



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY EXPLAINED FOR CO-SPONSORED CLIENTS

How much money does IRIS have to help each new refugee?

IRIS receives \$2,425 from the State Department for each refugee client that it resettles.

- \$1,125 must be spent on that individual client, this is the Reception & Placement grant, often referred to by clients as “Welcome Money”
- \$200 is flexible – for IRIS to spend on any refugee that IRIS feels needs additional assistance. These are called “flex” or “pool” funds, and are generally only spent on IRIS clients resettled without co-sponsors.
- \$1,100 is for IRIS’ operational and administrative expenses.

This money must be spent by the client’s 90th day after arrival in the U.S.

It is important to understand that this money does not belong to the client. The U.S. government gives the money to IRIS and entrusts IRIS to use it to support the client in the way they feel is most efficient.

The government prohibits IRIS and all resettlement agencies from giving the R&P Grant in a lump sum directly to a client; rather the funds must be spent on the client’s behalf to secure his/her basic needs.

What is the R&P grant used for?

- pocket money (\$50 per adult, \$30 per child)
- groceries (4-5 days’ worth) and/or food allocation(s)
- a cell phone and 1 month of service
- bus passes (up to 3 months’ worth)
- utility bills (30 days of service)

- beds, kitchen and household supplies
- housing (3-6 months of rental assistance)
- other basic needs, as relevant

Rental assistance - How long will I receive assistance for?

Based on IRIS policy, clients generally receive 3-6 months of rental assistance. The duration of the assistance is defined shortly after a client's arrival based on the following barriers to employment: English language, childcare and health. All clients receive assistance for at least 3 months. An additional month of assistance is provided for each barrier to employment.

- If no employable adult (18+) in the family speaks English at a "group 3" level
- If only one adult (18+) is present in a household that contains one or more children under age 14 or day care and/or after-school care for children is needed in order for an employable adult to be able to work sufficient hours;
- If one or more adults whose employment is needed in order for the family to be self-sufficient has a health condition that needs to be either treated or accommodated in order to make employment and self-sufficiency possible.

How much assistance will I receive?

The first month of rent is paid in full. Then beginning in the second month after arrival (the month that begins after you have started receiving cash) and through the duration of the initial rental assistance period (3-6 months), you are required to contribute 50% of your monthly DSS cash assistance toward your rent. The remainder will be paid for you. You are expected to pay your entire rent (or up to the IRIS Standard amount) at the end of the rental assistance period.

If you get a job and have income before the end of the predetermined IRIS rental assistance period, the assistance will continue as planned, which gives you the incentive of having both employment income and rental assistance for that time period.

If you do not have a job at the end of the initial rental assistance period, you may continue to receive assistance as long as you have been compliant (see Sanctioning Policy). Your contribution will increase to 62.5% of income in the first month after the plan ends and to 75% of income the following month. In general, clients are not expected to pay any more than 75% of their income toward rent. IRIS can end rental assistance even for a client who is not self-sufficient if IRIS feels that they are not making the necessary efforts to become self-sufficient.

If the remaining 25% of your cash assistance does not cover your remaining bills, your co-sponsor group can work with you on how to cover the shortfall until employment is obtained.

Are there exceptions?

Duration of assistance for households with no employable members: Clients whose plan for achieving self-sufficiency does not involve employment (minors, age 65+, disabled) will receive rental assistance for a minimum of 3 months. They will remain eligible for IRIS rental assistance until the end of the month in which the household begins receiving its long-term source of income (usually SSI). However, after 6 months, the clients' rental assistance will not be automatic and must be considered along with all other clients who request additional rental assistance.

In some cases, generally large families with relatively low rents, there is a need to adjust the rental assistance plan to ensure that the R&P grant can be spent in a timely manner. In these cases, IRIS will propose a specific rental assistance plan based on the family's specific circumstances in coordination with your co-sponsor.

IRIS reserves the right to adjust any client's rental assistance plan if there are exceptional circumstances.

This policy should be explained to all adult members of newly arriving refugee families and all adult members should sign below to acknowledge that they understand and will abide by the policy.

_____ Client name	_____ Client signature	_____ Date
_____ Client name	_____ Client signature	_____ Date
_____ Client name	_____ Client signature	_____ Date
_____ Client name	_____ Client signature	_____ Date
_____ Co-Sponsor Name	_____ Co-Sponsor signature	_____ Date
_____ Interpreter name	_____ Interpreter signature	_____ Date

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