



Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services

311 Laurel Avenue
Laurel, Maryland 20707
(301) 776-0442

Rental Assistance Program

Program Description

The Rental Assistance Program at LARS is available to qualifying clients in need of assistance preventing eviction or moving into newly secured housing.

- Client must provide proof of Laurel residency or homelessness in Laurel (Zip codes: 20707, 20708, 20723, 20724).
- LARS rental assistance is one-time, emergency assistance and not an ongoing financial subsidy.
- Clients may only receive assistance **ONE TIME** in a 12 month period
- The amount of assistance will vary and is dependent upon the availability of funds at the time of application. LARS will assist with a **portion** of the rent due, not a full month's rent.
- In order to qualify, client **MUST** have a balanced monthly budget (income must be sufficient to cover monthly expenses).
- Clients already receiving a housing voucher or subsidy from the State of Maryland (i.e. Section 8) may be ineligible for the rental assistance program.
- All clients must meet face to face with a case manager to be assessed for eligibility. However, final eligibility and assistance amount will be determined by supervisory staff.
- All documents requested must be submitted before an eligibility determination can be made. LARS reserves the right to request any additional documentation at any point in the process to assist in eligibility determination.
- Clients must submit proof of payment of their portion of rent due (i.e. money order, rent receipt) **PRIOR** to receiving LARS funds.
- The rental assistance processing time will vary (generally 1-2 weeks). Please assist LARS in expediting the process by submitting all documents in a timely manner.
- LARS cannot guarantee that request made after the 25th day of the month will be processed. Rental assistance not completed prior to the last day of the month may be addressed in the following month, and the amount due will reflect the past due amount and the amount of the current month's rent.

Rental Assistance Process

The following is a general outline of the Rental Assistance process. Processing time may vary (generally 1-2 weeks) and is largely dependent upon the submission of all documents and client's payment of his or her portion of the rent.

1. Meet face to face with Case Manager to determine eligibility for program.
2. Submit all required documents
 - Lease/Mortgage verification (must be current)
 - Photo ID for all adult household members
 - Social Security card for all household members
 - Birth certificates for all children in the home
 - Proof of income: Paystubs for last 30 days (all working adults)
 - Proof of any additional income: SSI, SSDI, Child Support, Retirement, etc.
 - Late letter/Eviction Notice with current amount due
 - All monthly household bills (including: BGE, cable, cellphone, car insurance, car note, credit cards, loans, etc.).
 - Updated account ledger from leasing office
 - Bank Statements (last 3 months)
 - Any additional documents requested by staff
3. Complete budget with Case Manager
4. Case manager will submit all documentation to supervisory staff for final determination. Supervisor will approve/deny application for rental assistance.
5. As needed, LARS will request additional documentation from leasing office.
6. If approved, client must submit their portion (total rent and fees due **minus** LARS' contribution) in the form of a check or money order (made out to leasing office).
7. Complete any additional supporting documents provided by LARS (i.e. grant application) on the day the funds are disbursed.



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Food Pantry Eligibility and Guidelines

Eligibility

- Proof of Laurel residency or homelessness in Laurel (Zip codes: 20707, 20708, 20723, 20724)
- Submission of all required documents
 - Lease/Mortgage verification (must be current)
 - Photo ID for all adult household members
 - Social Security cards for all household members
 - Birth certificates for all children in the home
 - Proof of income: Paystubs for last 30 days (all working adults)
 - Proof of any additional income: SSI, SSDI, Child Support, Retirement, etc.

Guidelines for Pantry Use

- Clients are permitted to receive food from pantry **ONE TIME in a 30 day period** unless otherwise directed by staff.
- Clients are eligible for two bags for the primary LARS applicant and one additional bag for each additional member of the household.
- If a client returns within 30 days of last visit, LARS reserves the right to deny food assistance until the next eligibility date.
- Clients are not permitted in the pantry area. Staff will retrieve food items for client.
- LARS donations and food orders are not on a set schedule, therefore LARS cannot guarantee that all food items will be available at every visit. Staff will choose from items available at the time of visit. However, client may choose to wait and return for food at a later date.
- Please inform staff of any allergies or food restrictions (i.e. due to medical or religious guidelines) **BEFORE** they go down to the pantry. LARS staff is not required to exchange items once they have been retrieved from the pantry.
- LARS cannot accommodate grocery lists. However, if there is a specific item that you would like from the pantry, please inform staff **BEFORE** they go down to the pantry.
- PG County clients may be asked to sign additional documentation to obtain food from the pantry.



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Energy Bill Assistance

Program Description

In extreme cases, energy bill assistance is available to qualifying clients in need of assistance paying their energy bill.

- Client must provide proof of Laurel residency or homelessness in Laurel (Zip codes: 20707, 20708, 20723, 20724).
- All clients applying for LARS energy assistance must first apply for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) unless they do not meet eligibility requirements.
- LARS energy assistance is one-time, emergency assistance and not an ongoing financial subsidy.
- Clients may only receive assistance **ONE TIME** in a 12 month period.
- Client is only eligible for rent assistance **OR** utility assistance in a 12 month period. If the client needs assistance with both services, LARS will determine which type of assistance is most appropriate to provide.
- The amount of assistance will vary and is dependent upon the availability of funds at the time of application. LARS may only assist with a **portion** of the energy bill due and not the total.
- In order to qualify, client **MUST** have a balanced monthly budget (income must be sufficient to cover monthly expenses).
- Clients already receiving a housing voucher/subsidy or utility subsidy from the State of Maryland (i.e. Section 8) may be ineligible for the utility assistance program.
- All clients must meet face to face with a case manager to be assessed for eligibility. However, final eligibility and assistance amount will be determined by supervisory staff.
- All documents requested must be submitted before eligibility determination can be made. LARS reserves the right to request any additional documentation at any point in the process to assist in eligibility determination.
- Clients must submit proof of payment of their portion of energy bill due (i.e. payment confirmation number or receipt) **PRIOR** to receiving LARS funds.
- Processing time for energy assistance will vary (generally 1-2 weeks). Please assist LARS in expediting the process by submitting all documents in a timely manner.

Utility Assistance Process

The following is a general outline of the Energy Assistance process. Processing time may vary by case (generally 1-2 weeks) and is largely dependent upon the submission of all documents and client's payment of the client's portion of the rent.

1. Meet face to face with Case Manager to determine eligibility.
2. Submit all required documents
 - Lease/Mortgage verification (must be current)
 - Photo ID for all adult household members
 - Social Security card for all household members
 - Birth certificates for all children in the home
 - Proof of income: Paystubs for last 30 days (all working adults)
 - Proof of any additional income: SSI, SSDI, Child Support, Retirement, etc.
 - Most recent energy bill and/or turn off notice
 - All monthly household bills (including: BGE, cable, cellphone, car insurance, car note, credit cards, loans, etc.
 - Updated account ledger from leasing office
 - Bank Statements (last 3 months)
 - Any additional documents requested by staff
3. Complete budget with Case Manager
4. Case manager will submit all documentation to supervisory staff for final determination. Supervisor will approve/deny application for utility assistance.
5. As needed, LARS will request additional documentation for leasing office.
6. If approved, client must submit proof of payment of their portion (total balance due **minus** LARS contribution) in the form of payment confirmation number or receipt.