



For Office Use:
Date Rec'd _____
Rec'd By _____

Benevolence Guidelines

In the interest of helping others, we do have the Benevolence Ministry in place. God's people have lovingly given tithes and offerings and we view it as God's money not ours. Therefore, it is not to be given away unwisely, but with loving discernment.

Here are some important principles that are essential for you to understand. These policies are not intended to burden you - but to simply be a responsible way for us to discern needs and use God's money wisely.

We may help you, and this is how we will do it.

- We will treat you with dignity and respect.
- We will never give cash.
- We do not say "yes" without prayerful evaluation that includes asking you to fill out an application and giving us permission to verify the information you have stated.
- *Needs that we may help you with include:*
 - lodging
 - food
 - clothing
 - medical treatment
 - transportation to or from a place of employment
 - funeral expenses

Needs that may not be met by the benevolence fund include:

- school expenses, business investments, or anything that brings financial profit to the individual or family
 - paying off credit cards. Exceptions can be made when an individual has had to use a credit card in a crisis or emergency (e.g., hospitalization, death, etc.)
 - needs of individuals who are wanted by the law or for paying fines as a result of breaking the law
 - housing for unmarried couples
 - legal fees
 - penalties relating to late payments or irresponsible actions
 - private school fees or tuition
 - business ventures or investments
 - telephone, cellular phone or cable/satellite television bills
- We will ask for you to take primary responsibility for your needs, and then turn to your family, **BEFORE** we involve church funds.
 - You must meet the qualifications (a member or currently attending Growth Track classes). Non-members may be assisted at the discretion of the Senior Pastor.

Acceptable reasons for rendering aid are:

- Destruction of family residence (serious damage to the residence to the extent that the residence is unlivable or unsafe due to water damage, earthquake, smoke or fire damage).
- Loss of Significant household income due to:
 - Loss of Employment
 - Death
 - Divorce, separation
 - Illness

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Read Benevolence Guidelines stated above completely.
- Complete an application. (Note: Applications are reviewed on Wednesday.)
- Meeting, either in person or via telephone, with designated Committee Member.
- Additional contact by designated Committee Member may be required to complete the application process. Details of the application will only be discussed with the parties directly involved.
- Notification regarding outcome of application
- All approved assistance will be paid to the vendors.

We don't want to see you continue in a bad financial situation. Therefore we want to know:

- Other agencies and help programs from which you have sought help
- Your job and family situation
- How you met this need last month and how do you plan to meet it next month

GUIDELINES FOR NON-MEMBERS

As previously stated, non-members may receive assistance at the discretion of the Senior Pastor; however, common practice will be to:

- Refer you to the appropriate agencies (Welfare Department, DHR, etc.)
- Arrange for Ministerial counseling (as long as it is not to appeal the financial request), when requested.
- Food gift cards or Food Pantry referrals.

Assistance is intended to be a gift. However, under no circumstances is a gift from Living Word Church to be considered a loan. No gift may be repaid, either in part or in full, in money or in labor.

The Benevolence Committee will not provide help to anyone who, in its estimation, will have negative or irresponsible behavior reinforced by financial help.

Those requesting help must be willing to give the Benevolence Committee permission to follow up on any information provided to the Committee. The Committee will be sensitive to confidential information.

You may be required to meet with the Benevolence Team Coach or designee for all requests made in two consecutive years. Also, for repeated requests, money management classes may be recommended at the discretion of the committee.

** Note: The full benevolence guidelines are set forth in a separate document. If you wish to review this document in full, we will provide you with a copy.*

If you wish to continue with this process please:

1. Sign below to indicate you accept and understand the policies stated above.
2. Sign the Release of Information Form.
3. Fill out the Financial Assistance Application.
4. Return both the form and the application

This is not a contract for assistance. I understand the terms stated above under which I may seek assistance from Living Word Church.

Signature of Candidate for Assistance

Name (please print)

Signature of Spouse (if applicable)

Name (please print)

Date: _____