
Concrete goods and services are designed to provide direct, material assistance to address immediate, critical needs that are impacting a family's safety and well-being. The goal is to quickly alleviate a specific problem so the family can stabilize and then work on long term solutions.

Referral Process:

1. The SSW completes the Community Action Council Referral for Concrete Goods and Services and attaches the required supportive documentation noted below.
2. The SSW sends the referral to their supervisor (FSOS) for approval. Upon FSOS approval, the referral will be sent to the identified regional gatekeeper for review.
3. Regional gatekeepers review the request to make sure the items are essential, basic needs for the family. They also review the attached supportive documentation to ensure it is complete and accurate.
4. If the regional gatekeeper approves the request, they send the signed referral form and supporting documents to cpsconcreteservices@ky.gov for final review/approval. Please use the subject line:
 - a. **Case Name – CPS Referral (ex: Jon Smith – CPS Referral) or;**
 - b. **URGENT: Case Name – CPS Referral (ex: URGENT: Jon Smith – CPS Referral).**
 - i. **Note:** If the form doesn't have approval and signatures from both the FSOS and Regional Gatekeeper, it will be automatically denied. All the necessary paperwork needs to be included when it is sent to both the supervisor, and the regional gatekeeper.
 - ii. **Note:** A referral is only considered urgent if a child is likely to be placed in foster care or removed from their home if the need isn't met immediately. Please don't mark a referral as urgent unless you can clearly explain why it's an immediate risk in the email or on the form.
5. Once the Child Protection Branch Specialist reviews and approves the request, they will send it to the Community Action Council (CAC) to process the payment. SSWs should not contact the local CAC office to ask for these funds directly.
6. SSWs should not instruct families to reach out directly to the CAC or Child Protection Branch via CPSConcreteServices@ky.gov to inquire on their referral.

Notes Regarding Referrals:

- The final approval email will be sent to the CAC from a specialist on the Child Protection Branch, all parties will be copied on this notification.
- Please allow **two (2) weeks** before reaching out to inquire about the status of a referral.

- If supportive documentation is missing, the Child Protection Branch or CAC will only reach out **once** for documentation.
- Failure to provide documents within 5 calendar days will result in the referral being closed and unpaid.

Mandatory Supportive Documentation List:

Housing Assistance:

- A rental agreement or lease.
- A statement of current amount due.

Household Items:

- An online shopping cart to show items being requested. (printable list showing item, cost, and total cost.)

Transportation Assistance:

- A car title.
- Proof of valid driver's license and insurance.
- A detailed statement of vehicle repairs needed.
- Vehicle purchases will no longer be accepted.

Utilities:

- An invoice/bill with the account number, amount due, name of the account holder, name of vendor to be paid.
- If the account is in another name, you will need to provide proof of residency.

Special notes regarding W-9s:

- ✚ The CAC can and will request the W-9, but this will delay payment if the vendor is not responsive or the contact information for the vendor is incorrect.
- ✚ If the vendor is noted to be in poor standing with the Secretary of State, funds are not available for use until that is corrected. The CAC will handle these communications with the vendor specifically.

Could the case be closed while waiting for the request to be paid?

No, you should keep the case open until the request has been processed and the funding has been provided. Otherwise, you will not be able to follow up with the family for missing information, should issues arise.

Eligible Expenses:

- Security deposits
- Rental payments
- Utility deposits
- Utility monthly statements
- Insurance
- Phone bills
- Internet
- Emergency housing funds
- Pest control/extermination
- Car repairs
- Gas cards
- Weatherization
- Medication costs
- Transportation to appointments
- Beds and bedding
- Kitchen appliances
- Cleaning supplies
- Groceries
- Clothing

Note regarding monthly expenses:

Funding is only approved for one month at a time. This funding isn't meant to cover regular monthly expenses over the long term. Past due balance and current month of expense can be requested. The initial funding is intended to give the family and social worker some time to find other ways to get help or to plan for future costs.

Ineligible Expenses:

- Child support
- Legal fees/fines
- Gift cards
- Drug screens
- Court ordered services
- Parenting classes
- Families where cases are closed
- Safety net clients
- Non-critical needs and services
- Vehicle purchases
- Household décor, or non-essential items.

Approved vendors:

Any retailer convenient for the family, including but not limited to:

- Walmart
- Lowes
- Home depot
- American freight
- Target
- Amazon



CAC requests that all items are listed at their full price, even if they're on sale at the time of the referral as the items may no longer be on sale when the CAC places the order.

