TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSC OP: 70.47, Staff Emergency Fund

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to establish a Staff Emergency Fund Program for non-faculty, benefits-eligible employees.

REVIEW: This HSC OP will be reviewed by November 1 every even-numbered year (ENY) by the Staff Senate President and the Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, with recommendations for revisions forwarded to the President by November 15.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. General Policy.

a. Purpose

The Staff Emergency Fund (SEF) provides limited financial assistance to staff members of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center who are experiencing a temporary hardship due to a significant life event. A temporary financial hardship is defined as one caused by a specific event, including the death of a family member (as defined by TTU System Regulation 10.10, Employee Leave), natural disaster, serious illness, or critical injury. Documentation supporting the temporary financial hardship and the specific event may be required for the application.

b. Eligibility

To be eligible for assistance, the staff member must meet all of the following criteria:

(1) Must be continuously employed as a full-time or part-time, benefits-eligible, non-faculty Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center staff member for at least 12 consecutive months prior to the application date;

(2) Have not been issued corrective actions or other documented misconduct or performance issues on file within the previous 6 months;

(3) Have considered other possible financial resources, including Sick Leave Pool, if applicable;

(4) Have not received an SEF award within the past 24 consecutive months;

Selection for the award will not be made based on an employee's protected status.

2. Program Administration.

a. The program will be administered through Staff Senate. Applications will be reviewed and decided upon by a committee composed of Staff Senate members, Staff Senate President (ex officio), a Human Resources representative (ex officio), and a Payroll & Tax Services representative (ex officio)

b. All identifying information contained within the application will be redacted to maintain the anonymity of the applicant prior to review by the Staff Emergency Fund Committee. In order to notify the applicant of approval/denial and to award funds (if approved), the applicant's name will be made known to the SEF Committee Chair, Staff Senate President, Staff Senate Treasurer, Human Resources Representative, and/or Payroll & Tax Services representative. In accordance with the Texas Public Information Act, all application materials will be subject to Open Records Requests.

c. Staff emergency funding is not guaranteed and is based on demonstrated need, short-term nature of the financial hardship, committee approval, and available funds. Due to the limited amount of funds, all requests cannot be approved even though there may be a clear need for assistance.

d. Applications for emergency funds may be approved at any time during the fiscal year, but they should be submitted to the Staff Senate through the application process listed below within three months of the date of the event.

e. Award amount may not exceed $500 (processed through Payroll & Tax Services with appropriate deductions taken).

3. Application Process.

a. Complete and print the application (Attachment A), then sign and date to verify that the information is valid and accurate. Information provided by applicants will be treated as confidential and shared only with individuals directly involved in fund administration.

b. Submit completed application and supporting documentation related to the hardship for review by the SEF Review Committee. Applications can be submitted in the following ways:

(1) By email: staffsenate@ttuhsc.edu

(2) Through the eRaider protected form on the Staff Senate website: https://www.ttuhsc.edu/staff-senate/

c. Applicants may be contacted by the Human Resources representative to provide supporting documentation.

d. Staff Senate will respond to all applicants within 10 business days after the completed application has been received. All decisions of the committee are final.

e. If the application is found to contain misleading or inaccurate information, it will be considered invalid.

4. Right to Change Policy.

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy, in whole or in part, at any time without the consent of employees.