

Applicant Guidance

The purpose of local welfare is to relieve and maintain those who are poor and unable to support themselves with basic needs. (NH RSA 165)

Basic needs are needs of survival such as shelter, utilities, food and medication.

This is an eligibility-based program, not an entitlement or benefit program.

This is not an emergency program as we have a minimum of 3 days to make a decision on completed applications.

To determine eligibility, we investigate information provided to us through the application, interview process and third-party verification obtained.

Incomplete applications prevent us from appropriately determining eligibility so those are most often denied.

When determining eligibility, we first determine if there is anything about your case that would disqualify you based on our written guidelines.

If there are no disqualifying facts, we then complete a budget using your income and assets, your expenses and the allowable levels of assistance provided by the Board of Selectmen to see if your allowable expenses exceed your income and assets and if so, by how much.

Allowable Levels of Assistance are updated, submitted to and adopted by the Board of Selectmen, at least, annually or as needed to be fair and equitable based on market conditions in the Town of Conway.

Some of the main sources used to determine what those Allowable Levels of Assistance should be include the IRS, NH Housing Finance Authority's Rental Cost Survey, DHHS and data provided regarding rate changes for utilities etc.

Budget requests are made based on need volume, costs, inflation, status of non-profits, state initiatives and overall trends, all of which can negate, minimize or maximize local welfare costs.

When non-profits start and run programs or provide financial assistance, they are using primarily donations and grants, funds received from those who wish to give it and can afford to whereas towns utilize funds granted and raised by property tax payers who may or may

not be able to afford to give it. It is imperative to note here that taxpayers also fund non-profits through funds granted and raised by warrant article requests.

These same property tax payers are also subject to federal and state deductions used to fund federal and state funded programs like fuel assistance and food stamps aka SNAP.

For this reason, the local welfare program requires utilization of federal and state funded programs as a condition of continued assistance given by the town. (NH RSA 165)

We are obligated to seek recovery of funds. In a 33-statute chapter, recovery or reimbursement of funds is mentioned as much as 25 times. This equates to 75% so seeking reimbursement through liens on real property and personal injury claims, for example, is a primary duty we have to the taxpayer. We also utilize promissory notes and follow NH RSA 165:19 that requires us to contact legally liable relatives. We are often partially reimbursed through social security disability retroactive checks.

Conway does not have the capacity to run a welfare work program.

Part of using fiscally responsible judgement requires acknowledging that fraud happens and addressing it when it does. We report fraud cases to Conway Police, the State's Office of Special Investigations and Attorney General's Office for investigation.