



Employee Disaster Relief Fund

Employee Disaster Relief Fund Frequently Asked Questions

What is the AISD Employee Disaster Relief Fund?

The AISD Employee Disaster Relief Fund (EDR Fund) is designed to assist employees who are experiencing a temporary financial hardship due to a ***catastrophic disaster which is both unforeseen and unavoidable***.

How is catastrophic defined?

A catastrophe is defined as a great, often sudden calamity. Catastrophic is defined as involving or resulting in substantial, often ruinous medical or other expense. (See American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition, 2011.)

Who is eligible to receive Disaster Relief?

All benefits-eligible employees. Only one grant per employee or household per year can be made.

What is an Emergency Hardship qualifying for consideration of an award of money?

Emergency hardships are considered either of the following disasters which cause the employee severe financial hardship for which there is no other source of funding.

1. **Expenses due to catastrophic property losses not covered by insurance.** Funds needed to establish or re-establish a habitable and safe residence following: (a) a natural disaster such as a hurricane, fire, flood, or tornado; or, (b) a criminal event such as arson or criminal mischief.
2. **Expenses due to a catastrophic emergency not covered by insurance.** Funds needed to pay bills resulting from a catastrophic disaster which are not covered by insurance. For example, an employee involved in an accident resulting in spinal cord injury causing paralysis would qualify.

Neither of the above results in the automatic awarding of monies from the Employee Disaster Relief Fund. Losses or expenses covered by insurance will not be considered appropriate for financial assistance from the Fund. Applicants must verify they do not have access to other resources.

How does an employee apply for Disaster Relief?

1. Print and read the Request for Disaster Relief Assistance Packet posted on the EDR Fund webpage at <http://www.austinisd.org/edrfund> or request a copy by calling the Austin ISD Employee Assistance & Wellness Coordinator at (512) 414-2282.
2. Complete all required fields on the Application.
3. Attach all supporting documentation to the Application.



4. Submit the Application to the Employee Relations Office as set forth on the Application.

If an employee is unable to personally complete the Application because of his or her medical condition, an immediate family member of the eligible employee may apply on the employee's behalf.

What happens once a Request for Disaster Relief Assistance Application is submitted?

The Application will be submitted to the Independent Selection Committee which will, within two weeks of receipt, determine whether to approve or not approve the requested monies to the employee. The maximum grant amount is \$500, less taxes, per employee per twelve month time period. Final approval is subject to the extent of the need and availability of funds. **There is no appeals process.**

The objective criteria used by the Independent Selection Committee in determining whether to award a grant includes:

1. Is the applicant a current benefits-eligible employee of the District?
2. Has the employee received a grant from the EDR Fund within the past 12 months?
3. Has the employee submitted a complete Application form with all supporting documentation?
4. Does the emergency hardship described by the employee meet the criteria to be awarded monies?
5. Are there sufficient funds to award the requested monies?

Is the EDR Fund program confidential? Applications are seen only by the Employee Assistance & Wellness Coordinator and Independent Selection Committee members.

Are awarded grants from the EDR Fund taxable income? Yes. Because AISD is the entity which submits the money to the employee, any monies provided is considered taxable income subject to both federal income tax and FICA (Social Security and Medicare).

Also, if any monies are owed to the District or items required to be returned by the employee applicant, the request for Disaster Relief may be denied.