

GACM Frequently Asked Questions



What is a GACM grant?

GACM is a ministry of last resort. After all other resources have been exhausted, GACM may provide financial assistance based upon availability of funds, residency and your need. The Grant much resolve your crisis. Moving forward, you should be able to sustain yourself – pay ongoing costs, once the aid is received.

Clients are expected to pay a portion of their debt.

We prioritize residents in zip code **19118, 19119, 19126, 19138, 19144, 19150**

Those residing outside the noted areas may be denied our private grant assistance and or referred to other resources.

About GACM Funding

GACM is a private, not-for-profit organization. We are not reliant on government funds. We raise money to support our work. Primary funding is provided by grant writing, private donations from individuals, and organizations aware of our focus on Northwest Philadelphia.

Why don't you service my zip code? I live near you.

With limited resources GACM determined we can have the greatest impact by targeting our assistance to those residing in Northwest Philadelphia, the area where GACM is located.

If you can't help me, who can?

Two data bases may provide you information and resources.

Available 24 hours, call **211**, the United Way's helpline for essential health and human services.

Monday through Friday, 8am -8pm, call **311**, Philadelphia's Non-emergency Customer Service Hotline.

If you give me a grant, how long do I have to wait for the check?

Once GACM approves a grant payment will be made within 10 business days. You should not expect to receive the grant check. GACM prefers to mail checks to the vendor.

HOUSING

Can you help me find housing?

We do not find housing for you. We have compiled a list of area realtors/landlords with contact numbers. This list is provided as a resource to jump start you search for housing. The list is not comprehensive or regularly updated. Please let us know of resources to add or remove from the list.

I am going to be evicted. What should I do?

There are laws guiding the eviction process. Tenant Union Representative Network (TURN) holds daily workshops regarding rental and eviction concerns. Contact TURN 215-940-3900, to learn your rights. Once you locate new housing GACM may be able to help you.

If You Are Or May Become Homeless in a Few Days

If you are homeless or fear eviction, contact the City of Philadelphia's Office of Homeless Services, 215-686-7175 or 311 for information on emergency shelters or housing assistance.

1. **Make** sure you have in hand your ID and other important documents. i.e. Social Security cards, income documentation. Current documents are preferred.
2. **Make** an Emergency Pack. Gather other important documents, valuables etc. and store outside your unit.
3. **Call for homeless** prevention assistance. Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network (PIHN), may help you, 215-247-4663

Can you help me with rent/mortgage assistance?

Rent & Security—Once you have located housing, know the landlord will rent to you or allow you to catch up and remain in your unit, and know how much money is needed, GACM maybe able to help. You should have the ability to sustain yourself after our help is given.

In general, it will take 10 days to complete the process to receive assistance.

Mortgage—Some funding sources, limit aid to interest and principal only.

UTILITIES

Can you help me with utilities?

GACM can review your utility accounts and make phone calls to help you identify programs that address your crisis. This includes application assistance to utility company Customer Assistance Programs, LIHEAP, CRISIS and private resources such as UESF (Utility Emergency Assistance Program). Once public resources have been exhausted, we can provide private grant assistance if you meet the criteria and funding is available. You should provide your most current bill.

Can't find my bill so what should I do?

You have several options. Wait until you receive your new bill. Visit a PGW, PECO or Water Revenue Customer Service Center. Access your utility account on-line to print a bill.

My bill is in another's name. Can I still get help?

A bill in someone else's name does not automatically preclude you from grant aid.

When does Crisis and LIHEAP start?

The LIHEAP and Crisis programs operate November through April.

Can you help me with oil?

We may help with oil once public resources, i.e. LIHEAP and CRISIS have been exhausted. Additional assistance for seniors is available through PCA (Philadelphia Corporation for Aging). Area senior centers may also provide oil assistance. GACM may help if you meet criteria and funding is available.

FURNITURE/ HOME REPAIRS

Do you provide furniture?

GACM does not directly provide furniture. We refer clients to other programs that offer furniture assistance and may track your request to match with a donor of items you may need.

Do you pay for home repairs?

Most likely GACM will refer you to programs such as URDC, Weatherization, Basic Systems. A small GACM grant aid may also be provided.

Donations

In general, GACM does not accept furniture or clothing donations. Find out what the donor has and let GACM staff know. Whosoever Gospel Mission (WGM) does accept clothing and furniture. Contact them for details. 215-438-3094

CLOTHING

Do you provide clothing?

Except for special clothing collections or the Winter Warmth Drive, we no longer provide clothing vouchers or distribute clothing on site.

FOOD

Do you provide food?

The GACM Food Cupboard operates each Thursdays from 10:00am – 12 providing goods to make nutritious meals in ones home. Distribution is outside. Prepacked bags with perishable and non-perishable goods and varied items on the community table are offered.

We do not provide hot meals but can give you a list of community programs that provide this service. Call the 1-800-5-HUNGRY (1-800-548-6479) for information about food and meals.

What non-food items are in the Food Cupboard?

GACM distributes a variety of non-food items i.e., including personal care items, adult pull ups, diapers, toiletries, laundry, or household cleaning products. We can't control what and when items are available but share what we have. You should ask for what you need.

Baby items—When available items may include, food, formula, diapers. Ask for what you need.

What should I do if I need food and can't wait until Thursday?

The GACM intake representative can advise you regarding what can be done at that time or provide you information for other food resources. If staff and food is available, we may assist before Thursday. Call the 1-800-5-HUNGRY (1-800-548-6479) for other options.

IDENTIFICATION

How can I get photo/state id? Do you pay for the i.d.?

GACM counselors may help you with i.d. Photo identification and other documents may be obtained from the city, state or other official entity. Most likely you will need to pay for government i.d. Social security card replacement and voter registration cards are free. Routinely GACM does not pay for this. We may refer you to other agencies for this service.

Face to Face - 215-438-7939

TRANSPORTATION

Do you give bus fare or tokens?

GACM has limited resources for transportation. Counselors will determine eligibility for this aid.

TAXES/REBATES

Do you complete PA Property Tax or Rent Rebates?

Annually the PA Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications become available mid-January and are mailed to previous rebate recipients. GACM can complete your application and will have blank applications available. This is a free service provided during our Social Service hours. Once submitted, you can check on the status of your rebate by calling 1-888-222-9190

The PA filing deadline is June 30. However, annually, the deadline is extended to December 30.

Do you provide State and Federal tax services?

GACM is not providing tax service. During the tax season, January through April, you can call Center In the Park (CIP) for an appointment. 215-848-7722.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Can I volunteer at GACM?

GACM welcomes volunteers. Some positions require PA child abuse, state and FBI clearances. There are other opportunities, including Food Cupboard service that require no clearances. To volunteer, you must first complete a volunteer application. Applications are available in the ministry office.

