



Acton-Boxborough
United Way

Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Emergency Grants for Acton & Boxborough Residents

What is Acton-Boxborough United Way's COVID-19 Impact Fund?

Acton-Boxborough United Way launched the COVID-19 Impact Fund to help local residents who need emergency financial assistance for basic needs due to the health or economic consequences of COVID -19. The local emergency response fund, managed by A-B United Way, is supported through generous contributions from local residents, family foundations and businesses.

My family is in need of financial assistance. How can I apply for a grant from A-B United Way?

A-B United Way works with trusted community partners who have agreed to help applicants and submit COVID-19 emergency fund requests on their behalf.

All residents must contact either a town social worker or a local faith leader who will help them determine if they qualify and submit the application on their behalf. You will find a list below under "Where to apply".

How do I know if I qualify for a grant from the COVID-19 Impact Fund?

Individuals or households residing in Acton or Boxborough with a total household income below 80% of [the Federal HUD 2020 Area Median Income for Acton and Boxborough](#) before or because of COVID-19 will be considered for as long as funds are available. For a family of four in Acton and Boxborough, \$96,250 is considered a low total household income.

Will other criteria be taken into account?

Residents have to demonstrate emergency financial need. They will be encouraged and supported by the agencies to access other available resources first. Check out vital local resources at abuw.org/covid19.

Are citizenship questions asked?

All requests will be treated confidentially. Citizenship status is not considered. No questions will be asked. Acton-Boxborough United Way understands the reluctance of some of our residents to interact with public authorities. We offer residents a variety of channels to apply, including faith community leaders who will not share any information with town social workers. A-B



Acton-Boxborough
United Way

United Way is a separate non-profit organization and operates independently from the government.

What is the maximum emergency grant amount?

Emergency grants are available for up to \$1,000.

An individual or household can submit multiple requests for consideration as long as the total request for the individual or family does not exceed \$1,000.

Who receives the funds?

In general, residents do not receive money directly. Since the purpose of the COVID-19 impact grants is to help residents cover current or past due bills, payment will be issued directly to the provider (utility company, landlord, etc.).

In rare cases, gift cards might be issued, for example to help with food expenses, if free local food resources are not available or appropriate.

What expenses would be considered?

Residents may request grant funds to cover the following expenses:

- Food
- Rent
- Mortgage
- Utilities
- Emergency home repair (plumbing, heating, etc.)
- Emergency car repairs (in exceptional cases)
- Prescription drugs or co-pays (in exceptional cases)

The list of eligible services may be updated as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

Are there any expenses that can not be covered by a COVID -19 grant?

The following expenses do not qualify for funding:

- Cosmetic home repairs
- Generators
- Medical or dental expenses (except prescription drugs or co-pays)
- Burial costs
- Purchasing vehicles
- Veterinary expenses
- Routine car maintenance
- Tax payments
- Insurance payments (incl. home insurance)



Acton-Boxborough
United Way

- Housing Authority/Section 8 rent
- Business expenses (commercial rent, utilities, insurance, etc.)
- School tuition

Can I save the grant money to use on future bills?

Grant requests for rent can be used for past-due bills or to cover the upcoming month. In other words, residents can apply in June for rent that is coming due on July 1. They cannot apply for rent that is due months later.

Requests for past due bills for other services will be prioritized over current bills.

When are applications for funds being accepted?

The application process is open now and will stay open for as long as funds are available from the COVID-19 Impact Fund.

Do I need to provide any documentation to apply?

AB-United Way will require a bill, invoice or statement from the provider (utility company, mortgage lender or landlord) showing that the amount is due. To speed up processing, it is helpful to gather the invoice, documentation or name and address of the landlord, utility company so documentation is ready to share with the agency preparing your application.

The screening agency will work with residents to determine what additional documentation is required.

Do I need to meet in person with someone to fill out an application?

No. Due to the need for social distancing, residents will have a virtual interview or call with the screening agencies.

Where to apply?

Residents cannot apply directly for COVID-19 emergency funding to A-B United Way. Instead, residents need to apply through one of the designated agencies listed below who will evaluate each request. They will submit the application on behalf of the residents.

In Boxborough:

- Lauren Abraham, Council on Aging & Community Services, Town of Boxborough, labraham@boxborough-ma.gov, 978-264-1734
- Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry, United Church of Christ Boxborough, cindyworthingtonberry@gmail.com, 978-263-7387



Acton-Boxborough
United Way

In Acton:

- Laura Ducharme: Social worker, Town of Acton, lducharme@acton-ma.gov, 978-929-6651
- Residents over age 60: Beverly Hutchins, Town of Acton, Council on Aging, bhutchings@acton-ma.gov, 978-929-6652
- Clients of Acton Housing Authority (AHA): contact Amanda Eldridge, AHA. amanda@actonhousing.net, 978-263-5339
- All local faith community leaders

How long does the process take?

Once all documentation is completed and submitted by the screening agencies, A-B United Way will process the review and payment within 72 hours of receiving a completed application.

Why do we require residents to apply through trusted community partners?

Our contacts at the community partner agencies are able to connect residents with a wide array of financial and social services to help you make the most informed budget decisions in this very difficult and uncertain time. They have extensive experience in evaluating residents' needs and can help connect residents to additional resources. A-B United Way has a long standing partnership with the town social workers to support residents through short-term financial emergencies.

We hear the fear and reluctance of some of our local residents to interact with public authorities, including town social workers. We therefore offer alternative application channels. Residents can apply through local faith leaders, who agreed to partner with A-B United Way.

We strongly recommend pairing the emergency grant funding with other existing public or private sources to get the best possible outcome for your household or family to help alleviate the hardship caused by COVID-19.

A-B United Way is unable to take any calls, questions or emails from residents directly regarding COVID-19 emergency grant applications.

The eligibility and priority focus areas for the COVID-19 residential emergency grants are developed in collaboration with our community partners and approved by the A-B United Way Board of Directors.

A-B United Way reserves the right to revise the criteria, review the application process or documentation policies of each partner in regard to the distribution of financial assistance. A-B United Way further maintains the discretion to approve or reject applications.