

Amended and Approved Effective 4/1/18

Local District: Washington County

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Effective Date: November 1, 2017 or upon OTDA/DOB approval, whichever is later

Amount of supplement (for example: Household 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 and limited to a total number of 25 active supplements at any one time.

TA Household Size	Shelter Allowance Effective 11/03	Shelter Supplement	New Shelter Maximum Allowance	Bedrooms	* Washington County Fair Market Rental
1	\$199	\$301	\$500	0	\$563
1	\$199	\$301	\$500	1	\$700
2	\$231	\$301	\$532	2	\$871

*HUD-established Fair Market Rents for Washington County

Type of Cases Covered by Supplement/Targeted Population:

This proposed Shelter supplement would be available to 25 single Safety Net consumers or childless couples who are homeless, living in motels, a domestic violence shelter, or in temporary housing; or are at risk of homelessness.

- 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.
- Recipients must corroborate residency in Washington County for a period of 6 months prior to being homeless/at risk of homelessness. In special circumstances the County may exercise discretion in the required length of stay including unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances.
- 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.
- The proposed shelter supplement would be limited to 25 single individuals at one time in receipt of Safety Net Assistance who have an SSI/SSD application pending, or presents as potentially meeting SSI/SSD criteria. Our Homeless Caseworkers will work with these

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individuals to assist them in the SSI/SSD process, to include assistance with the application and in gathering the documentation required, arranging for transportation to necessary appointments, and assistance with an appeal if necessary.

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 prorate 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 the contribution is a one-time payment or would indicate the anticipated frequency of the contribution.

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. The initial interview should determine legal responsibility.

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. Washington County is not planning to utilize rent supplements for back rent. If a client applying initially has arrears, Washington County will follow existing rules and regulations in this regard.
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 to be considered for the shelter 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.

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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. Washington 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 should be reported immediately to the County. A reassessment will be required, eligibility re-determined and the shelter supplement will be adjusted accordingly.

What will determine whether supplementation will continue? The supplementation will continue for at least two years, as long as the client is compliant with the program requirements and continues to be TA eligible, or until the client is successful in being determined eligible for Social Security benefits and the TA case is closed.

Individuals choosing to move within this time frame, except for health and safety issues or issues outside of their control, must find a shelter situation that is the same rent or less rent than the situation they are leaving.

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 governing village/town building codes. Appropriate DSS staff will perform a walk-through of the residence to ensure habitability.
9. **Will the supplemental allowance be time limited in any way?** The supplemental allowance will be limited to two (2) years as long as the recipient meets the eligibility requirements. Preference will be given to singles who are in the process of applying for Social Security benefits and are likely to be approved within a two-year time frame. Upon receipt of Social Security benefits, TA will close and another single adult or childless couple will be eligible for a Supplemental Shelter allowance.
10. **Will supplementation process include a one-time incentive payment to the landlord?** No. It is hoped that the increased ability of our clients to maintain stable housing will strengthen relationships with local landlords and result in greater cooperation, collaboration and increased housing options for all our clients seeking housing.

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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?** When approved, the supplement will be lower than the HUD Fair Market Rate which does not adversely affect the ability of low income working individuals. The district does not anticipate the shelter supplement having an adverse effect 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 two (2) 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, to include appeal if necessary.

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

Cost of motel rooms/mo. for single individual

(Washington County will use an average summer rate of \$104 per night.)

25 rooms x \$104/night = \$2,600/night

\$2,600 x 30 nights = \$78,000/month

Cost of Full Shelter Grant w/ Supplement/mo.

25 Shelter Supplements for singles x \$500.00/month = \$12,500

Comparison of motel room vs Shelter Supplement at full capacity

Cost of motel rooms/mo.	\$78,000
Cost of Supplement for singles	<u>\$12,500</u>
Gross Monthly Savings	\$65,500 (State Savings \$18,995; Local Savings \$46,505)

Cost of motel rooms/yr.	\$936,000
Cost of Supplement for singles	<u>\$150,000</u>
Gross Annual Savings	\$786,000 (State Savings \$227,940; Local Savings \$558,060)

Purpose/Justification

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The shortage of affordable housing in Washington County, combined with the rising cost of living and a static shelter allowance, has resulted in a population of homeless people who are unable to move from temporary housing to a safe and stable housing situation. The number of clients who present to Washington County DSS as homeless continues to rise, with the largest number of homeless people being singles.

Washington County does not have a homeless shelter or any emergency housing. The homeless clients are placed in motels, most of which are in neighboring counties. Utilizing motels for emergency housing creates a variety of challenges for the County and for the clients. For the County, the cost of temporary housing is prohibitive. For the client, a temporary address is not conducive to maintaining family and community supports, or in using SNAP benefits efficiently.

The approval of this Shelter Allowance supplement will allow Washington County to avoid the costly motel placements and provide our Safety Net clients with an opportunity for more stable and permanent housing.

Additional Information:

Year	Average # of Single People¹	Total Average Monthly Cost for Safety Net Individuals²	Total Actual Yearly Expense for Safety Net Individuals³
2013	21	\$11,228	\$134,733
2014	31	\$17,806	\$213,676
2015	35	\$29,486	\$353,836
2016	40	\$37,946	\$455,356

In 2016, Washington County Social Services housed an average of 61 cases per night in temporary housing. Of the average 61 cases, 40 were single individuals or childless couples.

Notes:

- (1) Based on a manual review of an internal spread sheet tracking homeless placements.
- (2) Based on simple division of 12 into the Total Actual Yearly Expense for Safety Net Individuals³
- (3) As reported in BICS for payment type 50, Temporary Residence in Hotels and Motels, and E8, Emergency Shelter Payment.