



**RESIDENTIAL PANDEMIC UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
(Program Administrative Rules)**

The Village of Wilmette declared an emergency affecting the public health and wellbeing due to the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) (“Emergency Declaration”) on March 23, 2020. As part of the Emergency Declaration, the Village has acknowledged the financial burden on the community, and therefore the Village has established a residential utility bill assistance program that would provide one-time utility bill assistance for households of the community experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic. The assistance program would make direct payments for outstanding utility bills to provide short-term financial assistance.

**Terms and Conditions**

The Assistance Program shall be administered in the sole discretion of the Village and nothing in this program creates a right to any household to receive any funds or creates an obligation of the Village to expend any funds. The Village reserves the right to cease the program at any time.

The Village is offering, through an application (“Application”), the ability of eligible Wilmette households to receive assistance associated with residential utility bills. All assistance by the Village are expressly conditioned upon the satisfactory completion of an Application and adherence to these Administrative Rules.

**Individuals Eligible to Receive Assistance**

The Utility Bill Assistance Program is intended to furnish one-time assistance to Wilmette households who experienced financial hardships related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specific eligibility requirements and financial considerations are enumerated below.

*Eligibility Requirements*

**Applicants must meet ALL of the five eligibility rules below:**

1. Applicant must be a current resident of the Village of Wilmette
2. Applicant must have a utility account that is past due by greater than 30 days
3. Applicant must have a utility account that went 30 past due after March 23, 2020
4. Applicant must have a utility account that went past due prior to October 15, 2021
5. Applicant must have income for Calendar Year 2020 at or below 120% of the Chicago-Joliet-Naperville Metro Area Median Family Income (MFI) as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Those levels are below.

| Members of Household | 1        | 2        | 3         | 4         | 5         | 6         | 7         | 8         |
|----------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Household Income     | \$78,300 | \$89,500 | \$100,700 | \$111,850 | \$120,800 | \$129,750 | \$138,700 | \$147,650 |

*Financial Considerations*

**Applicants must meet all of the above eligibility requirements and meet ONE OF the three financial considerations below:**

1. Suffered loss of job due to COVID-19 pandemic; OR
2. Suffered loss of income due to COVID-19 pandemic; OR
3. Other extenuating circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the applicant’s ability to pay.



The determination as to whether assistance will be granted in any particular case shall be in the sole discretion of Village Manager or his designee(s).

### **Request for Assistance Review**

Requests for assistance shall be made through the Finance Department. Other departments may refer cases to the Finance Department for assistance. A staff member will be designated to review and process applications for assistance and the final determination will be made by designated staff member(s).

### **Application Information**

All interested persons will be provided an application for submission. The application will include, at a minimum, the following:

- Name and other Contact Information
- Household Information such as number of persons in household and residency
- Income Information such as salaries, wages, social security, other financial assistance, governmental subsidies, and any other income source.
- Extenuating circumstances including opportunity to explain deviations from minimum requirements.

Information is subject to verification prior to approval of assistance or, as soon as practicable thereafter. Staff may request documents such as tax returns for the household or statements from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). The applicants shall sign a statement that the information on the application is correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge. Staff may request additional information if it is required to process an application.

### **Forms**

The application for the Grant Program must be completed and submitted to the Village via email to [WilmetteGrantApplication@wilmette.com](mailto:WilmetteGrantApplication@wilmette.com).

Applications must be received on or before December 31, 2021 for consideration as part of this program.

### **Payment of Assistance and Not Transferable**

If assistance is approved, it will be awarded via a direct transfer from the Village's General Fund to the Village's Water and Sewer Funds. No check will be issued to any individual. Grant awards are nontransferable.

### **Status of Assistance**

The Residential Utility Bill Assistance Program is not an entitlement program; the fact that an applicant might be in need of assistance or appear qualified for assistance does not entitle the applicant to assistance pursuant to this Program. The scope of the program and the amount the Village funds shall be determined by the Village in its sole discretion. The Village of Wilmette has no obligation to continue to fund or provide additional funds for the program. Applications will be processed on a first-come first-served basis and applications will be accepted until December 31, 2021 or until funds are exhausted, whichever is first.



### **Application Information and General Release**

Applicants shall permit Village representatives to make all reasonable inspections and investigations of the applicant's financial information during the process period of the Application. Applicants, as a necessary part of the Application process, shall provide to the Village or otherwise allow the Village to obtain and use all financial information. Failure to provide information may result in a denial of assistance.

Applications and information provided in requests for assistance will be treated as confidential information by the Village to the extent permitted by law. The amounts of disbursements made to applicants issued by the Village, and the applicant's name and other information may, under certain circumstances, be required to be disclosed by the Village to auditors or to other persons as official records. The Finance Department shall maintain, and upon request of the Village Board shall submit, a brief summary of actions on requests for assistance referred to by case numbers alone and not names or other identifying information.

Applicants, upon submission of an Application, release the Village from any and all liability, waive any rights in regards to information's provided in the Application and covenant not to sue the Village for the release of said information and from any other claim arising from this Application and the Assistance Program. Village, for this section shall mean their officers, directors, employees, agents, affiliates and representatives. Submission of an Application is an express consent and agreement to the above.