

Help Older Adults and People with Disabilities Facing Emergencies



California's approximate 1 million Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients have unexpected one-time emergency expenses for which it is nearly impossible to save up. This is given the low grant levels, which are only at 92.7% of the federal poverty line for an individual, and due to the SSI asset limit test of \$2,000 for individuals.

“We are the individuals unable to save even a few dollars monthly. If we have an emergency we have no funds to use for the emergency... We suffer. We suffer in silence. We are the individuals in poor health too. Unfortunately in our society money is the answer to live in modest comfort. ...we living on SSI just want to exist minus month to month worry. If those that decide what we live on monthly/yearly could walk in our shoes for a day they might understand our dismal fate.”

—California SSI/SSP recipient

Our Request to Meet Community Need:

Appropriate \$20 million ongoing funding starting in 2026-27 to revive an Emergency Grant program (WIC 12550) as a 5-year, time-limited program. The program would provide financial assistance in a one-time lump sum to recipients of Supplemental Security Income, In-Home Supportive Services, or Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants to support older adults and people with disabilities facing emergencies.

People could use an emergency grant for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Moving costs to help prevent homelessness
- House repairs to prevent unsafe or unhealthful conditions
- To maintain heating/cooling systems or generators to mitigate the impact of climate change