BASIC REFERRAL INFORMATION

When preparing a referral for a family requiring assistance with goods or services, it's crucial to provide comprehensive and specific information to support the request. Think of this as building a well-reasoned argument for the family's needs. The referral should clearly articulate the following:

- A precise justification for the requested goods or services. Instead of a general statement, the referral must detail the exact nature of the need and the underlying circumstances that have led to it.
- An explanation of the anticipated positive impact of receiving these resources. The referral should outline how obtaining these goods or services will contribute to the family's well-being and their ability to move towards greater stability.
- A record of the family's prior efforts to secure these resources through other means. This demonstrates that the current request is not the first course of action and that other available avenues have been explored.
- A basic financial overview and a preliminary strategy for future financial management. This doesn't require a detailed budget, but it should indicate the family's understanding of their financial situation and their initial plans for managing their finances and continuing to meet this particular need once the immediate support concludes.

Key procedural elements are also important:

- Exhaustion of local and informal resources is a prerequisite. Prior to submitting a funding request, the social service worker (SSW) and the family must have diligently explored all accessible community-based and informal support systems. The referral documentation must explicitly detail these investigative efforts.
- Demonstrating a pathway to future self-sufficiency is essential for funding approval. If the referral does not clearly indicate the family's capacity to independently manage their needs in the future, the funding request is likely to be denied. The objective of this support is to provide temporary assistance that facilitates long-term stability.
- The referral form's inquiries regarding an informal budget and future planning serve a dual purpose. This information not only aids in evaluating the immediate funding request but also helps the SSW identify potential supplementary support programs that could benefit the family, such as childcare assistance, the WIC program, or insurance options. Additionally, the 211 helpline (www.211.org) is a valuable resource for identifying local services throughout Kentucky.

How much money is available per family and how many total referrals can I make?

- **Maximum Amount:** Up to \$4,000 per household for the entire fiscal year.
- **Referral Limit:** A family can have up to two separate referrals within the same fiscal year.
- **Combined Limit:** The total amount of money requested across both referrals cannot exceed \$4,000.

Does every family have \$4,000 to spend?

- **No.** It's crucial to remember that this funding is **not guaranteed**. Social Service Workers (SSWs) should be very careful when discussing this with families and emphasize that it's a potential resource, not an automatic entitlement.

If the parents are separated, can both households receive \$4,000?

- **Potentially, yes.** If parents share joint custody of the child(ren), **both households** may be eligible to receive up to \$4,000 each, provided there is proper documentation and a clear justification for the need in each separate referral.

How are these funds dispersed?

- The Community Action Council (CAC) will pay the vendor directly.
- Referrals **must include vendor information** to be approved for payment.
- There might be slight delays if the CAC needs to follow up with the vendor for documentation.
- It's important to provide accurate vendor contact information to speed up the process.

What is the process for the CAC to complete a referral and issue payment to a vendor?

1. **Review** the referral for necessary signatures and vendor information.
2. **Ensure** the correct supporting documentation is attached. If not, they will contact the SSW for clarification.
3. **Reach out** to the vendor to request a W-9 form to verify their good standing with the state and confirm their mailing address.
4. **Submit** the request to the fiscal department once the W-9 is received.
5. **Payment** is generally issued within **two-three weeks** after submission to the fiscal department.

How do I submit a referral for clothes, groceries, cleaning supplies, etc.?

- Include an online shopping cart from a budget-friendly retailer with the specific items requested on the referral.
- Providing login information for the cart makes it easiest for the CAC to review and order.
- The request can be set for delivery or pick up, depending on the retailer's options and availability.

Are we able to purchase name brand items such as Nike, Abercrombie, Victoria Secret, Old Navy? And/or can I request items such as a PlayStation, X-box, new computer gaming system, tablet, etc.?

- **Generally, no.** These types of requests are usually not appropriate.
- The fund is intended to assist families with critical, immediate needs to ensure safety within the home.
- Due to limited funds, priority is given to essential needs like utilities, car repairs, and groceries.
- If an SSW believes a non-essential request is justified, a detailed explanation of why it is appropriate and critical for safety must be included in the referral.

Will the CAC pay for utilities in someone's name who is not a household member?

- If the utility invoice is not in the client's name, a clear explanation must be provided in the referral.
- Lack of explanation may cause delays as the CAC will need to follow up for more information.
- Proof of residency will be required if the individual on the referral is different from the name on the utility account.

How long will this funding be available?

- This funding **can end at any time.**
- If funding ends, all pending referrals will be put on hold, and no new referrals will be accepted until more funds become available.
- This emphasizes the importance of using these funds only for **emergent or imminent situations** and after exploring all other community resources.
- It's crucial not to guarantee families or providers that funding will be approved, even after a referral is made and approved at the Central Office level.