

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-K

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EATONVILLE, WASHINGTON, AUTHORIZING THE USE OF CARES ACT FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT A UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has determined that a pandemic exists due to the global spread of a highly contagious virus commonly known as COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, the Governor of the State of Washington proclaimed a State of Emergency due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020 the Governor of the State of Washington, in Proclamation 20-23.1, strongly encouraged all utilities to take reasonable actions to mitigate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their utility customers, including but not limited to: acting to prevent disconnection of services due to non-payment during the state-wide emergency; waiving late payments and fees; and using payment plans to fulfill outstanding customer balances; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Schaub proclaimed an emergency within the Town of Eatonville on March 24, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020 the Attorney General of Washington provided guidance on “Analyzing Issues Related to Gifts of Public Funds During the COVID-19 Pandemic” and found that “protecting public health is without question a fundamental purpose of government.” He also found that the “promotion of the public welfare” provides a “strong basis for local governments to make expenditures for the primary purpose of protecting and promoting public health which may have an incidental benefit on private citizens and entities.”; and

WHEREAS, on April 6, 2020, the Attorney General of Washington provided further guidance regarding whether “a local government may provide cash assistance” to individuals who “are struggling financially due to COVID-19” or to “small businesses struggling with the State ordered closure of their businesses.” He found that, with adequate safeguards in place, and “a clear nexus between such programs and either protecting the local economy or promoting compliance with public health guidelines,” temporary financial assistance during a public health crisis to advance public welfare, prevent regional economic collapse and promote compliance with public health guidelines would likely not be found by a court to be an unconstitutional gift of public funds; and

WHEREAS, the Eatonville Town Council recognizes that one of its essential functions is to promote public health by mitigating the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Town of Eatonville utility customers; and

WHEREAS, the Utility Assistance Program is necessary to further the Town’s purposes of protecting public health, safety and welfare during the COVID-19 pandemic, preventing local economic collapse due to the loss of jobs and businesses within the Town by offering utility billing credits to those customers who have been impacted by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the United State Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which was signed into law by the President on March 27, 2020 to provide economic relief package to cities, American workers, families and small businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Eatonville has received CARES Relief Funds in the amount of \$89,100; and

WHEREAS, the Eatonville Town Council authorizes the Mayor or designee to approve expenditures related to COVID-19 relief from the CARES relief funds, including the creation of a Utility Assistance Program; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council authorizes \$20,000 of CARES relief funds to be designated to a Utility Assistance Program as described in Attachment A; now, therefore;

THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF EATONVILLE, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

THAT: The Utility Assistance Program Policy is approved and the Town Council hereby authorizes the Mayor or Designee to distribute utility credits to Town of Eatonville utility customers as described in Attachment A, Utility Assistance Program Policy.

PASSED by the Council of The Town of Eatonville at a regular meeting this 13th day of July.

Mike Schaub, Mayor

ATTEST:

Miranda Doll, Town Clerk



**TOWN OF EATONVILLE
UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY**

Background:

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress with overwhelming, bipartisan support and signed into law by the President on March 27, 2020. This economic relief package provides direct economic assistance for American workers, families and small businesses. Through the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the CARES Act provided payments to State, Local and Tribal governments impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

On May 20, 2020, the Washington State Department of Commerce notified the Town of Eatonville that they will release a portion of the CARES funds to local governments. The Town of Eatonville's portion of these funds is \$89,000. The Town of Eatonville will utilize these funds to cover unanticipated and unbudgeted COVID related costs for public health and safety, as well as to help individuals, families and businesses overcome economic hardships.

Funding:

The Town Council is allocating \$20,000 from the Town's portion of CARES Act funding to implement a Utility Assistance Program.

Purpose:

To help those citizens of the Town of Eatonville who have been impacted by COVID-19 with all or part of their Town of Eatonville Utility Bills (up to \$300 and not to exceed the current monthly bill amount) in any of the billing periods from June through September 2020.

Qualifications:

- Must be a Town of Eatonville utility customer
- Must be negatively impacted by COVID-19 in one of the following ways:
 - Loss of work
 - Reduction of work hours
 - Loss of Childcare due to COVID-19
 - Illness or family member illness
 - Other impacts as determined (explain in detail on application)

Limit on use of funds:

- The disbursement of funds is to be restricted to payment of utility bills only. The funds cannot be used to pay the following:
 - NSF Fees
 - Reconnect Fees

To Apply:

- Complete the Assistance Program application*
- Attach documentation of household income (a paystub, W2, or other verification)**
- Attach a copy of identification (Driver's License, Passport, etc.). Address on identification must match service address.
- There is no limit on the number of times an account holder may apply, funds will be awarded as they remain available.

*Required for consideration

**Strongly encouraged, however, consideration will not be denied based on failure to produce documentation of household income.

Please note: Funds are credited directly to your Town of Eatonville Utility Bill and will not be issued to customer as a payment.

Limited funds are available and will be awarded on a first come first served basis, determined by completed applications and proper documentation.

Duration:

This program will be in effect for the billing periods beginning June 30, 2020 and will continue through September 30, 2020.



**TOWN OF EATONVILLE
UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
APPLICATION**

Application for utility assistance as funded by and allowed under the
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

PLEASE PROVIDE ANY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS WITH THIS APPLICATION. Complete front and back of the application.

Applicant name

Date

Physical Address

Phone Number

Email Address

Utility Account #

SECTION A: DECLARATION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND DESCRIPTION

Please select all that apply for the last three months and provide appropriate documentation:

1. Income/Benefits from the following sources:

☐ Wages/Earned Income

☐ Unemployment Compensation

☐ Social Security Income

☐ Other Income

☐ Veteran's Assistance

2. TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME _____

SECTION B: CIRCUMSTANCES

3. ☐ Death of immediate family member due to COVID-19

☐ Loss of job or income due to COVID-19

☐ Loss of childcare due to COVID-19

☐ Sudden illness or injury due to COVID-19

☐ Substantial loss of funds due to COVID-19

☐ Severely disabled or ill household member due to COVID-19

☐ Other (Please describe in detail on back of form)

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES: Please use the back of this application to provide an explanation for any checked items. Attach additional pages if needed.

Please give a complete account of the circumstances and provide supporting documentation (pay stub, letter from employer, unemployment, etc.)

I certify that I have provided and reviewed the information on this application. This information is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also give my permission for the Town of Eatonville's Utility Assistance Program Representative to request/release necessary information that may result in my receiving benefits. I hereby authorize the Town of Eatonville to release billing information to the Town's Utility Assistance Program Representative in order to process my application.

I understand that I may or may not receive assistance under this program and, if assistance is provided, it will be in the form of an adjustment directly to my Utility Account.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Submit Completed form to:
Town of Eatonville
Utility Assistance Program
PO Box 309
Eatonville, WA 98328

Or drop off in the Utility Drop Box
201 Center St W, Eatonville WA

SECTION D: UTILITY ASSISTANCE REVIEWER

___ Approved \$ _____
___ Disapproved

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

Authorized by: _____ Date: _____