

WLH Family Financial Assistance Fund Policy

Purpose: the purpose of the WLH Family Financial Assistance Fund is to provide emergent or urgent assistance to our member families who need short term help. WLH is not primarily a financial assistance organization and the funds that are available for assistance are generally relatively small amounts. WLH does not exist to solve a family's financial problems but rather to provide encouragement to a family and help show that we are emotionally in this struggle with them

I. The Funds

- a. Funds that are dispersed are a combination of part of the WLH general budget that is set aside for family assistance and sporadic funds such as grants or donations that are specifically earmarked for family assistance.
- b. It is understood that this policy is not meant to be hard and fast regarding amount of disbursement and use of disbursement as we realize that extenuating circumstances sometimes exist that might require WLH to bend this policy from time to time. However, the policy is a general guideline that should be followed in most circumstances in order to provide fair disbursement of funds and prevent the fund from becoming over extended.
- c. Operating outside of the guidelines regarding family assistance requires the permission of the Board of Directors.

II. Financial Assistance Application

- a. Families who request assistance will be directed to fill out a Family Financial Assistance Request Form from our website and submit it either by email, mail or in person.
- b. Additionally, families must have filled out the Parent Assessment of Needs in order to qualify for assistance, including the financial portion of the assessment.
- c. No one person in the organization has the authority to promise financial assistance of any kind, to any family
- d. With the exception of a gas card valued at \$50 or less, no financial assistance shall be extended to any family until they have been an active member of WLH for at least 6 months. (Active members attend WLH functions and/or are present and comment on the Parent page on Facebook so people are acquainted with them.)
- e. Applications will be accepted until the end of the month and decisions regarding the applications will be made the subsequent month as outlined below.

III. The Committee

- a. All decisions will be made by the financial assistance committee, consisting of at least 3 WLH employees and/or board members.
- b. The committee can vary from month to month depending on who is available to sit in on the meeting.
- c. The committee will meet on the first Wednesday of each month to review requests. If for some reason the meeting needs to be rescheduled, it will take place not later than one week after the first Wednesday.
- d. All applicants will be notified, and funds disbursed no later than the 15th of the month.

IV. Determination of Disbursement

- a. When there are more requests in a month than can be met, the committee shall consider urgency of the request, length of time family has been in WLH, amount being requested, purpose of the request and other assistance the family has received in making their determination.
- b. If there are not enough needs in a given month that are considered by the committee to be appropriate uses of the funds, the remaining months funds may be returned to the general budget.
- c. Requests can be rolled over to the next month without filling out a new request form when there are not enough funds available to meet all the requests in any given month. This can happen twice before the family is notified that WLH is unable to assist them at this time. They may apply again after 2 months.
- d. Families may receive assistance in total of no more than \$500 in any calendar year.
- e. If a request is made that the committee feels is not an appropriate use of the funds, the family shall be notified by email or phone call by someone on the committee that their request has been denied.
- f. Funds shall be for the use of the immediate Hero family only. No applications will be accepted from extended family outside of the family the Hero lives with or for the benefit of someone outside of the Hero or Hero's parents or siblings.
- g. Funds may be used for medical trips, utility bills including electric, gas and water, (cable, internet, and cell phone bills are not emergent and will be considered on a case by case basis) car repairs, final expenses for Hero or immediate family member, rent/mortgage assistance (although WLH should look at the amount we can provide to determine whether it is of any real substantial significance that will make a difference to the family before providing money for rent/mortgage; i.e. if someone's house is going into foreclosure a small gift of a couple hundred dollars is not going to prevent that from happening. The money would be better spent elsewhere for that family) food, medicine and diapers.
- h. Funds will NOT be extended for the following purposes: travel that has no medical component attached (i.e. pure vacations)
- i. Whenever possible the disbursement shall be made directly by a WLH employee or representative making direct payment to the payee instead of to family. If needed, a check may be written to the family. A receipt shall be obtained to prove payment for said expenses.
- j. In order to be good stewards of our resources, WLH shall look to see if there is an organization better suited to provide the help to the family before committing funds.
- k. If possible, funds shall be disbursed by the 15th of the month.
- l. No other funds except Family Assistance funds shall be used for Family Assistance.
- m. The above policy applies solely to the disbursement of the dedicated WLH monthly financial assistance funds and has no bearing on disbursement of specialized donations from outside sources which WLH may from time to time help disburse at the discretion of that specific donor.