



Osage Nation Crisis Assistance

Policy

It is the policy of Osage Nation to provide financial assistance to all enrolled members, regardless of residency, struggling in extraordinary times of a crisis. Crisis Assistance is available once per fiscal year to applicants that are able to document an emergency/crisis warranting assistance. Situations should be short-term or temporary in nature, and not chronic.

Eligibility

Eligibility requirements include:

- Completed Crisis Assistance application with support documentation
- Copy of Osage Nation membership card(s)
- Third party verification of the crisis (unforeseen event, beyond the applicants control in the last 30 days, that is the direct cause of the emergency need)

Crisis Situations

Assistance may be provided only when an eligible crisis creates a verifiable need and cannot exceed \$1,000, per applicant, per fiscal year. Assistance is available under the following four crisis situations:

1. **Homeless, or a threat of homelessness**
2. **Unsafe and/or unsanitary living conditions**
3. **Fire or natural disaster**
4. **Major car repairs**

Types of Assistance

1. Homeless, or a threat of homelessness

The following types of assistance available:

- Delinquent rent – eligible for one month of assistance
- First month's rent – must be affordable
- Security deposit – does not include pet deposits
- Mortgage payment – eligible for one month of assistance

Support Documentation

Support documentation for homelessness assistance:

- Rental statement for proposed housing showing monthly rate
- Current Lease Agreement – must be in applicant's name



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- Renting of individual rooms can only be for re-entry programs, half-way houses, or sober living facilities (no subletting)
- Security deposit documentation – does not include pet deposits

Support documentation for threat of homelessness assistance:

The Crisis program does not provide financial assistance with rent/mortgage/utilities if a crisis cannot be validated.

- Rental statement in the name of the applicant and/or spouse (no subletting situations)
- Current Lease Agreement – must be in the name of applicant and/or spouse
- Eviction notice in the name of the applicant and/or spouse (this is waived if applicant is experiencing financial crisis due to covid-19 and is under a moratorium on evictions and/or foreclosures due to covid-19)
- Mortgage documents in the name of the applicant and/or spouse
- Delinquent mortgage bill and/or foreclosure notice in the name of the applicant and/or spouse (this is waived if applicant is experiencing financial crisis due to covid-19 and is under a moratorium on evictions and/or foreclosures due to covid-19)
- Current utility bill in the name of the applicant and/or spouse to further verify residency

2. Unsafe and/or unsanitary living conditions

The following types of crisis assistance can be available:

- Utility deposits (electric, water, natural gas, propane, and trash service)
- Utility bills (for those services listed above)
- Pest control
- Bed bug mitigation
- Temporary housing due to the unsafe or unsanitary living conditions
- Basic essential needs caused by the unsafe or unsanitary living conditions

The following unsafe/unsanitary assistance can be available only to applicant owned housing:

- Emergency repairs necessary to the basic function of the home and not caused by normal wear and tear of the residence
- Termite removal/repairs
- Home insurance deductible on an insurance claim to ensure the home is safe and/or sanitary



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Support Documentation

Support documentation for unsafe and/or unsanitary living conditions in applicant owned housing only:

- Mortgage documents in the name of the applicant and/or spouse
- Current utility bill in the name of applicant and/or spouse further verifying residency
- Photos and/or quote for emergency repair to make home safe and/or sanitary
- Termite removal/repairs quote from a licensed professional
- Home insurance deductible documentation

Support documentation for unsanitary living conditions:

- Utility deposit information to set up account in name of applicant and/or spouse
- Past due utility bill(s) and/or shut off notice(s) in name of applicant and/or spouse (this is waived if applicant is experiencing financial crisis due to covid-19)
- Pest control and/or bed bug mitigation quote from a licensed professional
- Current utility bill further verifying residency in name of applicant and/or spouse

3. Fire or natural disaster

The following types of crisis assistance can be available:

- Basic essential needs
- Temporary housing

The following recovery assistance can be available only to applicant owned housing:

- Home insurance deductibles
- Repairs to the home caused by the fire or natural disaster
- Debris removal at the home caused by the fire or natural disaster

Support Documentation

Support documentation for fire or natural disaster:

- Warranty deed, tax records, mortgage statement in name of applicant and/or spouse to show ownership
- Insurance documentation to show deductible amount
- Quote for repair and/or debris removal
- Quote for temporary housing costs

Many times support documents are either lost or inaccessible in times of fire or natural disaster. Caseworkers should use good judgement if some support documentation is unavailable in cases of fire or natural disaster. In extreme cases of loss, the only support documentation may be the third party verification of the crisis and documents residing at the Osage Nation.



