

Coast Federation of Classified Employees AFT Local 4794

Hardship Fund and Committee Policy Guidelines

Mission Statement for the Fund:

The Coast Federation of Classified Employees (CFCE) endeavors to provide assistance to CFCE members who are experiencing an immediate, severe, and temporary financial challenge due to an emergency.

Definition of Hardship Fund Award:

- A Hardship Fund Award is a grant in the form of a union-supported grocery chain gift card with a value not to exceed \$350.00. The award is intended to assist a CFCE member facing a financial hardship.

The Hardship Fund Application Review Committee:

- Five CFCE members, of whom no fewer than three are Executive Council members, shall serve on the Hardship Fund Application Review Committee. Due to the confidential nature of the information that may be received, signing a non-disclosure agreement is required of committee members.
- A sixth CFCE member shall serve as a non-voting member of the Committee for the purpose of taking notes only during the procedural meetings.
- A quorum of no fewer than three voting committee members is necessary to conduct business.
- The Committee shall meet as needed to review the administration of the Hardship Fund, and the application process.
- At the first meeting of the Committee, the Committee shall establish meeting protocols and application decision criteria. The Committee will acknowledge its responsibility to substantiate need and apply decision-criteria consistently. The Committee will recommend changes to the administration of the Hardship Fund to the Executive Council as needed.
- The Committee shall meet as needed prior to each Executive Council meeting and determine if any applicants qualify for hardship funds. The Committee's determination shall be reported to the Executive Council in closed session. The Executive Council will then vote on accepting or declining the application.
- Committee appointments will be made every two years following an Executive Council election and service will begin coinciding with the start of the new fiscal year, except in the start-up year. The appointment to the committee is for two consecutive years, i.e., following the executive council terms. Vacancies on the committee will be filled by appointment of the Executive Council and will be in effect only until the start of the fiscal year following an Executive Council election. The incoming Executive Council will be the appointing body.
- A committee member submitting an application or having a potential conflict of interest must be recused.

Eligibility guidelines for funds:

- Must be a CFCE member in good standing, with a preference for those with 6 months of membership, including members whose termination is being grieved by the union.
- Member must demonstrate an emergency or catastrophic situation that has caused a temporary financial shortfall (e.g., natural disaster, immediate family crisis, acute illness, or injury).
- Member is unable to meet immediate essential expenses.

Amount(s) of available assistance to individuals:

- A maximum of \$350 in the form of a gift card redeemable at a union-supported grocery chain.
- A member may receive up to two (2) hardship grants within a rolling twelve (12) month period, up to a maximum of four (4) hardship grants in a lifetime.
- Funds dispersed will not exceed the amount of funds available in the Hardship Fund.

The process to apply for assistance:

- A member completes a Hardship Fund application – available to download from website or acquired from the union office.
- An applicant must provide copies of any and all supporting documentation of need as required by the committee.

Eligibility review/distribution of assistance

- A completed application is reviewed by the Hardship Fund Application Review Committee.
- Applications will be reviewed anonymously and the Hardship Fund Committee members will not be given the individual name associated with any application. Information provided by applicants will be treated as confidential and shared only with individuals directly involved in fund administration, processing, and audit reporting.
- The committee will determine the appropriate grant amount based on the need of the applicant. The maximum value of a single grant shall not exceed \$350.00.
- The grant shall be in the form of a gift card redeemable at a local union grocery store chain. The gift card shall be used to purchase food and personal hygiene products.
- The application for assistance, with accompanying documentation, shall be responded to within three (3) business days of receipt, and notification of approval/decline by the CFCE Executive Council will be provided to the applicant within five (5) business days of the decision.
- Referrals to other assistance will be provided as needed.
- Additional information providing context and detail will be taken into consideration by this committee as submitted by the member.

Sources for the Fund:

- Interest collected on interest-bearing savings accounts and Certificates of Deposits.
- Member donations – payroll deduction, on-line donations by bank transfer or credit card, one-time donations, special event fundraisers.
- Member bequests.
- An annual replenishment of funds as deemed appropriate by the Executive Council.

Changes to this policy:

- This policy may be amended at any time by majority vote of the CFCE Executive Council.