



## **Operating Guidelines of the Lyons Emergency & Assistance Fund (LEAF) Food & Basic Needs Programs**

### **1. Purpose and Structure**

1.1 The mission of LEAF is to offer a human services safety net for people in need in the greater Lyons area. LEAF provides for the basic and emergency needs of Lyons area residents in situations where other assistance is insufficient. LEAF currently offers three channels of food and basic needs support: a weekly on-site Food Pantry, Basic Needs Assistance & Resource Matching, and Lyons Meals on Wheels.

1.2 The Food Pantry is a member agency of Community Food Share. Eligibility to receive food each week is determined by Food Pantry leadership and an Intake Form, which includes proof of residency, is required of each client. Thorough records and some statistics are available; all food is distributed on an equitable basis without discrimination of any kind.

1.3 Basic Needs Assistance is intended to offer support for basic and emergency needs, typically valued at \$400 or less over a 12 month period. Basic Needs Assistance is not intended to be a continual or repeated source of support for an individual or family, except in cases where ongoing casework/management is established (see Sec on 1.4).

1.4 If a client requests Basic Needs Assistance beyond \$400 over 12 months, the client may be referred for more comprehensive case management through the OUR Center and/or financial counseling through Boulder County. If annual request(s) exceeds \$400 and the client complies with LEAF's recommendation for case management and/or financial counseling, requests will be taken under consideration by LEAF, applying best practices and resource matching. When request(s) over \$400 are considered, the Executive Director and a LEAF board member confer and render a decision regarding the request (see Sec ons 3.3.2 and 3.3.5).

1.5 Lyons Meals on Wheels services are offered weekdays to anyone who is unable to shop for or prepare at least one nutritious meal per day. The cost of the meals is determined with a generous sliding fee scale based on the client's income.

### **2. Eligibility**

2.1 LEAF's programs shall be available for residents in the 80540 zip code, as well as the greater Lyons Area (Hygiene in the east to Raymond/Riverside,

across Blue Mountain, and up US Highway 36 to Pinewood Springs and Big Elk Meadows).

### **3. Basic Needs Assistance**

3.1 LEAF shall not give cash to any individual. All funds disbursed shall go directly to the approved service provider (third or billing party).

3.2 Due to liability concerns, LEAF will not pay for narcotics prescriptions.

3.3 Basic Needs Financial Assistance shall be limited by the fund balance and frequency of requests as follows:

3.3.1 Grants of up to \$400 may be automatically approved by the Executive Director when the fund balance is \$20,000 or greater, and the request is the first within 12 months.

3.3.2 Grants from \$400 to \$2000 must be anonymously presented by the Executive Director to the Board Chair (or another board member if the Chair is not available). Clients requesting grants in this range may be encouraged to participate in case management or financial counseling, where appropriate. Compliance with these referrals will be viewed favorably by LEAF leadership when considering grant request(s). If LEAF does not approve a \$400-\$2000 grant request, or does not approve in full, LEAF will endeavor to refer to alternative community resources for support or collaborative matching.

3.3.3 All grants over \$2000 must be anonymously presented by the Executive Director to, and approved by, a majority of the LEAF Board. Clients requesting grants in this range will be encouraged to participate in case management and/or financial counseling, where appropriate. Compliance with these referrals will be viewed favorably by LEAF leadership when considering grant request(s).

3.3.4 If an individual requests LEAF assistance two times or more within 12 months, he or she will be encouraged to attend an assessment meeting with a caseworker and/or financial counseling.

3.3.5 When LEAF makes a Basic Needs grant, client will be made aware of LEAF's Basic Needs guidelines and will acknowledge such on Intake Form. These guidelines will also be available on LEAF's website.

3.3.6 It is LEAF's expectation on that clients will typically present with a Basic Need request in advance of incurring the expense. This will allow LEAF to help identify the best sources of support in advance of making a grant decision and to provide payment directly to the service provider.

3.4 The Executive Director and LEAF Board of Directors, at their sole discretion, reserve the right to deny any request for assistance.

#### **4. Coordination with Other Agencies**

4.1 Applicants 60 years of age or older will first be referred to the Boulder County Aging Services to review additional assistance available.

4.2 LEAF's Executive Director will refer clients to agencies that might collaborate with LEAF or better serve an individual/families' need whenever possible. (LEAF collaborates with approximately 20 agencies and organizations, e.g. the OUR Center, etc.)

#### **5. Procedure for Emergency Funds**

5.1 An Emergency is defined as, but not limited to:

5.1.1 Natural disasters such as flood, fire, tornado, or blizzard

5.1.2 Accidents resulting in personal injury or property damage

5.1.3 Family emergencies and events (illness, death, etc.)

5.2 An individual emergency is defined as an event that impacts a single individual or household. A collective emergency is defined as an event that impacts multiple individuals or households. Both are eligible for Emergency Fund assistance.

5.3 When a request for individual emergency funds is received, the Executive Director (or Executive Director and Board Chair or Board member if the request is over \$400) determines if the request is an emergency and not a basic need (and thus not subject to the guidelines set forth in Sec on 3.3).

5.4 In the event of collective emergencies, the Executive Director, or the Executive Director and Board Chair, or a group operating on their behalf, reserves the right to determine appropriate guidelines for dispersal of funds, including suspension of financial assistance guidelines as outlined in Section 3.3.

#### **6. Confidentiality**

6.1 The Executive Director shall keep a complete record of all clients.

6.2 The true names of clients shall be kept confidential unless released expressly by the client or as required in Sec on 6.3 below. Recipients of Basic Needs Assistance shall not be identified in reports prepared by the Executive Director.

6.3 If deemed necessary for audit and guideline verification purposes, the Board of Directors may access the true names of all clients.

6.4 All information discussed in regular or special Board meetings is considered confidential and should not be shared with any person or entity outside of the LEAF Board without the express written consent of the Board Chair, Vice-Chair or Executive Directors.

#### **7. Nondiscrimination**

7.1 LEAF adheres to the following Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy:

LEAF is dedicated to equal employment opportunities in any term, condition, or privilege of employment. LEAF does not discriminate against applicants or employees based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, citizenship, marital status, gender expression, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law. This policy applies to all employees, including managers, supervisors, co-workers, and non-employees such as customers, participants, clients, vendors, consultants, etc.

LEAF prohibits retaliation against any employee for filing a complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation. If employees believe there has been a violation of LEAF's EEO or retaliation standard, they should follow the complaint procedure contained in the sexual harassment policy.

LEAF intends to maintain a work environment free of unlawful harassment. Unlawful harassment includes verbal, physical, or visual conduct that substantially impairs an employee's ability to perform the job or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, derogatory or vulgar comments regarding a person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, gender expression, veteran or military status, citizenship or sexual orientation, or distribution of any electronic or written graphic material containing such comments.