



City of Needles, California Request for Action

CITY COUNCIL NPUA Board of Public Utilities
 Regular Special

Meeting Date: October 6, 2020

Title: CARES Utility Assistance Grant

Background: The Needles Public Utility Authority (NPUA) CARES Utility Assistance Grant is designed to assist households within the City of Needles that have been affected (e.g. lost job) by COVID-19. The NPUA CARES Utility Assistance Grant will provide up to \$500 for Needles households impacted by COVID-19 that require assistance towards meeting their financial obligations related to eligible* current utility bills. The Federal Cares Funding to the City will be used to pay the NPUA.

Residents must certify that their financial need is a result of COVID-19 and that they require assistance to pay their eligible, utility bills. Funding is allocated on a first come first serve basis in the form of a single grant. Only one grant can be issued per eligible household address.

To be eligible residents must meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- 1) City of Needles resident living at a physical household address located within the city limits
- 2) Name is listed on the utility account
- 3) Have been financially affected by COVID-10
- 4) Have past-due utilities in addition to current balance owed

Residents will complete an application for assistance and all awards will receive a pledge against the utility account and the City of Needles will transfer funds to the awarded utility account.

Fiscal Impact: \$14,000 remains in the City of Needles Cares Fund allocation from the Federal Government.

Recommended Action: Authorize the implementation of the NPUA CARES Utility Assistance Grant as per the program guidelines and request the City Council fund such program in the amount of \$14,000 with City CARES Act Funds

Submitted By: Rainie Torrance, Assistant Utility Manager

City Management Review: *Rick*

Date: 9/30/20

Approved: <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Approved: <input type="checkbox"/>	Tabled: <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
			Agenda Item: <u>8.</u>

Needles Public Utility Authority (NPUA) CARES Utility Assistance Grant Program Guidelines

Grant Eligibility Summary:

The NPUA CARES Utility Assistance Grant is designed to assist households within the City of Needles that have been affected by COVID-19. The NPUA CARES Utility Assistance Grant will provide up to \$500 for Needles households impacted by COVID-19 that require assistance towards meeting their financial obligations related to eligible utility bills. Residents must certify that their financial need is a result of COVID-19 and that they require assistance to pay their eligible, current utility bills.

Grant funds are limited and will be issued until all funds have been allocated or December 30, 2020, whichever comes first. Funding is allocated on a first come first served basis in the form of a single grant. Only one grant can be issued per eligible household address. Again, as applications will be reviewed and approved on a first come first served basis, it is critical that you submit your completed application as soon as possible before the limited funding is allocated.

If you have any questions, you may contact the NPUA business office by phone 1-760-326-5700 Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm.

I. Size of the grant:

The NPUA CARES Utility Assistance Grant will provide up to \$500 for Needles Residents impacted by COVID-19 and require assistance towards meeting their financial obligations related to eligible Utilities.

II. Residents must have been financially affected by COVID-19:

Residents must submit an attestation stating that they have a financial need because of COVID-19 in one of the following ways:

- Job Loss
OR
- Twenty-five percent (25%) reduction in household income

III. Eligibility Requirements:

Residents must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- City of Needles resident living at a physical household address located within the city limits
- Name is listed on the utility account
- Have been financially affected by Covid-19 (see section II)
- Have past-due utilities in addition to current balances owed

IV. Eligible Expenses of CARES Act Grant:

Residents may use the funding on the following eligible utilities:

- Electricity
- Water
- Wastewater

V. Disbursement of Funds:

Utility assistance grant awardees will receive the approved funding in one disbursement.

VI. First Come First Served Basis:

Grant funds are limited. Grants will be issued until all funds have been allocated or December 30, 2020, whichever comes first. Applications will be reviewed and approved on a first come first served basis. An application is not considered complete until ALL documentation is received.

VII. Required Information/Documents to Qualify for Grant Award:

- Proof of residency (one of the following)
 - Valid California Driver's License Card
 - Valid California State Identification Card
 - Valid United States Passport
 - Valid Matricula Consular
 - Other forms of identification may be accepted
- Certification of a Financial Impact related to COVID-19
- Utility Bill
 - Utility bill service address located within the city limits
 - Applicant/Recipient is named on the utility bill
 - Past due or in need of assistance in connection with the above-reference eligible utilities

VIII. Certifications:

This grant program is supported with Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”), Public Law 116-136, Section 601(a) of the Social Security Act, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus (“COVID-19”). According to Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code, it is a felony for any person to knowingly and willingly make false or fraudulent statements to any department of the United States Government. Resident understands that any willful misrepresentation on this application could result in a fine and/or imprisonment under provision of the United States Criminal Code U.S.C. Title 18, Section 1001.

Applicants will certify to the following:

- City of Needles resident, within designated zip code, from March 1, 2020 through application date
- Applicant is reporting the household income on behalf of the service address requested
- Applicant agrees, if awarded, the application becomes a binding contract between the resident and the City of Needles Any violation of the program guidelines will result in the resident promptly repaying the City any amount issued pursuant to this program
- Applicant understands that City reserves the right to reject all applications

IX. Grant Administration – Managed Career Solutions:

The NPUA business office will accept, review, approve applications, and issue grant payments.

All awards will be a pledge against the utility account and the City of Needles will transfer funds to the awarded utility account.