred, and the client still is unable to obtain affordable housing.

- The client has proven their ongoing search effort for affordable housing
- The client has complied with all requirements of the Employment Unit
- The client, if required, has applied for and followed through on the application for Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income.

Worker Signature: _____

Date: _____