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4. Major car repairs

The following types of crisis assistance can be available:

- Towing of a vehicle to a repair shop
- Repairs to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the vehicle, does not include routine maintenance

Support Documentation

Support documentation for major car repairs:

- Verification of vehicle ownership in name of applicant and/or spouse
- Estimate from a reputable repair business or licensed mechanic
- Copy of current, valid driver's license for applicant and/or spouse
- Current insurance verification in name of applicant and/or spouse
- Towing quote

Application Process

Once a crisis application has been received, the following process will occur:

1. The advocate has two (2) business days to contact the applicant and request any additional information or process the application to the Director for review.
2. Eligibility for assistance is only determined after all documentation has been submitted and verified.
3. The Director has (1) business day to review and approve or deny.
4. If the Director approves the application and request, it is then processed to the Accounting Department. The Accounting Department has two (2) business day to process a check.
5. Checks are only made payable to the vendor of the service and only in US dollars.

The Crisis Program operates on a fiscal year ranging from October 1st to September 30th. Osage tribal members may apply once a fiscal year and applications are processed first come first serve, while funding is available. Application and support documentation can be submitted in person, electronically by email, by mail, or fax. Copies of photo identification will not be accepted via fax due to loss of resolution. It is the responsibility of the tribal member to provide all necessary documentation for eligibility determination of the application.

The Crisis Assistance advocate will work with tribal members to ensure the application is complete and other federally funded resources have been utilized. The advocate will apply professionalism and exercise prudence to determine eligibility prior to submitting completed applications to the Director of Financial Assistance for approval.

All Crisis applications, supporting documentation and assistance will be recorded and tracked within the Osage Nation's, Customer Relations Management (CRM) software. Record retention will follow the Osage Nation's schedule for tribal records. Records will be archived within 90 days of the end of each fiscal year.



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Appeal Process

Osage applicants who have been denied assistance may appeal the decision in writing to the Director of Operations, within 10 business days of the notification. Appeal forms will be sent with each denial letter and will also be available on the website at <https://www.osagenation-nsn.gov/what-we-do/financial-assistance>. A determination will be made by the Director of Operations within 10 days from receiving appeal form. Applicant will be notified in writing by the Director of Operations and that decision is final.

Program Integrity

The Crisis Program is a tribally funded program and subject to an annual appropriation from the Osage Nation Congress. Executive Order No. 16-02 states that “All federal funds are to be expended prior to Osage Nation funds when federal regulation and Osage Nation policy allows.” Federally funded assistance programs should be utilized before the tribally funded Crisis Program. The Crisis Program is required to exercise sound judgement when reviewing and approving applications, providing assistance to crisis requests, and ensuring assistance is not a duplication of services, while quickly helping those who need it most.

Applicants are required to cooperate with the program and submit all requested information to support the application. All information contained within the application and received to support the application, will be verified to be true and accurate. This application is considered a protected record pursuant to the Osage Nation Open Records Act at 15 ONC §8-102(I) and as such will be protected from public disclosure. The information within the application, however, may be shared among Osage Nation Departments to enhance services, gather statistical information, and improve communications with our clients. All employees of the Osage Nation sign a confidentiality agreement upon employment with the Nation.

If the applicant is believed to be withholding or concealing information, or information alleging the applicant is received, or if fraud is suspected, the case will be investigated and referred to the Office of the Attorney General for prosecution or recoup of funds. If fraud is verified by a court of competent jurisdiction, the Osage tribal member will be ineligible to receive Crisis Assistance for a minimum of three (3) years.

Program Implementation

The Osage Nation Crisis Program is administered through the:

Osage Nation Financial Assistance Department

627 Grandview Avenue.

Pawhuska, OK 74056

Phone: (918) 287-5325 Fax: (918) 287-5593 Toll free: (888) 822-1248

financial-assist@osagenation-nsn.gov



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Definitions

Basic Essential Needs – Basic daily personal needs such as hygiene products, clothing, bedding, gasoline, and food.

Chronic – Persisting for a long-time or constantly recurring. Same crisis recurring for more than 2 consecutive years.

Eviction – The action of expelling someone, especially a tenant, from a property.

Form W-9 – US Internal Revenue Service document that the Osage Nation must attain to engage in a business relationship with an independent contractor. It requests the name, address, and taxpayer identification information of the contractor and is used to generate end of the year tax forms between the Osage Nation and independent contractors.

Natural Disaster – Sudden and terrible event in nature: hurricane, tornado, high winds, flood, ice storm, and wild fire.

Normal Wear and Tear on Residence – Expected decline in the condition of a property due to normal everyday use. It is deterioration that occurs in the course of living in a property. Examples: Paint, carpet/flooring, appliances, etc.

Routine Car Maintenance – Oil changes, air filters, windshield wiper blades, battery replacement, brakes, brake pads, belts & hoses, tires.

Pest Control services – Bugs, rodents/animals that are threatening the safety and integrity of the home and that can be eradicated by pest control services.