

## Emergency Assistance Policy

### 1. PURPOSE

Mission and outreach has been, and will continue to be, a major focus of Southminster Presbyterian Church (SPC). As such, the following policy will serve as a consistent guideline for the execution of any requests for emergency assistance (EA) of Southminster. Emergency assistance will be funded by the Emergency Assistance Fund of the church.

We understand that people from all walks and stages of life have needs, and we have developed this policy to provide a clear and consistent response to requests for assistance from those within our faith community and from our community at large. SPC offers assistance to individuals for the following life needs: Rent/Mortgage, Utility, Transportation, and other emergency circumstances. Assistance is limited and may include referrals to other community assistance programs who may be better able to provide support for an individual request.

### 2. SCOPE

- a. This policy applies to all those making monetary or non-monetary requests from SPC and may include members or non-members.
- b. This policy describes the SPC's objectives and policies regarding the acceptance and execution of all EA requests.

### 3. POLICY GUIDELINES

#### a. All Situations

- All requests shall be held in full confidence by all participating parties. Exceptions to this guideline may be necessary if any of the following were to occur...
  - i. Any situation that threatens the health and safety of any person or child will be referred immediately to the local authorities.
  - ii. If at any time members or employees of SPC feel threatened or unsafe, all support and communication will be terminated and staff/ church leaders will be advised. This final decision will be made at the discretion of our personnel and members and is not subject to review or appeal.
- Funds are not intended to address chronic or routine needs. Reasons for emergency assistance may include: medical emergency, job loss, severe family crisis, disaster, or falling victim to a crime or fraud.
- A plan will be created to meet the financial, physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of the applicant. The member, Elder and Pastor shall sign the EA form to demonstrate that the plan is accepted. The EA form will be stored in secure file with access limited to only the Pastors and the financial secretary/Treasurer.
- A record of EA giving will be detailed for the financial secretary/Treasurer. An accounting will be provided to the Session in a redacted form that does not identify recipients.

- This policy is considered a living document. It will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be updated and modified as needed to best support the church and at-large communities that we serve.

## **b. SPC Community Members**

SPC community members are eligible for monetary, material, referral, spiritual, and emotional support through the following mechanism:

- After a financial concern is brought to a Pastor, a *Southminster Emergency Assistance Request Form* will be provided to the requesting party.
- The member will meet with the EA Committee, comprised of a Pastor and at least 1 active Elder, to review the request and discuss ways to assist.
- If monetary assistance is approved, the Elder will request a gift card or payment of a bill directly to the vendor; at no time will money be transferred to the individual member.
- The Pastor will direct all spiritual support such as inclusion in prayer ministry, Stephen Ministry, or mentoring.
- If monetary support is given, this should generally be limited to an amount of **\$500** per year. However, exceptions exceeding this amount will be reviewed and approved on an individual basis by the Pastor(s) and Elder representative.

## **c. At-Large Community Members**

At-large community members are eligible for monetary, referral, spiritual, and emotional support through the following mechanisms:

- After a financial concern is brought to a Pastor, a *Southminster Emergency Assistance Request Form* will be provided to the requesting party.
- The requestor will meet with the EA Committee, comprised of a Pastor and at least 1 active Elder, to review the request and discuss ways to assist.
- If monetary assistance is approved, the Elder will request a gift card or payment of a bill directly to the vendor; at no time will money be transferred to the individual. (State issued Identification may be requested prior to any transfer of funds.)
- The Pastor will direct all spiritual support such as inclusion in prayer ministry, Stephen Ministry, or mentoring.
- If monetary support is provided, this should generally be limited to an amount of **\$200** per year. However, exceptions exceeding this amount will be reviewed and approved on an individual basis by the Pastor(s) and Elder representative.
- SPC makes available referral information for local support agencies equipped to provide emergency support and long-term solutions to those in need.
- We may establish an opportunity to pray with a Pastor or be added to our internal prayer network.
- Invitation to worship to find support and fellowship in our community will be offered; all are welcomed and accepted at SPC.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**SPC Community Members:** A person(s) who, for at least 3 months, has regularly attended or has been an active participant in SPC worship and activities (Sunday Service, classes, etc.) or is registered as an official member of SPC.

**At-Large Community Members:** Considered, for this policy, as those who are part of the local community at large and do not meet the description of "SPC Community Members." These are beloved children of God about whom we care and wish to support per the boundaries of this policy.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Pastor(s)/Session/Mission Team
  - 1) Establish and approve initial program policy (Mission Team/Session)
  - 2) Approve policy, amendments or changes as necessary (Mission Team/Session)
  - 3) Execute policy (Head-of Staff/Staff Pastor and designated Elder)

## 6. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- a. "Southminster Presbyterian Emergency Fund Request" (Ver1.0)... January 2017
- b. "Southminster Presbyterian Emergency Fund Request" (Ver2.0)... February 2017

Southminster Presbyterian Church Emergency Fund Request			
Applicant Information		<i>(attach copy of state issued ID if applicable)</i>	
Full Name			
Address			
City		State	
Phone		Zip	
Email		SS# (last 4-digits)	xxx-xx- _ _ _ _
Employment Information			
Current Employer		Position	
Length of Employment		Monthly Income	
Monthly Obligations			
Creditor (ex. DPL, Vectren, credit card, etc.)	Phone Number on Acct	Monthly Payment	
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	( ) -		
	( ) -		
<i>If more than four creditors, additional information may be added to the back of this document.</i>			
Reason for Request			
Signature*			Date:
Emergency Assistance Fund Committee Decision			
Approved <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Explanation if Denied:</i>		
Denied <input type="checkbox"/>			
Signature of Pastor			Date:
Signature of Elder			Date:
Signature of Applicant*			Date:

***\*By my signature I state that my request has been presented honestly and that I have received a copy of the Southminster Presbyterian Church Emergency Assistance policy.***